

The Servante

Official Newsletter of the Bruce Chadwick SAM Assembly 138 Alliance of Ilusionists

Volume 2023 - Number 4 - April 2023 Next Monthly Assembly Meeting - Thursday April 20, 2023 - 7:00 pm Illusion Warehouse, 3917 McCart Ave, Fort Worth, Texas Three blocks north of Seminary Drive/Across from the Public School

ROUTINING AND CLUB PERFORMER PERFORMANCES



Last month's March Monthly Assembly Meeting of SAM Assembly 138 Alliance of Illusionists and Executive Committee meeting had to be canceled due to hail and thunderstorms in the Tarrant County area. Therefore the April meeting will repeat the agenda that was scheduled for the March meeting.

The April meeting is slated to be filled with performances by Hare Evison, William "Wee-bo" Beaty, and others. In addition, Bruce Chadwick will lead the main core

activity with a presentation on "Routining and the Art of Magic." The meeting will be held on Thursday April 20, 2023 at 7:00 pm, the Illusion Warehouse, 3917 McCart Ave, Fort Worth. The meeting will be a lot of fun! Don't miss it! The Executive Committee will meet before the meeting at 6:00 pm. All elected officers should be in attendance, and any other dues-paid-up member of the club may attend as well. Visitors may not attend Executive Committee meetings.







I know our club has a good spectrum when it comes to the age of our members. So for some of you this might bring back memories, and others may be surprised by how much

things have changed since the 1970's when most major cities had a magic shop. Or sometimes, if you were lucky, even two! My first couple of years in magic I ordered my magic through a mail order catalog company. When I received my first Adam's Magic set for Christmas, with the instructions was a list of different magic shops that would send a free magic catalog.

As a kid I was not allowed to make long distance phone calls to request a catalog. That was expensive or so I was told, so I would have to snail mail my catalog requests and wait. I'm sure many of you can remember going to the mailbox every day in anticipation of the catalog being delivered. I can remember how I reacted when it finally arrived. I would take it up to my room, thumb through it first to see if anything really jumped out at me, and then read every description of every product on every page. They must have used professional writers because they could make every trick sound like a miracle!

I would calculate how much money I saved from my lawn mowing jobs. That was back when people hired the neighborhood kids to mow their lawn. I would decide what tricks I was going to order first. I would fill out the order form, which was always on the last page of the catalog, and get my parents to write a check and mail off my order. I would wait for what seemed like weeks for my tricks to arrive so I could start performing miracles.

Then the package would finally arrive! I would grab it, run to the downstairs bathroom (it was where I practiced as it had a huge mirror in it), take it out of the package and say, "What the heck is this?" I wasn't always disappointed with my mail order magic, but I will have to say I was most of the time!

Then in the mid 1970's, the town of Rockford got its first magic shop and my magic purchasing drastically changed. No more mail order! I could now go somewhere and see tricks performed, see the quality and make better decisions on the tricks I bought. Also, after I purchased the trick, Richard Gough, magician and owner of the shop, would teach me how to do it. And if I ever had a challenge getting it right, I just had to go back to the shop and he would work with me. Those were the days!

That all changed in the early 1990's when Magic Manor closed its doors. As many of us old timers know, the closing of magic shops has become a real trend and today finding a magic shop in most cities today is quite rare. And for the most part the proprietors that still have magic shops are not open not because they're getting rich, but because they love the art of magic. Our club is so fortunate to be able to hold our monthly meetings in one of very few existing brick and mortar magic shops.

We all know of other "online" magic stores where we can get tricks, but there is nothing like the experience of being in an actual magic shop with a demonstrator behind the counter. Bruce in our case, shows you one-on-one tricks to help you find something that fits your magic style. Not sure how to do it, just ask! Learn the trick, practice it, and get comfortable. But if you would like to be critiqued before performing it for others, just stop by during business hours. Try getting that kind of service from an "online store."

