

# Magic Advent Calendar 2020



Here is my gift (actually 24!) to you: The Magic Advent Calendar. Open a “door” (post) every day and find a surprise. You won’t get this automatically, but must go to my webshop [www.robertogiobbi.com](http://www.robertogiobbi.com), and then click “NEWS” in the menu bar. I’ll put up a new Magic Advent Calendar item every day, until DEC 24th, exactly at 00:07 Central European Time. I promise it will be worthwhile, as it will all be items – PDFs and film clips – I would like to read and see myself...

**Let your friends know, please!** If you believe that the *Magic Advent Calendar* could be of interest to your friends, please forward this email to them, or just tell them to go to [www.robertogiobbi.com](http://www.robertogiobbi.com) and click the menu item “News”. Enjoy!

Roberto Giobbi



Hello everyone,

...and welcome to the first day of the *Magic Advent Calendar!*

When I was a boy, on the 1st of December my parents would give me an Advent Calendar, one that depicted some colorful winter scene and had, of course, 24 small “doors” to be opened every day from December 1st to 24th, and which hid some seasonal image. Albeit of great simplicity, the little images fired the imagination of Young Giobbi, and each were like a small story – nowadays you need professional YouTube-clips to achieve the same result... Anyway, opening one of the “doors” each morning became a wonderful ritual. Later, Barbara brought the concept to the third dimension by sewing small numbered bags attached to a cord and which contained each a small goodie for our boys Rafael and Miro, who meanwhile are 26 and 28! Barbara, by the way, is not only my amazing wife, but also the gifted artist who illustrated all my books – without her there would be no Card College – so now you know who to really thank.

I forgot about that calendar (what a pity...) until recently, when I was reminded that we magicians, deep in our hearts, have retained some of those wonderful resources we had as children (...and are sharing them with our audiences through our magic). I would have loved to send you 24 bags with a magical surprise in each, but Corona and the Post Office are serious stumbling blocks. BUT what about a virtual *Magic Advent Calendar*? And here it is!

All you have to do, first thing in the morning (or maybe later...), is to go to [www.robertogiobbi.com](http://www.robertogiobbi.com) and click on “News” to enjoy the current day’s “magic goodie”, which will be what I hope you’ll find to be an interesting PDF or film clip or...well, it’s a surprise

So, without further ado, here is my first little gift for you:

In February 2013 *The Linking Ring*, the official publication of the International Brotherhood of Magicians, run out of real celebrities, so they decided to put me on their cover. In order to justify the choice, Bill Evans, then IBM’s international president-elect and exquisite connoisseur of magic, did an interview with me, which I believe is one of the better ones I ever did. We discuss some seriously interesting topics, and you might find it entertaining as well as useful. Plus they talked me into writing up their complete “Parade”. If you have the patience to peruse it, you might find a nugget or two...

The PDF-extract is reproduced here with the kind permission of editor Samuel Patrick Smith (thank you, Sammy!), and I encourage you to visit the IBM’s website [HERE](#).

To download and read the PDF click on the image below. Enjoy!

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MASONS

# The LINKING Ring

Volume 93 Number 2 • February 2013





Hello everyone!

Welcome to day 2 of the *Magic Advent Calendar*.

My Advent gift to you today is the last segment, over one hour long (!), of my first lecture at Penguin's, the *Penguin Lecture Live – Stand-up Card Magic*, which runs a total of 5 hours 25 minutes!!! At the time it was a live stream, and the server broke down, as it couldn't handle that much – I still hold the record for the longest Penguin Live lecture. Here people who attended the lecture online sent in questions via Twitter to Dan Harlan, who is a great moderator as you will see. We discuss some interesting questions related to the lecture, of course, but also independent issues, and all can be understood and appreciated even though you do not have the rest of the lecture.

To watch [CLICK HERE](#).

If you want to see the complete lecture, you can buy the download of it directly at Penguin Magic [HERE](#), or if you still prefer the DVD with the lovely Penguin-graphics, you can get it directly from me, signed if you wish (please mention on order form), [CLICK HERE](#). The content is not just a bunch of very good tricks from my professional repertoire, but really a comprehensive course in the art of performing card magic in stand-up situations (parlor and small stages). This is not an expense, it is an investment. The lecture, BTW, was so successful, that the Penguins asked me to do a second one in the same year, and you can get a bundle deal (only from me) [HERE](#).

