

INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE FOR MENTALISTS & MAGICIANS

VOODOO

THE MAIL ON NOVEMBER 2019

KILLER TRICKS
mind
MiMiC



How to build a
MNEMONICS
MEMORY
PALACE

The Forgotten Craft
of
Memorizing
With Total Recall

chan canasta

John Kent

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Hi everyone,

I'd just like to say a big thank you to everyone who has commented and the fact that this digital VOODOO magazine is still getting some fairly high visitor stats I'm incredibly thank you!

In the meantime, there are plenty of articles on this VOODOO magazine that you can read to hopefully improve or at least understand Mentalism in a little more detail! Again, a huge thank you to everyone!.

saji vijayan



—Saji Vijayan, on behalf of the team Voodoo
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MAGAZINE

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MEMORY PALACE

IMPROVING

YOUR

MEMORY

Have you ever walked into a room and forgotten why you walked into that room? Have you ever studied for an exam, and found that when it came to taking an exam you couldn't remember how on earth to answer that science question? These things happen to all of us at some point in our life, but how can we improve our memories so that whenever we need to, we can recall on information that we have learned and then stored?



Firstly, sleep is very important. Studies have shown that people who do not get enough good quality sleep suffer from bad memory, this is because research has shown that whilst we sleep, our brain organises the things we've learnt and places them into our long term memory which enables us to remember them the next day. However if you're getting bad quality, or a lack of sleep then you're less likely to remember things, because your brain hasn't been able to filter the information efficiently and some "data" is lost.

The most important part in improving your memory is to begin to pay attention to things, improving your own memory is very well linked with improving your observation. I've already discussed techniques on improving observation before which can be found half way down the page by [CLICKING HERE](#). By paying attention and making small notes of things inside your head, then you're more likely to remember something. If you sit there only half listening to what someone is saying, then you won't be taking in that information and you'll be less likely to remember what's been said.

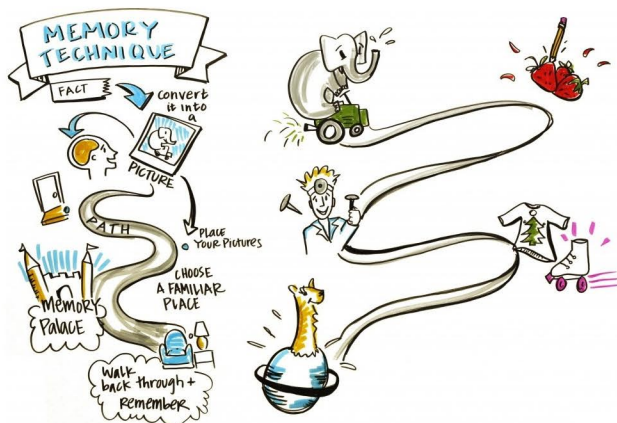
Improving observation and learning to pay attention is only part of memory improvement though. What if you need to remember a whole list of things for an exam, or maybe you'd like to go shopping without having to take a list with you and still be able to remember exactly what you need? In order to do this you'll need to create a memory palace.

What is a memory palace? well, putting it simply a memory palace is a place in your mind that you can walk around and see everything clearly, you can make it up although it's usually more effective if you use a place you know very well like the work place, college, home, your town etc..as long as you can clearly see everything in your mind, then building the memory palace should come quickly.

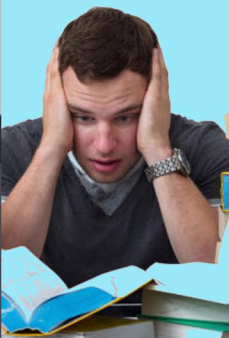
There are two ways to do this, however I'll only discuss one of those in this blog so that in my next blog I'll have something to talk about.

In this example we're going to be trying to remember the list below, you can try this with me and then in an hours time, see how many you're able to remember. I'll be using a short shopping list of 10 items for this example.

- Lettuce
- Apples
- Oranges
- Mince
- Pork
- Beef
- Pizza
- Lamb
- Biscuits
- Kit Kats



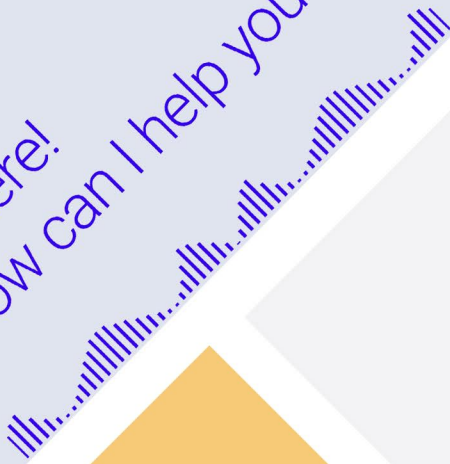
The items above will be the items that we'll be putting into our memory palace so that we can remember them later on, admittedly, this isn't the best of shopping lists. Now, for building the memory palace as I said above, you need to picture a place you know very well, for this example I'm going to use my college, however you can use anything you know clearly. What I'd do to remember the above items is to close my eyes.