You hear people all the time talking about the importance of buying from local businesses and I believe that goes for our magic purchases as well. Even when I see something advertised in a publication or receive an email with a video of the latest and greatest effect, I always call Bruce first to see what he thinks of it, and sometime see if he can get one for me. He knows my skill set and will ask me how comfortable I am with the sleight or sleights used in performing the trick. He has even sent me links to help me learn sleights. It's the personal attention you get when you buy at the local magic shop! (This ad paid for by the Illusion Warehouse – just kidding)

In a future column I plan to cover local magic, live performances by local magicians, as well as other magic happenings throughout the DFW area. We are very fortunate to live in an area where it's easy to get your magic "fix" when needed! Until next time, Bernie



#2 - HOW TO GET BOOKED AT MAGIC CONVENTIONS AND MAGIC VENUES (MCMVs)

Recently I had the honor of serving as the President of the Texas Association of Magicians. My primary duty was to organize the TAOM convention which happens every year in a different Texas city. As the convention approached, I was contacted by potential acts.

Getting booked for a magic convention or a magic venue (MCMV) need not be a mysterious process. Allow me to shed some light on the MCMV markets.

Working MCMVs come with perks. You get to attend the magic convention or venue, and you also get to network with other bookers who may also be there. BUT BE

WARNED: Despite how prestigious it can look to appear at an MCMV, these gigs don't usually pay much. If you're a paid professional, then know that MCMVs should be considered as supplemental gigs only. Even your most famous performance venues tend to not pay that much money. You cannot make a magic career solely out of doing MCMVs. If you're still interested in these gigs, read on.

(1) MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL AND KNOWN TO THE RIGHT PEOPLE This is the hardest step in getting booked at MCMVs. MCMVs are looking for sure-fire talent that they can hire at a reasonable price that will encourage more paying customers (convention registrants and venue customers). If you're an unknown act, regardless of how good you are, you're less likely to get booked at an MCMV. You have to make yourself KNOWN in the magic world.

Every MCMV has a single person you want to convince to hire you whether it's the Castle, the IBM convention or whatever. Who are these people? You'll have to research those individuals yourself. It wouldn't be professional

for me to list any names here. These bookers are real-life human beings; many of which do magic for pay, just like yourself. Once you assemble your list of potential bookers...

ARTIST OF THE IMPOSSIBLE

(2) BE USEFUL. Help these producers bring in more customers or registrants and they will probably book you. You need to be known in the magic community a

little bit before pitching yourself to these bookers. The best way to make yourself known to these people is to network with your local magic clubs, in your local magic shop, and enter as many magic contests as you can.

Make yourself USEFUL and known in the art of magic. If bookers know that you're already involved in advancing the art of magic, then they are more likely to book you. Do you volunteer your time at your local magic club? Have you served as an officer of a magic organization? Showing MCMV bookers that you care about the growth of the art of magic beyond your own paycheck and fame is a MUST.

(3) HAVE AN AMAZING PRODUCT for the MCMV to use. Have a great act that's original and fun. If your act sucks, don't expect to be booked. Make sure that other people think your act is good before approaching a booker. Again, did I mention magic contests?

How much should you charge? Obviously, you want to get paid for your work; but the harsh reality is that when you go off and work an MCMV, you could have just as easily stayed home and worked a couple of local family and made just as much money. Magicians who reach out to me are often shocked when I tell them that I'm USUALLY looking for an act in the \$500-\$1200 range. Even if I offer to offset some travel expenses, this is often too little money for some acts to travel and work my events. Again, I stress that you can't get rich on MCMVs.

There is another way to make money at magic conventions and to be useful though: offer to do a FREE lecture. Make the lecture on TRICKS and NOT solely on theory. Consider not charging money for your lecture. Instead let

it be a freebie to add on to your performance package and then sell lecture notes and gadgets after your lecture to make extra money.

GOOD Proposal to a Booker:

"Hi. I'm Petrie, an award-winning act from Toronto. I can offer you a 20-minute stage magic presentation for an evening show as well as an appearance in your professional close-up magic show for \$750 USD if you'll also give

me the option of doing a magic lecture on original TRICKS. I also ask that you help me offset my travel costs a little.

BAD Proposal to a Booker:

"Hi, I'm Lewis. I'm a celebrity magician from Chicago and I can offer you a 20-minute stage act and my lecture on close-up magic theory for \$2000 USD plus expenses. You can add things to the package like a close-up magic performance, too for another \$500. When I arrive, I need a ride from the airport and a big hotel suite all to myself."



(4) VIDEO is your next major asset. Make videos of your BEST performance, in front of a live audience if possible, to show to bookers. Make sure the video is clear but not heavily edited.