And now enjoy!





Hello everyone!

This is day 3 of the *Magic Advent Calendar* with a version of Paul Curry's "Open Prediction".

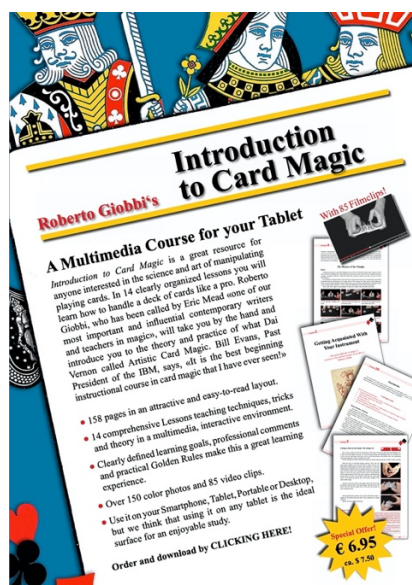
In 2012 I was asked to create a basic course of card magic for the Magic Agora project, a great idea for an online school of magic, which unfortunately folded after a short period – the reasons for this would make for a fascinating essay on the obscure psyche of today's practitioners of magic and the magic market...but I won't torture you with that ☺

Instead, here is one of fourteen chapters of what became *Introduction to Card Magic*, certainly one of the first if not the first interactive multi-media e-book on basic card magic (it is sort of *Pre-Card-College*). Chapter 9 deals with audience management, and is illustrated by a self-working version (if there is anything like that...) of "Open Prediction". My open prediction is that even the very advanced among you will find this interesting, and maybe even use it, let alone those who just started out in magic!

To read the PDF [CLICK HERE](#).

Enjoy!

PS: If you're interested to obtain the complete course, you can get it [HERE](#) – I put a price tag of € 6.95 to it (no, it's not a printing error) so that everyone can get it. I'm sure even experts will find the holistic approach of the course inspiring, and those among you who teach card magic will find it to be a ready-made curriculum for their course.





Hello everyone!

Here we are at day 4 of the *Magic Advent Calendar*. It is a short film clip, which was originally recorded as a private demonstration and explanation of the “Houdini Color Change”, described in my *Card College Volume 3* (p. 744), following a very kind inquiry from a reader who did not come to terms with my description in the book.

I would like to remind us all that a Color Change is not just a “pretty effect”, which of course it is, provided it is well done, but that to elevate it to Artistic Magic, it should be given a meaning, a dramatic unity, which makes it more than just a “quickie”. This can be done by previously having a card selected (premise), then apparently failing in finding it (conflict), only to magically *corriger la fortune* by mysteriously transforming the wrong card into the spectator’s selection (resolution with astonishing miracle). Now it is an *esthetically pleasing impossibility* that fulfills the deep human desire to get out of trouble just by a snap of the fingers – who wouldn’t want to be able to do that (and in these times)! This is just one of the things Juan Tamariz pointed out to me many years ago in one of our night-long sessions, when he said to me, “You have to put emotions into it.” But that’s another story...

The clip is very “home-made” :-), in the “writer’s corner” of my studio, where many of my books were written. I hope that all that matters to understand and learn the sleight is there, everything else is not... But since it’s free, you will forgive the “amateurish” quality...

To watch the clip [CLICK HERE](#).



Enjoy!



Hello everyone!

Here we are at the 5th installment of the *Magic Advent Calendar*.

While leisurely walking through Basel, my home town, the display in front of an antique book shop caught my attention: they were selling the *Encyclopedia Britannica* of 1910/11 in 26 volumes individually for 5 Francs the volume (cost of 1 cup of coffee in Switzerland, 5 espressi in Italy...). So I immediately checked the entry «conjuring», and lo and behold, as in several other editions, there was an extensive essay on the subject.

I bought the copy for you (and me!), scanned the essay, and here it is for your perusal and collection. (BTW: It would be nice if at some point we got all entries from all the EB editions on «conjuring» – as you might know the EB had a new edition about every ten years, and each time the essays were penned by different experts).

The authors of the article are three: John Nevil Maskelyne (well-known), G. Faur (I have never heard of him), John Algernon Clarke (maybe Sidney Clarke's father?). I haven't researched Faur nor Clarke, so if you have any info, let me know. Later articles are by John Mulholland and Ricky Jay, very interesting.