GROW WIDER



Hi there!
How can I help you?



Five tips for better conversation.



- 1) Take a genuine interest in the person you are talking to.
- 2) Listen.
- 3) Put away the distractions.
- 4) Get to the point.
- 5) Be open minded

During conversation do you ever wonder whether someone really is as interesting as you think they are? When you're sitting there listening to someone talking about something they did the other night, or that they're interested in and you really couldn't care less what they did, I expect you'll add in the occasional nod and "yeah", but how can we really tell whether someone is genuinely interested in what we're talking about by observing their body language?

To do this, we have to look at three key things. The eyes, facial expressions and the way a person is standing/sitting. When someone is interested their pupils will dilate (grow wider) automatically, this is something that we have very little control over, although with some practice we can make our pupils grow wider, although that'll be discussed in another article during the next couple of weeks. So next time you're talking to someone look at their eyes although try not to stare, and see whether their pupils are dilated, if they're not, then it might be time to change the conversation.

A word of warning on this, our pupils dilate and contract when light conditions change, so if you're standing in a very brightly lit area, their pupils maybe contracted (small) to stop the amount of light getting into the eyes. Someone who is on medication may also have dilated or constricted eyes, which is why this should be used in conjunction with what's written below before deciding whether they're interested or not.

The next thing we'll move onto is facial expressions. Its fairly easy to see by looking at facial expressions to see whether someone is bored or not, and this can be a big clue to whether they're interested in what you're talking about. The three main things to look at here are;

Half Open Eyelids

Raised Eyebrows, a sign of trying to stay awake

Sometimes there is a slightly puckered mouth or side placement of the mouth.

So, they're the main facial expressions to look out for to see whether a person is growing bored. Again, this is just one of the signs and doesn't necessarily mean they're not interested, someone who has had a rough nights sleep may also show these expressions.

The third thing, is probably one of the most important along with Pupil Dilation and that's the body language side of things. It helps if you know the person well on this occasion because you should already know their baseline.(a baseline is how a person would normally act) When someone is interested in a conversation they will stand with both feet pointing towards you, this indicates that they're ready, and happy to interact with you.



If they're no longer interested in what you're saying, then they are likely to take more of a closed stance, they may cross their arms, and one of their feet may turn to point towards a door, or another area of the room. When someones foot points away, they're usually pointing in the direction that they'd like to walk in and when this happens, its usually best to change the conversation because it's no longer satisfying for them.



The picture shows what I mean by one foot pointing away, you'll have to excuse it's cartoonyness, it's the best picture that I could find which demonstrates what I mean perfectly.

I find that its best to look for all three of the things I have talked about above before deciding whether someone is interested or not, it may seem like a lot to do whilst in the middle of talking, however with a little practice it'll very quickly become second nature to you, this is a fantastic way to stay interesting when talking to friends and even people that you've just met, as soon as you can see that they're losing interested simply change the topic to something else, until you get a hit with something they'd enjoy talking about, if you're having no luck then simply ask questions about themselves. People love to talk about themselves, so you're very unlikely to go wrong by doing that.



MODΣ



P&I

As long as you are performing within the act, you are considered a professional. Therefore the subtlety of taking out the keys from the pocket, right after the load of a palmed card to create time misdirection from the actual sleight and the revelation is crap. Really! Why would a professional be so unprofessional to keep the keys in the pocket? The performer knew he was going to do this trick, ergo nothing should have been in the pocket to hinder this trick to begin with.

However: In Impromptu Mode this is a perfect subtlety. It shows that you are thinking on your toes, and that you are a better magician, than those who can only do their act and nothing outside of it.

So working in Professional Mode in the beginning, for a short while, then thanking the audience and acting, as if you end the show, followed by Impromptu Mode (which is still part of the show) is strong stuff man!



ONE OF THE ADVANTAGES WE CAN GET FROM OUR ABILITY TO TRICK MINDS IS TO MAKE DAILY LIVING EASIER.
HERE ARE SOME DAILY HACKS THAT WE CAN DO WITH MIND TRICKS:

SUFFERING FROM
LAST-SONG SYNDROME
OR "EAR WORM"?