(5) MAKE AN AUTHENTIC CONNECTION with bookers. MAIL a PRINTED promo guide to your booker. On your printed material include a description of your act, your contact info, a QR code taking the booker to a video of your act. Include a handwritten letter introducing yourself.

(6) I divide MCMVs up into the following categories: Private Magic Conventions (PMCs), Organization-Sanctioned Magic Conventions (OSMCs) and Magic Venues (MVs). Each of these gigs book a little differently. Contact me if you want to know the process for getting into particular types of gigs.

(7) IT'S A MARATHON, NOT A SPRINT- MCMV gigs book VERY far in advance, sometimes as far as 2-3 years out. If you want to appear at a convention, approach them at least a year out to be considered. Also, it will take multiple brushes of contact with these bookers in order to maintain a lasting impression. Be patient, don't be pesky. Follow up every 2-3 weeks at most until you get a contract or they turn you down for the present.

(8) DON'T BE RUDE, a drama queen or unpleasant in any capacity. ANYTIME a performer comes to me with a prideful attitude, I place their promo material in the trash. While magicians are hams by nature, you can promote yourself without gossiping or inciting drama. Never, under any circumstances be rude to a booker! Even if you feel wronged by being asked to lower your fee for their budget, don't act angry in retaliation! Also, don't forget that your reputation is ON THE LINE when you're backstage. BE KIND to EVERYONE backstage.

I would love to hear your thoughts. Reach out to me at bronsonchadwick@gmail.com or contact me at www.bronsonchadwick.com

PLANNING FOR A GOOD MAGIC SHOW

Bruce Chadwick MA, M.Div.

It has been said that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. In a similar way, a magic performance is only as strong as its weakest element. While elements that go into a magic show such as choice of material, routining, patter, and practice are very important, other more practical elements should also be considered.



For example, if the lighting is not good and an audience has trouble seeing a performer, the performer's overall performance will suffer. Likewise if an audience has trouble hearing a performer, they cannot fully appreciate his verbal eloquence. If an audience is uncomfortable due to heat, cold, or poor seating, they will not enjoy a magician's performance perhaps as much as they would otherwise.

Fortunately most "snags" such as these can often be eliminated with proper planning. Sometimes simple communication to party

planners and event hosts regarding these elements will assure a good performance.

Many touring theatrical shows and performing artists have "performance riders." This is usually a simple list of requirements that the performer either needs, requires, or otherwise wants for the performance. The list is then provided by theatre personnel and the producer of the show.



While some performers might require a bowl of fresh fruit or a chilled beverages in their dressing room, most magicians would do well to communicate more realistic considerations such as a good parking space and some type of moderate dressing room where one can change clothes.



The following document is presented with due diligence. It is a type of "rider" I have used when performing my banquet show. It gives the client information they need to best utilize my performance and gives them ideas to consider that they otherwise might completely overlook.

This document has taken me over 30 years to formulate. Still it is a work in progress and is constantly being revised. Sometimes I tweak it a bit to fit the venue and performance occasion. It is designed for larger audience sizes and larger performance venues. Obviously I do not use it when I go into someone's home for a family party.

Please feel free to use the following rider as it is, but it is probably best if you edit it to fit your specific needs. Ever how you might use it, I think you will agree that the elements presented herein are very important for good magic show.

PLANNING GUIDE FOR BRUCE CHADWICK'S COMEDY SLEIGHT-OF-HAND ILLUSION SHOW

ARRIVAL TIME AND SET-UP

Bruce usually arrives at a performance site to set his equipment at least one hour before guests arrive.

PERFORMANCE AREA

Since magic illusion is a visual art form, its effectiveness usually depends upon how easily the audience can see the performance. A stage or platform is therefore highly recommended, especially for audiences larger than 50 people.

If requested in advance, most performing venues have portable platforms that can be set up free of charge. All performing areas or platforms must be at least 12 feet deep x 16 feet wide. Larger areas are acceptable.

Stairs or steps should be placed in the front of the platform so that Bruce can bring volunteers onstage during his performance. If the stairs have handrails, stairs must be placed at the end(s) of the platform so that the handrails will not interfere with sight lines.