Also, it would be informative to see what other big encyclopedias wrote/write about «conjuring-magic» (Brockhaus in Germany, Larousse in France, Treccani in Italy, Spain??? etc.). If you live in one of these countries and are interested, you can find and send me the PDFs. Be aware that there might be various editions with various entries.

I find it enlightening to read definitions of magic by experts and laymen alike, as they reflect the understanding (or not-so-understanding) of the subject, how magic is perceived from inside and outside, and in different cultures, at different times. As far as I know this focus has not yet been discussed...much.

To read and download the PDF [CLICK HERE](#).



Ad for Encyclopedia Britannica



Hello everyone!

For many December 6th is a holiday, where Santa Claus leaves little presents in children's shoes. Well, here is my present for the child in you (and me!): it is an old clip my friend Marco Aimone, the president of the magic club in Torino, Italy, sent me years ago. It aired on Italy's national TV RAI – I have not been able to find the original airing date and place.

This clip is short and sweet, and it uses Card Magic to show yet another little quarrel between Donald and Mickey. Also, it gives us a glimpse into how non-magicians perceive magic and magicians, and important thing to learn, if we want to better understand ourselves and what we do. I like this little clip, and I hope you too.

To watch Mickey and Donald, [CLICK HERE](#).



See you tomorrow!





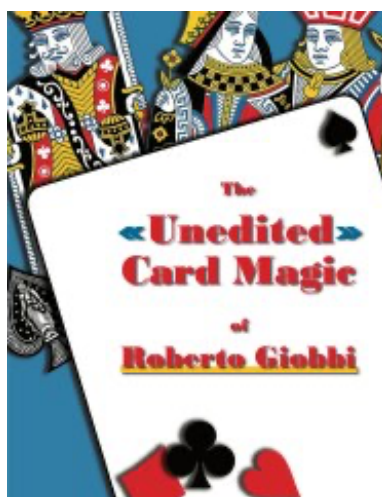
Hello everyone!

In any performance it is attractive to present something topical. An easy way to do this, is to use the current day's number, in our case number SEVEN, and this is what the 7th episode of the *Magic Advent Calendar* is about. In the PDF you can download as today's *Magic Advent Calendar* gift, the piece "Seven" will fit the bill. Some of you may recognize it as an early write-up of the trick that later went into my book *Confidences*.

I go even further, and give you *the complete PDF* of what were the notes for a lecture I gave at Brent Geris's Magic Apple magic shop in Hollywood, Los Angeles, on ? April 2012. I titled them *The Unedited Card Magic of Roberto Giobbi* to make it sound intriguing, but really it was exactly what it read: I had only little time to put the notes together, so nobody could proof-read them, and I thought it was a clever way of "staging" any mistakes in it. Of course, it was not so clever, but just necessary. Nonetheless, the edition was limited and numbered, and only 50 printed and signed copies exist, legal ones, I mean.

You'll find that most of the content later went into my book *Confidences*, and the item titled "TTTCBE" (The Trick That *Can* Be Explained) even made it into a commercial trick, one of the very few I ever put out, with moderate success, although those who have it insist that it is quite good (you can get it from [The Magic Apple](#) or [directly from me](#), if you really need to...). I can only tell you that I have fooled luminaries like Juan Tamariz and Bernard Bilis with it, so it has to be good – oh my, this sounds like a mail from Penguin ☺

To read or download *The Unedited Card Magic of Roberto Giobbi* [CLICK HERE](#).



PS: My book *Confidences* is now out of print and will likely never be reprinted. However, I do have a few copies left, which I'm happy to sign to your name and send them to you, but you will have to buy it: [CLICK HERE](#).



Hello everyone!

This is number 8 of the *Magic Advent Calendar*.

Today's offering is purely nostalgic and might amuse you :-), although I must say, that at the time, this was quite something, but that's about forty (!?) years ago.

You see me at about age twenty, in the library of my friends and mentors Dieter & Agi Haldimann, performing a routine with chips conceived by Eckhard Böttcher (all credit to him!), who at that time had a very successful magic shop called "Zauberbutike" in Germany. I hope you'll forgive the imperfections of a youthful and inexperienced but certainly enthusiastic Young Giobbi.

To watch the video [CLICK HERE](#).



Wish you a lovely 8<sup>th</sup> December!



