



Photo : Kris de Witte (Lemming Film)

# THE BUZZ

AMSTERDAM MAGIC SOCIETY



March 2025

ISSUE 3

# Mr. K



# 1/ FRITZ WITH A Z

You may have seen news of the fires in Los Angeles, including striking images of the Magic Castle illuminated by an orange glow in the background.

3 p.



4 p.

# 2/ REVIEW OF MR. K.

MERGAN

Mr. K is a travelling illusionist who becomes embroiled in a Kafkaesque nightmare when he can't find the hotel exit.



# 3/ 10 QUESTIONS TO TORI NOQUEZ

## FRITZ WITH A Z

4) We can wake you up in the middle of the night for...

Chat about perfect faros or Si Stebbins.

6 p.



# 4/

## THE MAGICIAN'S TABLE

12 p.

## STEPHANE VARRAULT

London is giving you its best attempt at a cold, mysterious, December night when the lights of this ancient factory turned theatre come into view.



This magazine is a production of the Amsterdam Magic Society. If you like to contribute, send this to our editor & designer, Frans de Groot: [amsterdammagicsociety@gmail.com](mailto:amsterdammagicsociety@gmail.com)

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## DEAR READER

You might be looking at the cover and thinking: Who is Mr. K? It's a surrealistic film starring Crispin Glover (best known from *Back to the Future*). If you enjoy movies about magicians, Mergan's review might just persuade you to give Mr. K a watch.

Here are a few magician-themed films you may not have heard of:

✦ ✦ *Comme Par Magie* (2023) – A close-up magician suddenly becomes a single parent and must navigate his new reality.

✦ ✦ *La Grande Magie* (2023) – “Can you make my wife disappear?” is a common comment we hear as magicians. But what if it actually happened—and the husband wanted her back?

✦ ✦ *Sleight* (2016) – A street magician caring for his younger sister is forced to use his magic skills to save her.

✦ ✦ *Magic in the Moonlight* (2014) – A romantic comedy about a magician invited to

expose a spirit medium.

✦ ✦ *Magicians* (2007) – Two rival stage magicians must confront their past after a tragic magic trick failure.

Speaking of magicians, there were four performers at last Wednesday's Amsterdam Close-Up Magic Show. If you missed it, Stefano was there, and he'll tell you all about it in this Buzz. The special guest was Tori Noquez, who was in Amsterdam for a math conference.

It was a treat to see her Magic Castle and Fool Us act before she flew back to the USA.

Speaking of flying, many magicians are now heading to Blackpool for the world's biggest magic convention. Wishing everyone a magical time there!

ENJOY READING

*Fritz with a Z*





**Mr. K is a travelling illusionist who becomes embroiled in a Kafkaesque nightmare when he can't find the hotel exit. His determined attempts to leave only lead him deeper into the hotel's mysterious world.**

Perhaps the weirdest film I've seen this year, *Mr. K* is an audacious and existential class commentary from writer-director Tallulah H. Schwab. Its aesthetic and narrative eccentricities become a tender nesting ground for its themes of the drudgery of pointless work and the need for community to brave life's horrors. Starring the great Crispin Glover as the titular Mr. K, we first meet K, a traveling magician, at a café where he's painstakingly performing his show to patrons more concerned with their meals and conversations. He leaves for a Victorian estate that looks much worse for wear. Schwab's production design alone makes this film worth viewing; the walls seemingly writhe like a living being due to the steady yet consistent paint peeling, while the rooms always feel as if they contain some hidden evil despite being well-lit. The estate's interior is much livelier, filled with all manner of eccentric patrons who seem happy to accommodate him in every way—except by letting him have a consistent and good night's rest. Once he

wakes up and tries to leave, he quickly realizes he can't escape the house and begrudgingly has to take various odd jobs (such as working in the estate's kitchen as a line cook). When he notices that the house is beginning to shrink, he attempts to warn the other residents, but his cries are ignored. People begin to refer to him as "the Liberator." To say more about the plot would spoil some of the goopy and clever twists this film takes, but just as the house itself feels like a living being, the fun of watching Mr. K is seeing the ways form and theme work in tandem. Schwab's camera is facetious; for instance, when K explains that the house is shrinking, the scene is framed in a wide shot that emphasizes its vastness—is K delirious from his travels, or is he an introspective whistleblower trying to save everyone inside? Glover's performance anchors the film amid its swerves, a consistent force we can always look to, even as the rest of the film attempts to distract viewers through visual sleight of hand.