CHAIR ARRANGEMENTS

Be sure to seat the audience in rows of chairs as close to the stage or performing area as possible. A center aisle is not suggested. Where banquet tables are to be used, banquet tables must be positioned as close as possible to the stage or performance area.

Please make sure all chairs closest to the stage are filled. Laughter is contagious and seating audience members close together and close to the performing area usually makes for a good show. Front chairs are also great for dignitaries, VIPs, and so forth. Use assigned seating if needed. Do not seat any audience members to the far right or left of the stage where it will be hard to see the performance.

DANCE FLOORS

Do not place dance floors in front of the stage. A large empty area between the performer and his audience makes it difficult for Bruce to establish audience rapport.

Where a dance floor is necessary, consider positioning it at the back of the room or in another area of the room. If a dance floor is permanent, a good option is to have rows of chairs placed on the dance floor in front of the performing area. Upon conclusion of dinner, your emcee can ask guests seated at the tables in back of the room move to the dance floor chairs so that they can the show better. If there is to be a dance after Bruce's program, it only takes a few moments for catering staff to remove these chairs.

DO NOT ask audience members to move chairs to the dance floor themselves. Audiences are usually hesitant to do this and it is an awkward thing for them to do.

TABLE DECORATIONS

Avoid the use of helium balloons and tall table decorations that obstruct the audience's line of sight. This is very important.

SHARING THE STAGE

Bruce has no problem sharing his stage or performance area with other activities such as pre-show announcements, award ceremonies after his program, and so forth. However the 12 x 16 foot performing area must be completely clear at least ten minutes prior to the start of Bruce's performance so that equipment can be set. DO NOT introduce Bruce before his equipment is in place and he is ready to start his performance.

Be aware that Bruce uses a freestanding $8' \times 10'$ backdrop frame that cannot be easily moved. Also Bruce uses the area behind his backdrop to set-up and store equipment and roadshow cases for his performance.

Do not position video screens in the middle where Bruce's backdrop frame will obscure the screen. Place screens to the far right or left or the performing area or stage.

If a DJ or other equipment must be on the stage with Bruce's performance, do not position DJ equipment in the area where Bruce will perform. It is very difficult to move DJ equipment once it is set in place. Please have your DJ set to the side of Bruce's performance area. An alternate idea is to provide two entirely different stages, one for Bruce and one for the DJ and other activities.

LIGHTING

If the room has stage lights that can be aimed at the performing area, please have them focused onto the center stage area prior to Bruce's arrival.

Overhead lights (room illumination) should be on during Bruce's performance. Bruce's program is comedy, and laughter is catching if audience members can see each other. If lights have been dimmed for the mealtime to create ambiance as per a candlelight dinner for example, the lights should be raised back up prior to the start of Bruce's performance. If someone mistakenly dims the lights right before or after Bruce starts his performance, Bruce will stop his show until someone turns the lights back on. This will be awkward for Bruce and the audience.

Bruce may have with him a small 600-watt cabaret spotlight and may set the light in an appropriate area near the back of the audience. This light can be raised up to 12 feet with the light shooting down on the performing area. A spotlight operator is not needed. One electrical outlet at the back of the room is required.

SOUND

In the event that the performance venue has a good built-in sound system and someone available to monitor the sound levels, Bruce needs two XLR inputs at the back of his curtained backstage area. He will plug his music into one input and his wireless microphone into the other.

Bruce may provide his own microphone and sound system. One electrical outlet near the performing area or on each side of the stage is required. If your group would like to use Bruce's sound system, you must notify him in advance so that he can bring and set up a wired handheld microphone. Otherwise you must use your own sound system.

If your performance will be held at a restaurant or hotel that uses background music, this music must be turned off completely prior to the start of Bruce's performance.

SHOW START

If your program includes a banquet, **Bruce's program must start immediately after the meal**. Do not schedule any activity such as speeches, award presentations, and so forth before Bruce performs. Do these activities only after Bruce's performance has finished and he has left the stage.

INTRODUCTION

The introduction your emcee is requested to use to introduce Bruce may be downloaded in PDF format from his website at www.BruceChadwick.com. It is important that your emcee read the introduction with enthusiasm and eloquence. The introduction must be read exactly as it is printed. Do not add commentary to the introduction. Read properly, the introduction will result in a warm round of applause as Bruce enters the stage to start his program.