ON WINNING
ROCK,
PAPER,
SCISSORS

2020 : AN ARRIVAL

MIND TRICKS FOR DAILY HACKS

When doing a high five, look at the other person's elbow so you won't miss it.

When trying to feed your child vegetables, he/she might refuse to eat them. Instead of directly asking him to eat his/her veggies, ask him/her if he/she want to have the vegetables in a pink plate or in a blue cup. He/she will like to pick up one color and eat the vegetables in it.

When you try to find something, look from right to left instead of the usual left to right. You will easily notice it because your mind is not used to looking this way.

When you want to tell a lie, incorporate a personal and embarrassing story in it. The lie will work and the person you are lying to will believe it because he will remember the embarrassing thing but not your lie.

On winning rock, paper, scissors: Right before you count or interrupt the count, ask your opponent a personal question. This will catch them off guard. Then immediately continue with counting like nothing happened. Most of the time, your opponent will likely throw scissors as an automatic defense mechanism.

If you think that someone is staring at you, look at your watch. This person will likely look at his/her watch too. This way you can prove that he/she is really looking at you.

During a negotiation, remain silent. Your silence will make the other person feel uncomfortable and do anything to break this silence.

REHEARSAL

Suffering from last-song syndrome or "ear worm"? Think of that song again and finish it. It will go away. Why? Because the mind has a problem with something left unfinished. This is called the Zeigarnik effect. Finishing the song will help it go away from your mind.

To make the other person agree with you, nod your head while you speak to him. The person will more likely to agree with you.



LUCKIEST

THIS SIMPLE MIND-READING TRICK IS BEST PERFORMED WITH
A LARGE AUDIENCE,
BUT CAN ALSO BE DONE WITH SMALLER AUDIENCES.



4 HOURS.

107 DEGREES.

1 LIFE FORGOTTEN.

ALMOST.

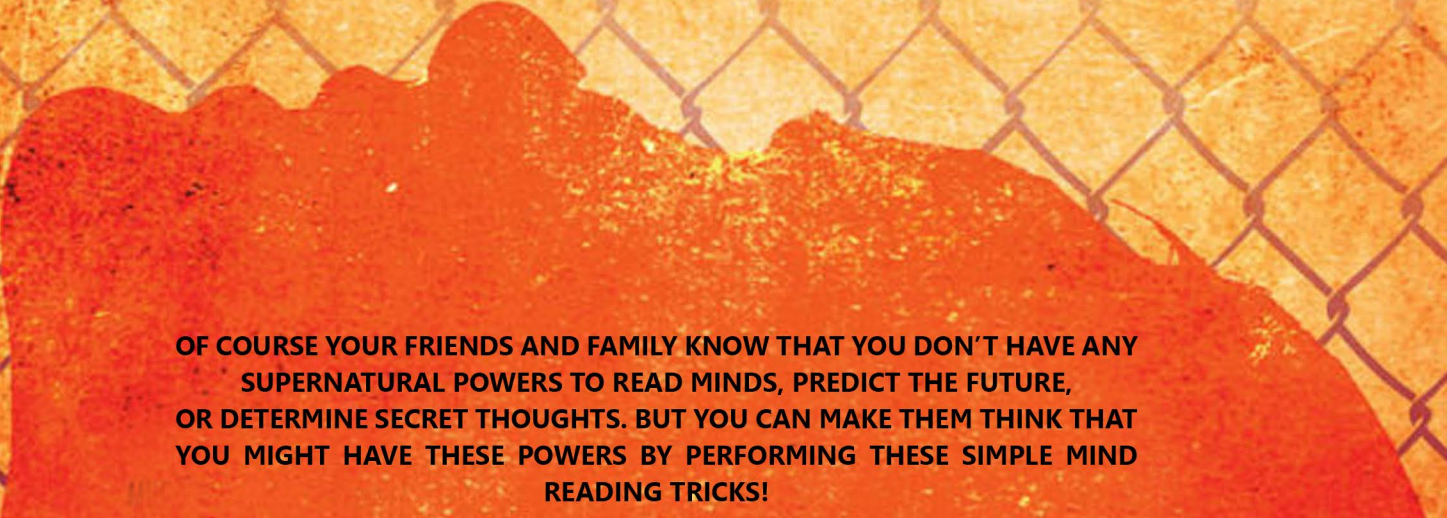
Ask for 10 volunteers to come up in front. Ask each one of them to tell their name. Write the name of the first person on one card, the second person on another card, the third person on another card, and so on.

