

George McBride - The DVD Review

This is the first DVD from George McBride. On popping it into your DVD Player you are greeted with a Main Menu from where you can have direct access to each individual Effect or its corresponding Explanation. You can also choose to have a look at the Extras which include some Trailers for other DVD's from Big Blind Media, but for me the real KILLER Bonus is a move from George that I'll talk about later! So, for now, let's go back to the Main Menu, hit play and settle down for the show.

The 'Show' features George first performing, and then explaining no less than 11 Routines. Let me immediately point out that while George can, and does, perform Close-Up Magic using a variety of props. This DVD concentrates almost exclusively on his superlative Card Magic. So, if Card Magic ain't your 'thing' then you may well find nothing of use to you here... other than a great show from a world class performer. Oh, and the one Coin Routine that he does teach you.

Another thing I liked about this DVD is that Owen Packard sits with George during the explanations. This is great because Owen quite often asks George the very same questions that you yourself would probably ask if George was teaching the routines to you... which he is!

OK, so let's look at each effect performed on the DVD.

Ace De Triomphe

The four Aces are caused to vanish, one at a time. They then re-appear in a variety of different ways.

This is Georges handling of Marlos Vanishing Aces from Mint. My personal favourite here is the vanish of the last Ace. This is a stunning colour change from John Cornelius that George handles beautifully. He also makes some other really difficult moves look easy, including a neat Ace production using the Open Shift from Expert at the card Table.

Bar Room Blues

A VERY visual colour changing deck routine. The spectator is given a free choice of any three cards. The chosen cards are caused to change from Red to Blue backs one at a time. Finally, the entire deck is caused to change colour in a very visual manner.

Other than the Tenkai change used for the last selection, this routine is pretty easy, and you will love the visual way all the cards change.

Cutting The Aces

A nice straight forward Ace Cutting routine. Each Ace is 'cut to' in a different manner and you get to learn some great ways of producing cards (and a terrific false cut) that I am sure you will use in some of your other routines as well.

Double Swap Sandwich

I don't want to say too much about this one in case I spoil the surprise for you. Suffice to say that if you like the last trick of Dr. Daley, then you will love this.

Open Assembly

A while back, George produced a little manuscript called Assembly Time. This was a collection of different handling's for the classic Four Ace Assembly. I remember telling George that my favourite routine was, "Where Regals Dare". Well, after watching this I have changed my mind! This is a fantastic handling for the Open Travellers that uses no extra cards and looks as clean as it possibly could. It also has a killer ending that will blow you away!

Reversal of Fortune

This is the only non card item on the menu, and what a feast it is. Four Coins and only two cards are used. Basically, the coins vanish one at a time and reappear under one of the cards until all four coins are under the 'leader' card... or are they? Just when you think the routine is over, all four coins instantaneously appear back where they started. And all without any cover other than the two cards.

Immediate Ace Spelling

This one does exactly what it says it does. A spectator is given the cards and asked to give them a really good shuffle and then cut them. George now takes the cards and spells to each of the Aces. All done apparently without any further shuffling or otherwise re-arranging the order of the cards. The spectator himself is allowed to spell to the last Ace. If you have a good Second Deal you will love this as the first spell automatically sets up everything else. If you do not have a good Second Deal, George talks about the Jack Merlin Second Deal which you seldom (if ever) see anyone using, but it is perfect for this routine.

Hotel Mystery

The Hotel Trick is popular among Magicians and this is George's take on it. You will be glad to hear that this is also one of the easiest routines on the DVD and well within the capability of anyone that performs Card Magic. It also makes a nice change of pace from some of the other more technical routines. With this, you can relax, tell the story, and let your spectators enjoy some great magic along the way.

Discrepancy Assembly

Another Four Ace Assembly, this time inspired by Peter Kane's Jazz Aces. Only four Kings and three indifferent cards are used. I love George's direct thinking on this, especially his use of the Bottom Deal rather than the much simpler Braue Addition to switch out one of the Kings.

Flight Path

Four Aces, signed by the spectator, vanish one at a time only to re-appear in the performer's pocket. This is a fantastic example of how a skilled Magician like George can mix sleight of hand with a gimmicked card to create a knock-out routine. It does use a gimmick (that you can easily make yourself), but you end clean and ready to carry on with your next miracle.

Triola

A nice multiple selection routine. Three spectators each choose a card (or one person can select all three cards if you wish). Two Kings are now used to find the selections. The first card is caused to magically appear between the Kings. What about the other two selections? Well, the Kings have somehow changed into them!

Overview:

Well there you have it. All in all a very enjoyable collection of top class magic performed by a true expert. For full disclosure, I should state that I know George very well, and we have been friends for many years. In some ways that makes my job as a reviewer rather difficult. If the DVD isn't very good, do I lie as George is a good friend?

Well, thankfully, I don't have to. The material on this disk is superb, and I challenge anyone to say different. You will find material suitable for just about everyone, although most of the material is pretty challenging.

One last thing to mention. In my introduction to this review I mentioned a 'Killer' move that you can find in the Extras section of this DVD. That move is George's Twist Shift. Those in the know, call it by a different name, but everyone agrees that this is one of the most invisible Shift/Passes to have been invented in recent years! George explains two handling's, one for the table and one in the hands. Both are completely invisible in George's hands. Until now, this move has only ever been shown to a handful of his closest friends, and I know several Magicians that will be buying this DVD just to see the real work on this move. This really is a case of one move being worth the full cost of this DVD!

Well, I think I have just about said enough. I loved this collection and can hardly wait for more. Thankfully I shouldn't have too long to wait. As the DVD credits roll to the end they leave us with a little teaser, just 4 simple words -

George McBride Will Return...