TEXT: MERGAN  
PHOTO: KRIS DE WITTE





# Mr. K

A  
FILM BY  
TALLULAH

STARRING

**CRISPIN GLOVER**

A LEMMING FILM, A PRIVATE VIEW & THE FILM KITCHEN PRODUCTION  
IN CO-PRODUCTION WITH TAKE 1, AVROTROS & AURORA STUDIOS

COMPOSER STIJN COLE COSTUME DESIGN CHARLOTTE WILLEMS HAIR & MAKE-UP DESIGNER KAAATJE VAN DAMME EDITOR MAARTEN JANSSENS  
SOUND DESIGN NILS VIKEN & BROR KRISTIANSEN PRODUCTION DESIGN MAARTEN PIERSMA & MANOLITO GLAS DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY  
FRANK GRIEBE CASTING SHARON HOWARD FIELD, SAIDA VAN DER REIJDE & ANN WILLEMS FIRST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR MARCUS HIMBERT  
SOUND RECORDISTS DIRK BOMBAY & MIGUEL DE OLIVEIRA & SILVA LINE PRODUCERS GRIETJE LAMMERTYN & CAROLINE BRANDERS EXECUTIVE  
PRODUCERS ELS VANDEVORST, FRANK KLEIN, MARTIN KOOLHOVEN, TINE KLINT, MARTIEN UYTENDAELE, DIRK DE LILLE, OLIVIER MORTAGNE,  
EDGAR DAARNOUWER, JEAN-CLAUDE VAN RIJCKEGHEM, NIKI LESKINEN, ROOSA TOIVONEN & ARI TOLPPANEN CO-PRODUCERS TURID  
ØRSVEEN, KATJA HARTERINK & MIEKE DE BRUIJN INTERNATIONAL SALES BY LEVELK PRODUCERS JAN VAN DER ZANDEN, INEKE KANTERS  
PRODUCED BY ERIK GLIJNIS, LEONTINE PETIT, DRIES PHLYPO & JUDY TOSSELL WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY TALLULAH H. SCHWAB

FEATURING SUNNYI MELLES, BJØRN SUNDQUIST, FIONNULA FLANAGAN, DEARBHLA MOLLOY  
JAN GUNNAR RØISE, BARBARA SARAFIAN, ESMÉE VAN KAMPEN, SAM LOUWYCK, FABIAN JANSSEN

lemming  
film

private  
view

The Film Kitchen

TAKE1

FFF

Paradeisio  
Film

LevelK

PARADISO FILMS

N. FILM  
FUNDUS

N. FILM  
INCENTIVE

European  
Union







# 10 QUESTIONS

## Tori Noquez

### 1) Most memorable magic performance.

My very first time working The Close-Up Gallery at The Magic Castle. It was such a dream come true, and I've been super lucky to be able to perform there a couple of times a year since. Fun fact: it was my first paid gig ever!

### 2) What is one of your hobbies?

I love running! It's a great way to get to know a city (as long as it isn't too cold!)

### 3) Favorite city?

Los Angeles

### 4) We can wake you up in the middle of the night for...

Chat about perfect faros or Si Stebbins.

### 5) One thing you cannot live without when performing a magic show.

Deck of cards ;) I don't think I've done a single show that didn't include at least one card trick. And the right pair of high heels makes for a big confidence boost!

