



Society of Memphis Magicians



International Brotherhood of Magicians Ring 16
May 2016 www.ring16.org

Presidential Ponderings

Bill Canaday - President

Fellow Ring 16 Members: Great meetings and attendance so far this year! Looking forward to seeing you at our meeting next week, and also next week, a visit from mentalist Mark Strivings for a lecture on Friday, May 6th, and workshop the next day. If you are not familiar with Mr. Strivings, he is one of the best mentalists to have visit us. He is very successful, and his work and routines are very commercial and for all skill levels. Alain Nu will also be here to see us in May. A very busy and exciting May for us. Hoping this finds you well, and see you next week.



April Business Meeting

John Sorrell

- * Mark Strivings - Friday May 6th - 7pm
Germantown Presbyterian Church \$20
- * Mark Strivings Seminar - Saturday May 7 1-4
Mike Speros' House - \$40
- * Alain Nu - May 19th - 7pm
- * PBS - An Honest Liar - James Randi
- * Visitors: JJ Dresvolid (age 12), Julian (age 9),
Jennifer, Sam, Doug Green
- * Jam Sessions - Every other Monday at
Germantown Presbyterian Church 6:30-9
- * Grayson Smith - Discussed Area Storytelling

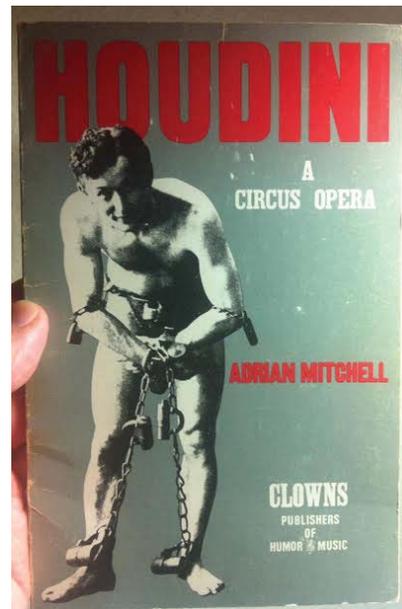


IBM Ring 16

May Meeting
Tuesday May 3rd - 7pm
Memphis Botanic Garden
Theme: Silk Magic / Box Magic

Houdini - A Circus Opera

Jeffrey Day



Was There an Opera Written About Houdini ?

MAGIC has long been a passion of mine since I was about eight years old. This was about the same time that I became interested in music. I'm not really talking about the music of 1968 such as The Beatles, The Who, or The Rolling Stones. However, it was more like music of Mozart, Wagner, Bach, and Verdi. As a young boy, I did chores to get money so I could buy records of classical music. Music and Magic have a parallel meaning for me, and I sometimes use them together in performances. Even though I have studied opera in college, I am by no means an expert in the field. There is so much to learn about this style of vocal music, as is a magician who never stops learning his craft.

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Was There an Opera Written About Houdini ? (continued from page 1)

This brings me to root of what I have to share. Did you know, that in 1974 there was an opera composed by Adrian Mitchell and Peter Schat entitled, “HOUDINI: A Circus Opera”? It is about the famous escape artist that we all know and love. I saw this online and I couldn’t believe that I have never heard of this one. I mean, I’m a musician AND a magician; how did this slip by me? I don’t think I have ever clicked BUY so fast!

The opera covers the life of Erich Weiss from birth all the way to his tragic death. As operas go, this isn’t the best piece of music ever put down on paper. It’s rather bizarre actually. One quirky thing about the production of this opera is that three different men portray Houdini during the course of the opera. One actor to play young Houdini, one to do all the singing and dance numbers, and one to do the escapes. I guess they couldn’t find just one person who had talent for all things. Oh, one of the actors who played Houdini was Hugh Jackman! He’s come a long way.

I’ll leave you with just a bit of one the better parts of this opera. This is taken directly from the libretto. The scene is Houdini saying goodbye to his mother, Cecelia, at her funeral.

Houdini stands by the coffin (and sings)

HOUDINI: Mother
 My dear little mother
 Poor little mama

 When I lay helpless in the womb
 You fed me through your
 bloodstream
 When I was a child
 You stilled my crying with your
 heartbeat

 You gave me light
 You gave me light
 With your wide smile

With you courageous little face
You gave me light

I brought you silver
A shower of silver
I brought you gold
A shower of gold

I bought a house for you –
Brownstone, four storeys
The finest a magician ever owned

You never asked for anything
Except for these –

(HOUDINI places a pair of
woolen slippers beside
the coffin)

Balloon Prom Dress

Daniel Herron - The Balloon Guy



Some of you will remember Daniel Herron from a balloon lecture he and Tom Vorjohan gave here several years ago. Most girls want their dresses to pop on prom night — but at one point during Henderson County High School’s prom Saturday, Emily Herron was hoping for just the opposite.

The 17-year-old surprised a large crowd of her peers and their parents as she carefully made her way to the dance floor of the annual senior waltz prior to prom arm-in-arm with her father, Daniel Herron, in a dress made entirely out of balloons.

April Open Magic

Kathy Kat - Photographer