Do this until you reach the tenth person.

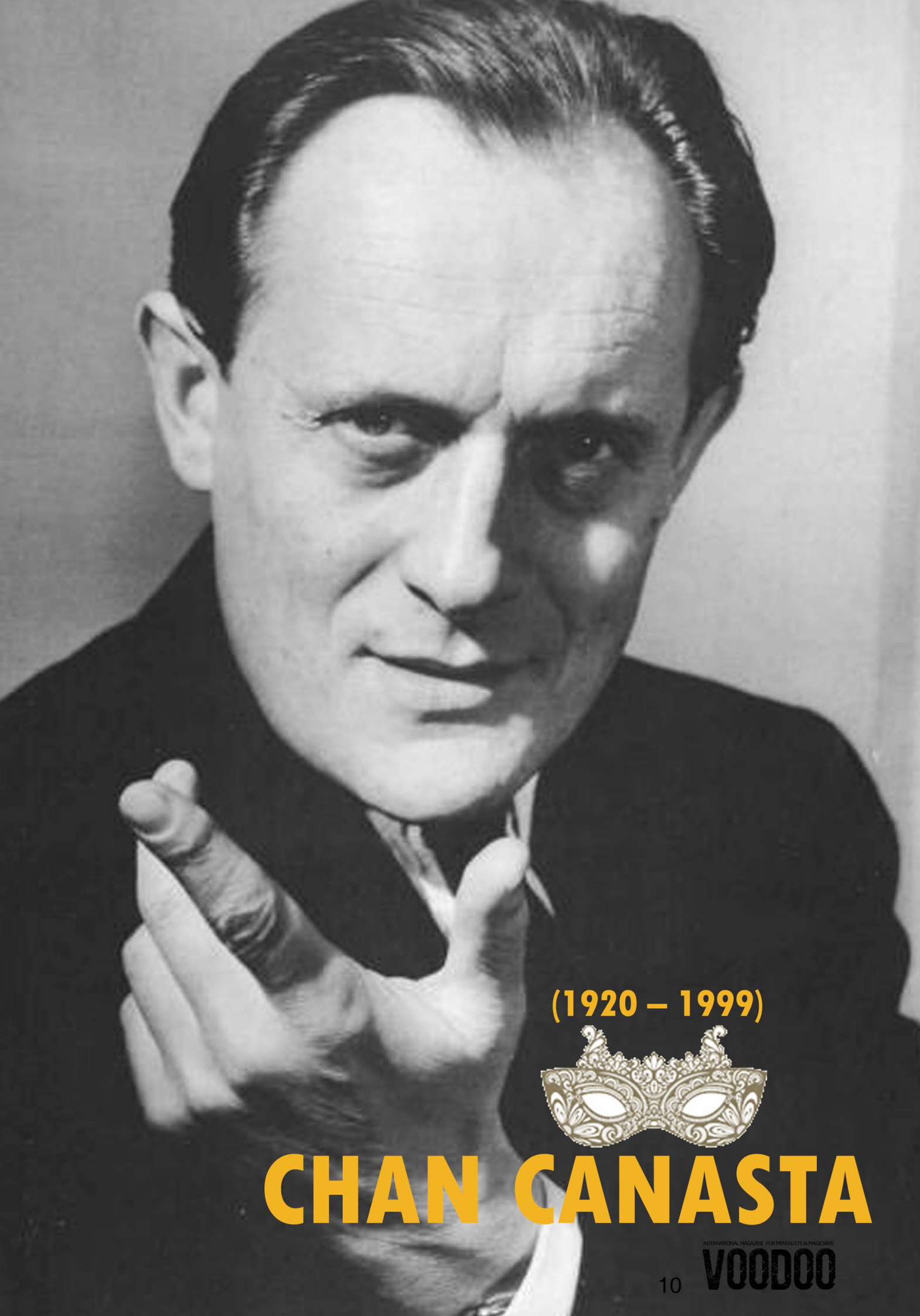
However, write down only the same name on each card, pretending that you are writing each person's name on the cards. It is important to make sure that no one is near you and sees what you are writing on each card.

When you finish writing, put all the card inside a hat. Announce that you will predict who the luckiest person is. Make the prediction relevant to the even. If it's a wedding party, announce that you will predict who is getting married next, or if it's a birthday party, make the birthday celebrant as the luckiest person.