### 6) Who inspired you as a magician?

Luis Solorzano, he was an incredible coin magician and the first close up magician I ever saw live (the first time I visited The Castle when I was 22). His show was the reason I decided I wanted to start learning magic, I went home and signed up to take classes at The Castle that same night. Over the years he became my mentor and a very dear friend. RIP, my friend.

### 7) What trick are you working on at the moment?

This month I finally put together an ambitious card routine to teach to my students. For some reason it's one that I had never performed, but I

may work it into my act now that I have a full routine with some flight time.

### 8) Best magic act you have seen?

So many amazing ones! It's hard to choose just one favorite, but over the last year or two, I think my favorites have been Shawn Farquhar's Hidden Wonders in Vancouver, Shin Lim's Limitless in Las Vegas, and Joan Dukore in The Palace of Mystery at The Magic Castle. I remember really enjoying Asi Wind's Close-Up act at The Castle years ago (where he did the entire show with just a deck of blank cards that had all been signed by audience members, that was so creative). And back in 2017 I got to see Derek Delgaudio's In and of Itself in New York City. Honestly, it's impossible for me to name just one best magic act, I'm so lucky that I get to see so many incredible performers!

### 9) Any card at any number or Magic Square?

I love ACAAN (and have some super fun Si Stebbins and faro versions in my lecture notes). I never perform The Magic Square, but if you want to learn one that's easy to do, check me out on Penguin! Click [Here](#)

### 10. One piece of advice you give somebody when constructing a magic act for Fool Us.

Lead with why you're interesting! Everyone on the show has great magic to share, but you should figure out something that makes you unique (especially within the magic world). When I emailed my trick to them, the subject line was "Female Mathematician and Magic Castle Magician". They weren't interested in the trick I sent (since it was a Zoom trick, and by 2021 they were bringing American acts to perform in person), but asked me to send them something else that could be done in person. It's TV, and they want to see variety in the types of people they have on the show.

FRITZ WITH A Z.





## REVIEW AMS CLOSE-UP SHOW WITH TORI NOQUEZ

On Wednesday, February 12th, I had the opportunity to attend the close-up magic show at Boom Chicago. Originally, this show is held at The Butcher Social Club, but due to renovations, it was temporarily moved back to Boom Chicago's Attic.

That night, three AMSociety members took the stage: Soumya, Evan, and Fritz, along with a special guest, Tori Noquez.

Tori, originally from California, is a math professor by day and a conjurer by night. She regularly performs at the renowned Magic Castle in Los Angeles and has even appeared on Fool Us. She has been a longtime friend of AMShow and I first had the pleasure of meeting her during a Zoom gathering in December 2021,

back when the pandemic had us all connecting virtually.

The show's lineup was wonderfully diverse. Soumya opened with his signature mix of clever magic and sharp sarcasm, performing an intriguing sponge ball routine and even making drinks appear.

Next, Tori amazed the audience with her sleight of hand, cutting directly to all four Aces before performing her unique presentation of the Ace Assembly. She also demonstrated her mind-reading skills, correctly identifying the thoughts of three participants who were merely thinking of a card.

After the intermission, Evan introduced a fascinating new act centered around the senses. He was able to take away someone's ability to smell and even read a participant's mind—an effect so astonishing that he couldn't stop mentioning it!

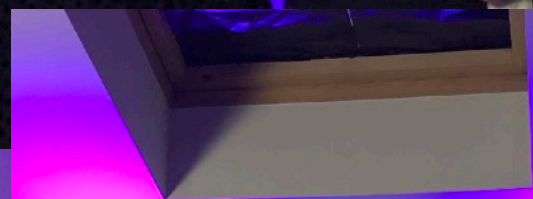
Finally, Fritz brought the evening to a hilarious and magical close. He performed his signature "bills across" routine and transformed a participant into a magician, allowing them to create a real miracle. As the grand finale, Fritz identified everyone's chosen card—yes, everyone's—while remembering each of their names.

After the show, we had the chance to chat with Tori about her life and career in magic—an inspiring conversation to end an unforgettable evening!

I had a lovely evening, and the audience certainly did!