Please remember that Bruce requires ten minutes before his performance to set last minute props. It is very important to check with Bruce Chadwick before starting the introduction. Bruce will not start his performance before his equipment is in place.

NO DINING DURING THE PERFORMANCE

It is difficult for people to people to concentrate on a live performance while eating. Also people cannot applaud with a fork in their hand! Therefore Bruce does not perform while people are dining. Please make sure all food, including desert if served, is fully consumed before Bruce's performance. Waiter staff should not be collecting dishes during Bruce's performance. To do otherwise is distracting and very unprofessional.

RESTROOM BREAKS

For banquets, do not announce any type of formal restroom break between the finish of your meal and the start of Bruce's performance. Long restroom lines will delay the start of the performance. Also people re-entering a room and trying to find their seats after the entertainment has started is very distracting. At the last course is served, your emcee can make an announcement that the performance will begin immediately following dessert. If a restroom break is needed, that should be taken before dessert is finished.

VOLUNTEERS

Bruce welcomes your suggestions for individuals whom you think will be good volunteers during his show. However Bruce reserves the right to make final choices. He must choose audience volunteers who are reacting well to his show.

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Dienary: "Three Pets" by Bob Hummer, published circa 1953 by Frank Werner, Houston, Texas, USA., has a fascinating impromptu trick using a die called '*The Moon Die Mystery*'. Bob Hummer was an early pioneer of integrating binary processing within decks of cards, dice and such. I too, being a giant fan of binary based magic, explored his creation and came up with something relative but different. Similarly with Bob Hummer, I consider this one of my pets, however it would be silly for me to think I'm the 1st to realize this.

Effect: The magician cups his hand on the table, creating a little covey. The magician takes a die, reaches into the small hand hut, drops it to randomize its orientation, then adjusts the die, by feel, where the spectator can see 3 of its sides (top, front left, & front right). The magician rotates his hand-hut's opening where the spectator can see the die and is asked if they see their thought of number amongst those 3 visible sides. After their response, the process is repeated 2 or 3 times more. Without any peeking the magician looks into the spectator's eyes and reveals their thought of number!

The Magician is looking away the entire time—No peeks or glimpses—No feeling dots—Beyond simple math

First, I'll explain the binary based secret: 1. Grab a normal die and place it on the table as shown in illustration 'A' (all images are from your perspective). The spectator sees the '1', '3', & '5'. They respond if they see their number.

2. Place the your right thumb against the '4' and middle finger on '3'. Using the index and/or ring finger, rotate the die 180°, the thumb and middle being axis points, the '5' ending on the bottom. The situation will now be as in illustration 'B'. Once again they respond if they see their number (2, 3 or 6).

3. A similar and final process is done, the thumb this time going against the '1', middle finger on the '6' and the die rotated 180° where the '2' is now on the bottom. The ending situation will be as in illustration 'C'. The question is asked one final time if they see their value (5, 4 or 6).

You now know what number they're thinking. Depending on their answers each of the 3 times, the following binary calculation is mentally carried out:

1st (illustration A) - If "YES" think to yourself '1' (one), if "NO" think to yourself '0' (zero)

2nd (illustration B) - If "YES" think to yourself '2' (two), if "NO" think to yourself '0' (zero)

3rd (illustration C) - If "YES" think to yourself '4' (four), if "NO" think to yourself '0' (zero)

Add your mentally noted values together and the sum is their number!

As if that's not cool enough get this: It's impossible for 3 'yes' or 3 'no' to occur, therefore, if the first 2 responses are identical (both 'YES' or both 'NO'), 2 yeses mean they're thinking of number '3'. If the first 2 responses are 'No', they're thinking of number '4'! Since 3 & 4 are commonly chosen values you've got a strong 1 out of 3 chance you'll know what number they're thinking after only 2 die adjustments! As if adding binary together isn't already easy enough, consider "Yes" is spelled with an odd number of letters and '3' is an odd number. Likewise "No" is spelled with an even number of letters and '4' is an even number. This little mnemonic eliminates math all together if '3' or '4' has been selected.