Write down your prediction on a board or slate. Show it to the audience. Then, draw the cards and pick up one. Ask someone to read the name of the card aloud. Now, watch your audience become amazed. Make sure that you immediately put away the remaining cards so that no one will know how you did the mind-reading trick.



OF COURSE YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY KNOW THAT YOU DON'T HAVE ANY SUPERNATURAL POWERS TO READ MINDS, PREDICT THE FUTURE, OR DETERMINE SECRET THOUGHTS. BUT YOU CAN MAKE THEM THINK THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE THESE POWERS BY PERFORMING THESE SIMPLE MIND READING TRICKS!



(1920 – 1999)



CHAN CANASTA

INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE FOR MENTALISTS & MAGICIANS



Chan Canasta is one of the most influential mind readers we have seen. His relaxed personality and ability to strike a strong rapport with, and utterly amaze his audiences, led him to huge success. He called himself a psycho-magician, a perceptionist and a mentalist, but never a conjurer or magician. He has been referred to as The Amazing Canasta and A Remarkable Man – just two accolades for a performer whose brand of mind-reading has been described by magicians and lay people alike as intelligent, entertaining and baffling. Whilst he would use cards and books extensively, these were merely tools that led to what he called psychomagical experiments. Canasta had a great way of engaging and mesmerizing audiences who would simply gasp with astonishment at his feats. His popularity grew throughout the fifties by virtue of his extensive appearances on the only television channel of the time and we are fortunate to have some excellent footage of Canasta's live performances. He was, at the time, simply sensational.

Chan Canasta was born Chananel Mifelew in Kraków, Poland on January 9, 1920. Whilst his early appearances went under the name of Chan Mifelew, he later took his name from a card game and started working as Chan Canasta. His father was a Polish-Jewish educator and most of his family perished in the Holocaust. As a 17 year old he attended Krakow University studying philosophy and the natural sciences for a year before leaving Poland for Jerusalem, where he studied psychology. When the Second World War started a year later Canasta volunteered for service in the Royal Air Force (he once said he was stage director at the RAF Repertoire Company in the Middle East). He saw action in the Western Desert, North Africa, Greece and Italy, finally becoming a British subject in 1947.

Demobilised, he began seriously to study the occult, the science of extra-sensory perception and magic and would happily perform a few effects to entertain friends. Not content with simply doing sleight of hand magic, he began learning memory feats which enabled him to quickly memorise words on selected pages of books or the order of cards in shuffled decks and he incorporated these skills into his magic performances with huge success and his popularity started to grow. He had his own (some said limited) repertoire and he stuck to it and how well he did it too, astounding fellow magicians along the way. Surprisingly for a mentalist, Canasta had a disdain for all abnormal aids, dispensing of any form of deception such as sleight-of-hand, depending solely upon his uncanny power of anticipating the reactions of his audience, individually or en masse.

He would take incredible risks and not every effect worked. Indeed the occasional failure was actually encouraged by Canasta who believed his audiences enjoyed the suspense and reacted to the odd error as it 'proved' his skills were not down to magic trickery – “Failure makes the success more exciting” he would say; a fact that infuriated many magicians. This risk taking and a lack of fear of failure was to become one of Canasta’s strengths in his career. A well-educated man, Canasta also spoke several languages. His basic repertoire consisted of a variety of forces (normally classic forces), the use of a (3 Kings) stacked deck where he would force a single or stack of cards, and an incredible book test where he would ask one spectator to think of any page number (whilst he riffled through a book) and another spectator to think of a line number and a position of a word along that line, ensuing to reveal the precise word. It was a remarkable effect that work almost every time. So Canasta had ended up combining his childhood interest in magic with his study of psychology and memory feats to create what he called ‘Psychomagic’ or ‘sleight of mind’ whereby he presented what he referred to as experiments in anticipated reaction, which appeared to onlookers as pure mind reading & influence. This coined the term ‘psychological illusionist’. By calling his effects experiments, he both distanced himself from magic and also allowed for some degree of failure (“that is the nature of experiments” he would say) and most importantly he realized that the most interesting thing on stage were the people themselves and not the (method of the) effects he performed. He became a naturalized British subject and toured the world doing his act. Canasta possessed the uncanny ability of immediate photographic recall, known as eidetic memory. This enabled him instantly to state the number of vowels on a page selected at random from a book by a volunteer from the audience, or to forecast with perfect accuracy the sequence of playing cards in a suddenly shuffled deck. One of the biggest risks he took on an effect was to ask his celebrity panel to each think of a random word and with those make up a random sentence. He had already predicted what they would end up with but the effect failed completely. When asked about the high risk he simply replied “Well it might have worked!”