STEFANO ROSA









# Out of sight out of my **mind**

## Go back to the basics



Magicians often come to me for advice. One question that shows up quite often is:

**“What advice would you give to a beginner magician?”**

The answer I have for this isn't just for beginner magicians; it's advice I'd give to any magician, no matter their level:

**“Go and study the basics.”**

But Rico, I already studied the basics; I'm proficient at them.

No, probably you're not. Let me explain why. We often think we are proficient at the basics when we're not. We also often make the mistake of thinking the basics are just for beginners—something to focus on when starting out—and once we can do them reasonably well, we move on to more advanced moves and routines.

The truth is that in any craft or art, the people who master the basics are the ones who progress the most.

I remember studying martial arts for 10 years. At the beginning of every training session, everyone—regardless of their rank—would spend the first 30 minutes practicing the moves we learned during the first year of training. It didn't matter if you were a black belt or a white belt; everyone worked on the same foundational moves.

This is because martial artists understand that the basics are the building blocks of the entire art. Whenever we had competitions, the person who would win was usually the one with the strongest foundations—not the person with the fanciest or flashiest moves. The same is true for magic: the magician with the strongest foundations is usually the better magician.

But why do I have to go back if I already know how to do the basics well?

Just like in martial arts, where we practiced foundational moves every week, you want to keep your basics sharp. What's even more important is that you likely learned these foundational moves while having a limited understanding of magic as a whole. You didn't have the proper framework to see how all the elements flow together.

Going back to the foundations as an advanced magician allows you to notice things you missed before. Developing strong foundations as a beginner makes everything else in the art easier and more efficient to learn.

The truth is that, to do good magic, you don't need much. You only need a few basic moves executed superbly. If you can perform a perfect:

- **False shuffle**
- **Invisible control (such as a pass)**
- **Top change**
- **Double lift**
- **Palm**

...then you can perform nearly every effect in card magic at a level that will fool both lay audiences and magicians.

Focus on:

- **Learning break management.**
- **Achieving naturalness in your controls.**
- **Mastering moves so thoroughly that you no longer have to look at your hands.**
- **Removing all tension from your technique, until you're barely aware of performing the moves.**

Work more on your basics, and you will improve as a magician.

**RICO WEELAND**





## HAPPY YEAR OF THE SNAKE!

The snake is an animal that has always been closely linked to the magical arts. It is no coincidence that two of the most famous "magic wands" are the Caduceus and the rod of Asclepius.



The Caduceus has two serpents entwined around a staff, with two outspread wings at the top and was originally the symbol of the Greek messenger god, Hermes, known as Mercury to the Romans, who from the beginning was a deity with shamanic attributes related to divination, magic and initiation.

The Rod of Asclepius (Latin spelling) has a single serpent entwined with a rough, wingless branch. Asclepius, son of Apollo, was the Roman god of healing, medicine and

magic. He is usually depicted with a walking stick entwined with a single serpent. In modern times, it is the predominant symbol for medicine and healthcare, although it is sometimes confused with the similar Caduceus.

This is an excellent prelude to begin this year which will see the EMHC take place, precisely, under the sign of the serpent !

And, speaking about good news, we are pleased to announce that a new, unique, conference has been added to the program. Fergus Roy will exclusively preview his latest research into the legendary figure of George Davenport, also known as "Gilly", the legendary head of Davenport magic, whose contribution to the Davenports' dominance of the 20th century world of magic has never been fully discussed or appreciated. All details are already added in the web page of the Conference.



Another good reason to register, and if you haven't already, you can do so by click on the picture below :







## *International Club Night*

Hello Everybody!

We had an excellent International Club Night this past January, and a record number of Americans joined us and as well as a record number of local members. To everyone who logged in, thank you for the support.

There were two special guests and two performances. First, Jim Kleefeld joined us from Ohio to discuss his magic history and his love for book tests. He spent a few years accumulating the props needed to write 'The Book Test Book,' which overviews hundreds and hundreds of book tests - it has proved an invaluable resource in my library. It is available for local members to request in our 'Society Library.'