Hello everyone!

Today is December 9th, and our subject is the “Cups & Balls”, and more specifically Sam Leo Horowitz’s routine published in the *SPHINX*, issue of September 1938. Although it’s only two pages, it will take some concentration to get through it. My recommendation is to read through it with the instruments at hand, that’s almost always the best way of understanding a written description anyway.

You will find some excellent ideas in it, especially the opening sequence. If you have my book *Confidences*, re-read my “Overture for Cups and Balls” (pp. 119). Curious to note, that the initial set-up of Horowitz’s and my routine are *exactly the same* – how did he know 82 years ahead 😊

If you want more of Horowitz’s genius, go to *Stars of Magic* or George Kaplan’s *The Fine Art of Magic*: you will immediately recognize the originality and expertise of this outstanding artist, who was part of the exclusive New York circle in the 1920s. I do not, though, suggest that you follow Horowitz’s advice of repeating the sequences, as this will make the routine too long. Such lengthy and repetitious presentations are only good if you work in streets or maybe some trade shows, where the audience walks on and off. Like “Linking Rings” “C&B” is one of the very few magic pieces, where as a spectator you can come in at almost any moment of the presentation and still understand and enjoy what is going on. You don’t get that with mental magic...

When it comes to the artistic interpretation of C&B Dai Vernon’s routine remains the template, in my opinion. I have gone in great detail in analyzing his routine in my DVD-project *Dai Vernon Seminar*, which also includes a film clip of Vernon himself performing his brilliant creation. You can get it from most dealers of [directly from me](#) (I’m happy to autograph it if you mention that in the comment field of the order form). One of the two DVDs also contains an 80-page e-book in PDF format, don’t miss that!

To read and download the PDF with the Horowitz routine from the *SPHINX* [CLICK HERE](#).





Hello everyone!

My little surprise for December 10th is my favorite short film by Georges Méliès (1861 – 1938), for me one of the geniuses in the history of civilization.

I look at this clip as a metaphor for what we are aiming at with our performances as magicians, and with the most simple and commonplace of instruments, *a deck of cards*. I mean, it's not a Steinway Concert Grand Piano for more than 170'000 USD, just a very good deck of cards for under 10 USD. But people like Ricky Jay, René Lavand or Juan Tamariz create a similar esthetic experience, not the same, of course, but similar, in a way. A deck of cards reminds me of Picasso, who could take just a pencil, which most use to write a shopping list, and create great art that nowadays sells for hundreds of millions... Ah, you see, that's why FISM bestowed upon me the award for "Theory and Philosophy" ☺

I used to show this clip for many years before my lectures, as a prologue, and I have no doubt that you will like it. For a change this is a short one, just under 3 minutes!

Maybe it will motivate you to do a little research on Méliès – It's easy, as there is quite a bit of information on the Internet, and of course in wonderfully illustrated books about his life and work, and even movies: remember *Hugo*, by Martin Scorsese, winner of 5 Oscars, with Ben Kingsley? And not to forget the commercially available DVD collections with many of Méliès's works, still available for little money.

To watch *Cartes* by Georges Méliès [CLICK HERE](#).



Enjoy!



Hello everyone!

This is item #11 of the *Magic Advent Calendar* and it deals with a bit of a specialized subject in form of a PDF (actually two!), which at first sight only a few will find of interest. However, I'm confident that you, my intelligent reader, once you've perused the first page, will realize that this is much more than what it seems.

Stephen Minch, arguably magic's most erudite and talented author and publisher, discusses and gives guidelines on how to write about magic, a subject of eminent importance. If we ever want magic to be recognized as an artistic and academic discipline – Art & Science, if you will – we need a unified terminology...and taxonomy, I might add. I sometimes get desperate when I read magic books, magazines or lectures notes, not to mention when I attend live lectures, where many authors seem to make an effort to reinvent magic's vocabulary. And I still find it hard to believe that Mr. Biddle gets credit for holding a deck at its ends, whereas this must have been done (we assume!) at least since 1370, when the first playing cards were mentioned. In any other recognized discipline once a term has been coined it will be used in all future publications. Even if you only occasionally write or speak about magic, you will want to make sure to use correct and understandable terms.

