

If you're familiar with Big Blind Media DVDs, then you'll be expecting slick production, good crediting of sleights and effects, and a caustic seam of typically British humour. And you won't be disappointed.

This second instalment from *The Wicked World of Liam Montier* has high production values with simple, clean camera work, making it viewer-friendly whether you're just spectating or studying the tricks. The quirky humour of the Big Blind crew is manifested through the revolutionary step of having Liam perform his routines to a giant rabbit, an idea that has somehow passed by the majority of magic DVD producers until now.

As with other Big Blind DVDs, the explanation portion is presented as a dialogue, rather than the magician explaining to the camera. This format works well, as it tends to mean that any point that isn't particularly clear is picked up on, and the conversation ranges wider than the mechanics of the effect, so the viewer gets some background knowledge that can be used in their own creations. In addition, it means that the explanations feel less like a lecture and more like listening in on two magic-buddies sessioning and joking together, keeping the sense of fun in the whole business.

And so to the tricks themselves. There are the obligatory card and coin routines, plus some using more surprising items (fancy a bit of sock magic?), an approach that Liam seems to have made his trademark. While most of the tricks are not strictly impromptu, requiring some level of setup or gimmickry, they all pack small, and could easily be slotted into your existing close-up set.

To be brutally honest, there isn't a lot in the way of innovative new plots or new moves, and the advanced sleight-of-hand artist may very well find little to add to their repertoire. However, the strength of this material is in its modern interpretation of several classic tricks that may otherwise have been forgotten. For example, the handkerchief is an item that has fallen out of common usage, and those that are in circulation are seldom in a savoury state. However, if you open virtually any magic book published in the early 20th century, you will find tricks that call for you to "borrow a pocket handkerchief from a gentleman." Liam has cleverly found a solution to make many of these routines usable in today's world.

Even if you don't learn and perform any of the routines verbatim, the thinking magician will be inspired to dust off their old books that have been lying unopened for years, and apply Mr Montier's thinking to bring these discarded masterpieces to a new generation of audiences.