I missed asking him one last question...which is his favourite book test? Jim wrote back his answer after the meeting:

"Favorite book test? Out of thousands of ideas and products? That's tough.

I am very proud of Salem because of its look, method, and ease of use. I am also proud of Mysterious Affair because it is easy and different and does not ask someone to focus on a single specific word.

I guess, though, that my favorite book test that I did not produce would be Illumination by Luke Jermay. I like the compound word premise with two drawing reveals and the premise where you evoke a sound instead of a word." Illumination is a book test that I purchased immediately upon hearing about it, and it is quite a unique one. If you'd like to see Luke perform it, you can visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHU6aThRYBI>

If you'd like to read more about Jim, including his incredible 'Salem' book test, which he mentions, then you can do all of this on his website: <https://www.jimkleefeld.com>

Next, Loshayden demonstrated two effects - an impossible Okito Box where one coin is inserted into the side of another one. This was mind-bending.

He also showed the one from last month themed to the tail end of the Chinese Year of the Dragon, which will have wrapped up by the time you read this. I want to thank Loshayden for sharing his creations over the last few months.

Ian Fenn then played a recording of a book test performed by the British performing duo The Piddingtons from the 1950s. In addition to being impressive, it reminded us all of a time when we would gather and have widely universal experiences as a society. Now, with podcasts and streaming apps ruling our ears and eyes, we do share experiences, but not at the same time and not nearly as universally. This is one of the reasons I have loved getting together with you every month - we gathered to share ideas, media and our passions in real time.

This edition of the 'International Club Nights' will be our last for the moment, and again, I wish a big thank you to everyone who visited with us over the last months. For those who joined us from beyond Amsterdam, we would love to extend a warm invitation to join the Society! You can find the membership form right on our website - and feel free to send me an email if you need a sponsor: [evan@evankastor.com](mailto:evan@evankastor.com) We will continue with these online meetings as our international crew grows and on special occasions.

Until then, I am looking forward to producing an interview series with performers who cannot join us in person, as it was a pleasure interviewing our guests over the past months. We will ask the members to submit any questions and invite them to the interview when possible. They will then be uploaded to the 'Buzz Talks' section of the site and be forever available to all members. More details will be written about here in The Buzz, so keep an eye here to see into the future!



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# AGENDA

March 1-2 - [NEMCON](#) (New England Magicians' Conference)

March 4 [Amsterdam Magic Show](#), Boom  
Chicago Amsterdam

March 7-9 - [Winter Carnival of Magic](#) in  
Pigeon Forge, Tennessee USA

March 8 | [Curated Mysteries](#) - Rico  
Weeland, Mascini Amsterdam

March 10 | [AMSociety Meeting](#), Mascini  
Amsterdam

March 10-12 - [Mystify Magic Festival](#) in  
Las Vegas, NV

March 13 - 16 [Magic Gathering 'Golden Cat'](#)  
Gabrovo, Bulgaria

March 15-17 - [Poe's Magic Conference](#) in  
Baltimore, MD -

March 14 & 15 - [Magic Capital Close-Up Convention](#)  
in Colon, Michigan.

April 1 [Amsterdam Magic Show](#), Boom  
Chicago Amsterdam

April 3-5 - [The Gateway Close-Up Gathering](#)  
in Collinsville, Illinois (near St. Louis, MO) USA

April 4 - 6 - [Portland Magic Jam](#) in  
Portland, Oregon USA

April 6 [Historie Van De Magie](#) in the  
House of Mysteries, Ghent Belgium

April 10-12 - [WonderBash](#) in Grand  
Rapids, Michigan. USU

April 14 [AMSociety Meeting](#), Mascini  
Amsterdam

April 16 - [Double the Magic](#),  
Mascini, Amsterdam

April 23-26 - [Obie's 4F Invitation Only Convention](#)  
(Fechter's Finger Flicking Frolic) in Buffalo, New York, USA







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