When I conceived my *Card College* series, one of my very first worries was to find a logical and intuitive terminology for everything pertaining to cards, and I believe I'm the first to have come up and published such a detailed nomenclature. All of you who are interested can download the PDF with the "Map of the Hands, Deck, Card Case & Card" by [CLICKING HERE](#) – I authorize you to use this map, as is, in your own publications, and only ask you to mention the origin (e.g. "From Roberto Giobbi's *Card College*").

To read and download Stephen Minch's *Stylebook*, with his kind permission, [CLICK HERE](#).





Hello everyone!

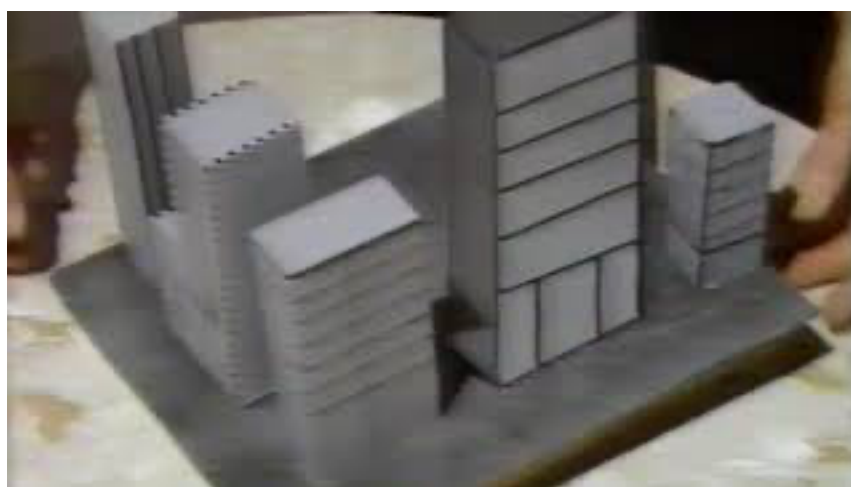
This is my December 12th gift: a rare recording of Jerry Andrus demonstrating and explaining some of his 3D-illusions on the *Knoff-Hoff-Show* on German TV.

*Knoff Hoff* is not misspelled, but alludes to the English term “know-how”, of course, spelled as a speaker of German would pronounce it – this is considered amusing over here ☺

Anyway, it was a successful and most interesting program on German TV, which combined scientific topics with entertaining presentations, I guess they call it “infotainment” nowadays. In one of the episodes they invited Jerry Andrus, and you can see him demonstrate some of his fantastic three-dimensional optical illusions – I’m sure most of you have never seen them.

*Pour la petite histoire* (english: anecdotally) let me tell you that I met Jerry Andrus for the first time in 1982 at the FISM convention in Lausanne; I was 23 at the time. Part of the program was a ship cruise on beautiful Lac Léman, on a splendid sunny summer day, with an amazing view on the Swiss-Italian-French Alps. However, to Young Giobbi this was mere decoration, as for circumstances I cannot remember I somehow got to talk to Jerry Andrus. Although I was an absolute nobody at that time, Jerry took to me, and we spent the whole trip doing magic! Or more precisely I should say that Jerry showed me (almost) every item from his *Andrus Deals You In*, a remarkable book. Years later we met again, when he and his card magic were the subject of one of those legendary Escorial Card Conferences, and I once again had the pleasure and privilege to experience his genius.

To see Jerry Andrus on the *Knoff-Hoff Show* [CLICK HERE](#).



# 13 Roberto Giobbi's Magic Advent Calendar



Hello everyone!

Before anything else: I'm humbled by all your kind comments and wishes, most of them sent to me privately. Please know that each one is greatly appreciated! See the PS at the end (where else...) of this post.

This is the 13th offering on the *Magic Advent Calendar* and is a partial answer to the question I often get of how to take and store notes.

In my Newsletters # 6 and # 9 I already wrote about different aspects of note-taking, and you might want to review those. To read or download my past *Secret Newsletters* go to the "Newsletter" item in the menu bar, or simply [CLICK HERE](#).

Today's PDF are my notes I took from a Dai Vernon video lecture, and it is almost a transcript of it. You can therefore even study it without having access to the video, but if you have, all the better. The video in question is part of the *Vernon Revelations 30th Anniversary Commemorative Boxed Set* published by L&L in 2003 and which contained 12 DVDs. One of the DVDs has the lecture at the Magic Castle from 1st April 1977.

To read or download the PDF [CLICK HERE](#).



