

REVIEWS

RATINGS
 ★ - poor
 ★★ - OK, but could be better
 ★★★ - reasonable middle of the road value
 ★★★★ - good product
 ★★★★★ - outstanding/exceptional

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WHAT'S HOT AND WHAT'S NOT



Welcome To The Firm

Featuring Colin Miller and

Jamie Badman

Available from:

www.bigblindmedia.com

Price: £22.99

Colin Miller and Jamie Badman have been collaborating with each other for many years to produce ideas and routines under a pseudonym of The Underground Collective, and this enjoyable DVD gives you a first glimpse of what they have produced together.

Rather than just have a 'show-and-tell' DVD, the guys at BBM decided to give the whole production a theme, and the reason for the title is because the two featured boys play the part of London gangsters. This allows them to jazz up a little the presentation segments of the DVD as they pretend to be showing their routines to an abducted victim who is forced to watch each routine with bound hands, a taped mouth and with a bag over his head! Liam Montier is the guy who is put through the ordeal. Given the fact that there is rather a lot of kidnapping in the real world these days, this is perhaps a somewhat tasteless theme, and the rather contrived patter used as a result in the effects does nothing to endear you initially to the magic, but if you ignore the dressing, the material underneath is really rather good. So let's concentrate on that.

In total there are 8 items performed and explained, 7 of which are card routines. The card stuff mainly gives you versions and variations of well known themes. So we get a poker deal, a sort of monte effect, a version of the Christ Aces, a variation on the Triumph, a way to do a two card peek and a version of the Collectors. My favourites amongst these, all of which are worth taking a look at, were The Witness, which is a lovely, subtle way to peek and reveal two cards, and The Wire, which must be the easiest Triumph you'll ever do. This card material is, I would judge, ideal for the intermediate card magician. A beginner would struggle, an advanced performer would probably already have his own good versions of the themes that are covered, but all the people in between will find plenty of material to enjoy working on.

The one non-card effect is a nice presentation for the Centre Tear. The actual Tear itself is not anything unusual (in fact it's basically assumed that the viewer knows how to do it) but Colin goes through a presentation which in the right hands could prove excellent for commercial lay people entertainment. I thought this was the stand out effect on the whole DVD for those who work commercially. Both Colin and Jamie are smooth but not in any way flashy performers. Their handling, as shown on this DVD, is fairly deliberate and not especially slick. I think this is a good thing because it makes the material feel accessible to the average watching magician. Many card workers featured on DVDs are so hugely and overtly skilful that while you may enjoy watching them, very few of us would dare to even attempt the miracles that are being explained. It just feels a bit intimidating! What I liked about the magic on this DVD is that the two instructors looked like ordinary guys who liked what they did, who had thought about it carefully, and who put it across well but not extravagantly, and I think this makes their material of more use. Apparently there will be more from these two in the future, so get this and see if these are guys to follow. **ML**

WHAT'S HOT: Nice magic suitable for the average hobbyist or card enthusiast

WHAT'S NOT: The theme of the DVD is perhaps a bit questionable

STAR RATING: ★★ ★★