Chan Canasta



**Live on Television
March 18 1960**

Around 1949, after being staggered by a performance in Amsterdam, Harry Stanley invited Canasta to work with him in London. Harry described him as an extraordinary man “he could force a card like nobody’s business, had a marvelous photographic mind and was a great psychologist”. Canasta had that performance personality that many mind readers simply fail to attain. He was able to develop a strong rapport with his audiences and people liked him; that, along side his undoubted talent and understanding of psychology made him the success he was. His brave, risky and psychological approach and his (apparent) non-concern with failing only added to his intrigue particularly as he would more often ‘hit’ when he needed to; most of his effects were very direct, clear and easily explained – three ingredients of any strong mentalism routines.

Strangely, following an expose in the People newspaper as to his methods (as they had done previously with Maurice Fogel and The Piddingtons), Canasta was invited to write articles for the same paper entitled “train your brain with Chan Canasta’ in which he described basic mnemonic systems and other stunts.

In 1951 BBC television offered Canasta his first television show that focused only on mental effects. His television series (later called) “Chan Canasta: A Remarkable Man” was presented not as magic but as a series of experiments attempting to understand unusual and mysterious powers and his low-cost, high-impact performances were ideal for television at the time – he needed virtually no props, a few armchairs and a small number of studio guests and Jon Freeman as the half-hour’s host, the budget was as low as the viewer interest was high. Although none of these suspenseful performances appear to have been preserved, the cast of celebrity guest personalities proved an ideal recipe for television magic and is used frequently today. His combination of panache, charm and intelligence made him an immediate television success. It seemed impossible that a man, even a professional mentalist, could transmit his thoughts through the television camera into the homes of a million or more viewers via their television screens – but this is what Canasta did or seemed to do.

One of his most famous hoaxes included what he called his “tube-destroying machine”. He said he would use his powers of thought to switch off every television set in the country which was tuned into him. “Concentrate” he told his audience – “concentrate”. In homes across the country television screens went black with the (50’s television) trademark diminishing white light spot that eventually popped off to nothing. Forty suspenseful seconds passed before the screens leaped back to life showing a smiling, if apologetic Canasta admitting that his stunt was only a ‘leg-pull’. He then showed how one of his cameras was trained on a screen in the studio, which was suddenly switched off, then on again. The studio audience applauded but not so the angry home viewers who rang the BBC under the impression that Canasta had ruined their sets! Interestingly, according to Canasta, his first methodology for this effect (which was not allowed) was to use a masked team to invade a transmitting station, hold the staff hostage and just pull the right switch, claiming after all, the effect is everything.

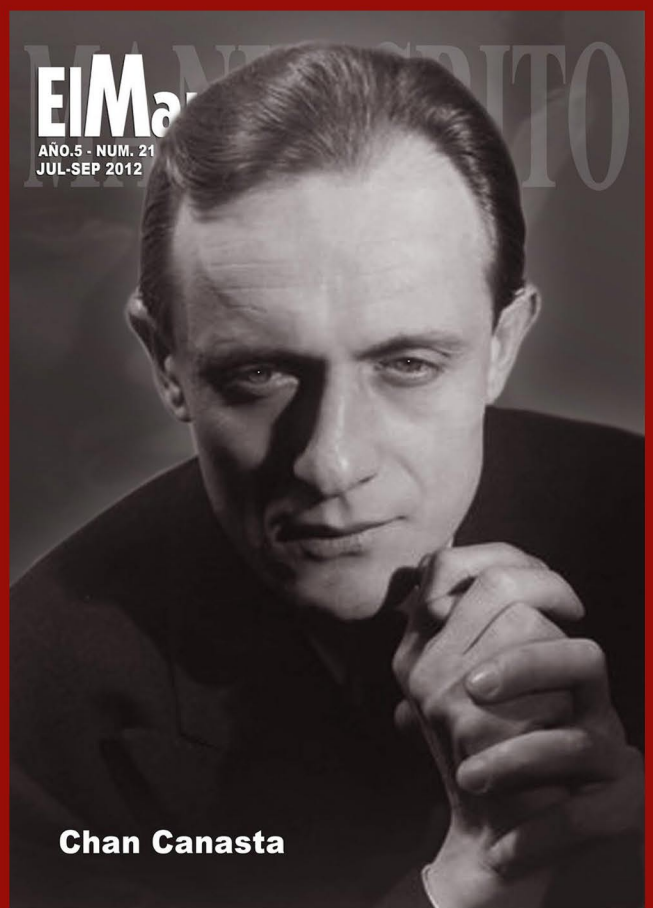
In 1952, he made the transfer to the cinema screen with Butchers Film Service for a half-hour supporting short in which was billed “The Amazing Mr. Canasta”. Strangely Canasta did not speak on the film, which was narrated throughout by Donald Waldman. The film included a psychological raffle force as an interactive feature with the cinema audience. Some 50 years later the same effect opened David Blaine’s Street Magic series. He later went on to have a further TV series on BBC in 1959, with the now deroujer performing his miracles to celebrity guests the success of which lead to a report in the Daily Mail ‘The conjurers rabbit is dead – murdered by a Polish wizard with a name like a Chinese parlour game. ...He makes other conjurers look like alchemists in the presence of an atomic scientist’. Praise indeed