(Dienary continued) - O.K., now you know how the binary sorting within a die is handled (kudos professor Hummer), let's move on to the presentation(s). Bob Hummer presented his, and as taught in '3 Pets', where no knowledge of the die's initial orientation is needed, its only slightly weak point being that after the 3 sequences, you know where on the die their number is but you don't know what number they chose. The chosen number is revealed to be on top when the hand is removed by revolving the die where that side is uppermost. In my version you know both location and identity, the weak point being the starting orientation must be a certain way. I do feel however it's a small price to pay because the ending can be more powerful, especially with the choices of '3' or '4'. Imagine, after just 2 times you already know what number they chose, that's pretty awesome, plus if they're under the impression you never knew the die's orientation beneath the hand they'll probably be quite stunned.

When I first came up with this variation, I way overthought the method on how to get the die into the necessary starting orientation. I later considered these facts:

A. The cupped hand on the table only creates only a small tent for the die to be hidden inside, therefore it's not out of place for the magician to reach into the hand and drop the die from a half-inch or so, the audible sound of the die bouncing creating ample proof in their mind of a genuine random happening. Actually, the fingers keep control of it so it doesn't rotate by cradling its sides and just barely dropping it.

B. If the table surface is covered or soft, no sound is expected, so a simple pantomime of it being bounced will work perfectly. When the hand is raised and they see different values, that's evidence enough in their minds of randomness.

C. It's not hard to get the die into the starting orientation. After all there's only 6 sides and as long as the '5' is uppermost a simple rotation where the '6' & '4' are towards you is easy to accomplish.

D. In this routine the magician must orient the die where 2 of its top diagonal corners are pointing towards the spectator in order for them to see 3 sides. This provides a logical excuse for spending a couple seconds or so inside the hand, making adjustments, no fast sleights or skills are necessary.

Presentation: I highly recommend you get accustomed to the number arrangement on a die. Since opposite sides always total seven (7), a quick glimpse of just 2 or 3 number locations provide all the information you need.

- 1. Show the die and bounce it on the table by raising it an inch or so off and releasing it, the die dropping straight down and spinning around mostly in place. If you drop it with a corner pointing down it will really spin. You want to acclimate their minds on how such a small drop randomizes the die.
- 2. Cup your hand and place it palm down on the table, creating a small covering. With the other hand pick up the die, noting the location of the '5', move the die and the finger tips holding it into the opening where it's obscured from view and do a controlled drop. You'll have to experiment some with your personal handling, depending on your hand shape and size. Remember, just the slightest sound is all that's necessary. Knowing where the 5 is, quickly adjust it into the starting orientation (image A on previous page). While doing this, explain to the spectator you're adjusting it where 3 sides are visible to them. Now ask them to think a number from 1 to 6.
- 3. Use the method explained on the previous page to discover what number they're thinking, each time reaching into the hand, control dropping the die and making the necessary adjustments (images B & C on previous page) as you pantomime adjusting it so 3 sides will be visible to them. You may prefer adjusting before false-randomizing, whatever works for you.
- 4. Reveal their number in your preferred manner and enjoy the baffled expression.

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DFW AREA MAGIC HAPPENINGS

FORT WORTH SAM ASSEMBLY 138 ALLIANCE OF ILLUSIONISTS

Meets on the third Thursday of each month, 7:00 pm at the Illusion Warehouse party room and magic shop located at 3917 McCart Avenue, Fort Worth, Texas 76110. Contact communications@allianceofillusionists.com or go to <u>http://sam138.com/alliance/</u> or Facebook at <u>https://www.facebook.com/groups/162025544420781/</u>



FORT WORTH MAGICIANS CLUB INC AND REN CLARK IBM RING 15

Meets on the first Thursday of each month, 7:00 pm. See https://

MID-CITIES MAGIC CIRCLE

Meets monthly. See the Mid-Cities Magic Circle Facebook group.

DALLAS MAGIC CLUB, SAM ASSEMBLY 13 AND IBM RING 174

See <u>www.DallasMagic.org</u> for meeting information.

IMPROV COMEDY CLUBS IN ADDISON AND ARLINGTON

Both comedy clubs periodically host weekend comedy magic shows. For more details go to either <u>www.ImprovArlington.com</u> or <u>www.ImprovAddison.com</u>.

MAGIC IN THE LIVING ROOM

Periodic magic shows every 1st Tuesday at 7:00 pm at The Line Public House, 940 E Beltline in Richardson. See <u>www.MagicLivingRoom.com</u> for more information.





DALLAS MAGIC CLUB