Canasta become an international celebrity. Throughout his career Canasta made over 350 television appearances. American television welcomed him and he appeared on such programmes as those hosted by Ed Sullivan and Jack Paar; and whilst television is notorious for its ferocious consumption of material, Canasta seemed to be able to perform the same effects over and over again and the audiences appeared prepared to watch them. As an author, Canasta produced “Chan Canasta’s Book of Oopses” in 1966, published by George G Harrap & Co. The book was an interactive book that read your mind. He shot to the top of the bill at the both London Palladium and in Las Vegas.

His live performances never quite had the impact of his intimate television act. He received mixed reviews and never seemed able to replicate his success on the road.

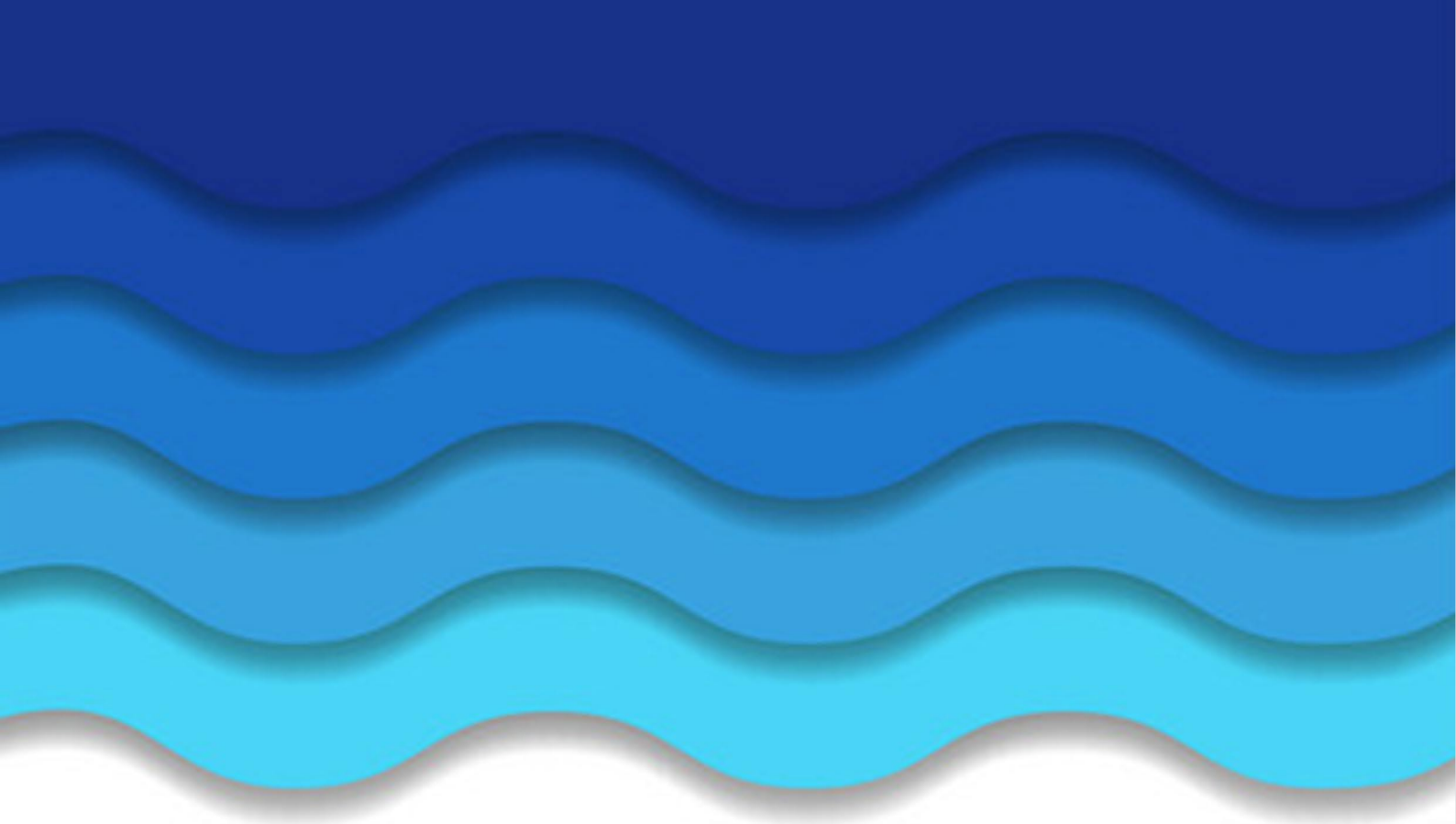
In 1962 he returned back to London to star in a new television series on a new station (Associated-Rediffusion). Dan Farson hosted these late night half-hour specials, which again featured celebrity guests and a small but fascinated audience. Jazz man Humph Lyttelton remarked, “This man is a phenomenon,” Farson said “Canasta has a fantastic command of psychology” Canasta would reply, “no – all I have is discombobulations!” (He was using Mark Twain’s homemade word to describe pre-telly tension). One of his favoured phrases, which demonstrated his high-risk manner when doing his psychological forces was “Whatever you decide will be”.

The fact many magicians criticized Canasta for using simple methods and forces, and having a limited repertoire, clearly missed the point that performance is not about the method but the audience experience; the performer’s personality and his relationship and ability to entertain, amaze, engage and interest his audience are paramount, and Canasta knew this and was able to deliver.



INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE FOR MENTALISTS & MAGICIANS

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He gave his last appearance on TV in 1971 as a personal favour to Michael Parkinson. By this time he was pursuing his passion as a painter, with successful selling shows in London and New York. He signed his paintings by his real name, Mifelow. But it is as a perfectionist performer that millions will remember him. He was neither a conjuror or a magician “I want to prove that nothing I do is phoney. If I sawed a woman in half I would be arrested for murder”.

He was a pioneer of mental magic, and has highly influenced many renowned mentalists of today, including Derren Brown (who writes about Canasta’s influence). Among magicians, Canasta is revered for the invention of a principle that eschewed perfection, believing that making an occasional error made his other effects stronger and more entertaining. He denied he used supernatural powers, saying that he had developed methods of psychological manipulation. It is said that Canasta enjoyed gambling whereby he could pit his knowledge and memory skills at the casino table, but his pleasure became a costly addiction. He once remarked ‘if I start to win everyone thinks I am using an unfair advantage. If I lose, everyone laughs’.

He retired from magic and continued painting. In the mid-nineties he accepted an invitation by David Berglas to visit the Magic Circle where he took part in a Q&A session with members. As David Britland quite eloquently puts it in his excellent book “[Chan] elevated magic to a higher level where it played as an intellectual game rather than the carnival entertainment it is often perceived as”

Canasta died at the age of 79, on April 22, 1999 in London.

KILLER TRICKS

The magician asks a member of the audience a series of questions, which are unique to that individual. The same person or another spectator writes their answer and put them into a glass. As they are writing their answer, the Mentalist is also busy writing their answer to the same question. Once they are done they also put their answer in another glass. The answers are then compared and they all match. The magician is then thought to have the power of reading other people's minds.

THE EXPLANATION

After every answer the magician asks you, they ask you to put your answer in one glass as they put their answer in another. They then ask you to give the crowd you answer out loud and so forth until the questions are over. What you will not realize is that the Mentalist will always write their answer one question behind. After you give out your answer, they will put it down as the answer to your next question. What about your last question? The last question asked is always less personal but more general with a direct answer. This is the answer the magician write down on their piece of paper at the beginning of their question, hence getting everything right.

Mimic of a Mind

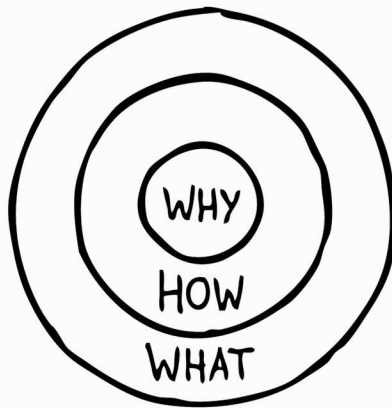


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