PS: Several wrote in to comment on the past posts and sent in further information, which I forward to you here. Denis Behr sent a link, which contains all magic-related performers who have appeared on the Knoff-Hoff Show, including Jerry Andrus's in a much better quality – [CLICK HERE](#) to watch (this might not show up in all countries). And Marco Pusterla sent in a link, which all of you who are interested in optical illusions, should find interesting, [CLICK HERE](#). Thank you, Denis and Marco!



Hello everyone!

Today is December 14th, and my offering to you is a film clip of an Abbott & Costello routine that has magical qualities without being magic: originality, plot, humor, rhythm, timing and more for you to think about...or just enjoy.

Clearly, there is a lot to be learned by watching people who do something very well, as it somehow rubs off and forms our mentality of excellence. Simply by saying, "I want to do my thing as well as they do theirs", is as important as constant work; however, one doesn't function without the other.

To watch Abbott & Costello in their amazing routine "Money Swap and Roulette" [CLICK HERE](#).



Have a good day!





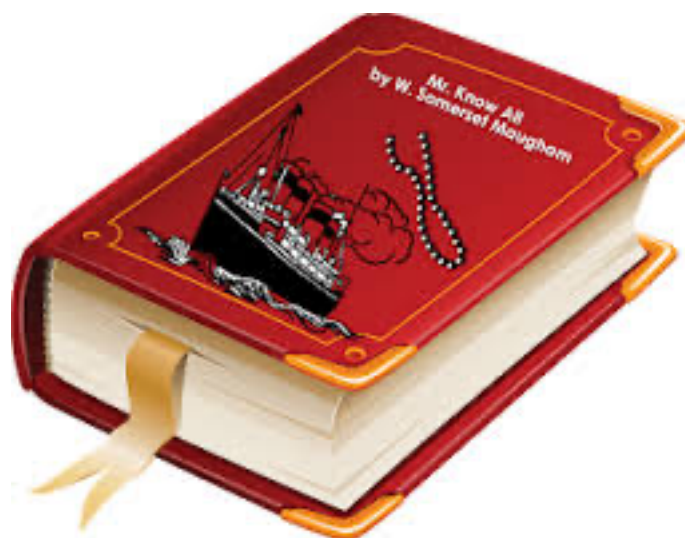
Hello everyone!

Welcome to entry number 15 of the *Magic Advent Calendar*.

Most of you will have read or heard this quote: “He asked me if I like card tricks. I said no. He showed me five.” And variations thereof...

The quote is not quite correct. If you are interested to learn the exact wording you’ll find it on page 2 of the attached PDF, which is the complete short story *Mr. Know-All* by Somerset Maugham (1874 – 1965), the brilliant British writer, and which was first published in 1924 (so is now out of copyright). It was later reprinted in various collections of Maugham’s.

December, the Holiday Season, is the perfect month to read short stories – to do so [CLICK HERE](#).



Wish you a good day!

PS: There is a short movie, ca. 20 minutes long, about Maugham’s short story *Mr. Know-All*, and you can watch it on YouTube [HERE](#).

PPS: Many have said that Maugham’s *A Writer’s Notebook* is the best of its genre, and you can get it as a book or e-book for little money – I remember I immensely enjoyed it, and it is part of my non-magic library.



Hello everyone!

I hope you are doing well on this 16th installment of the *Magic Advent Calendar*.

Today's "Advent Door" will open to one of the most unusual and original performances I have ever seen. As I've expressed many times in my writings, I have a great affinity for minimalism, especially in the Arts. I prefer a "simple" card trick by René Lavand to an elaborate illusion by any famous illusionist, although I do respect and appreciate the latter, too. It's just that I prefer to see an artist with his instrument, and little more.

Buka, who is not easy to research (I wish I could tell you a bit more about him), has created an act with just one single playing card...and little more. It is, well, quite extraordinary.

To watch Buka's most unusual act [CLICK HERE](#) – and enjoy!





Hello everyone!

It is December 17th, and here is today's little gift for you.

You will see me, Roberto Giobbi, with the piece “The Deck of the Missed Opportunities” from my book *Confidences* (performance only). In the summer of 2017, as I was spending a week at Juan Tamariz's home in the south of Spain, Dani DaOrtiz called and asked if I would be interested to tape the performance and explanation of a few pieces of mine for his Enfilo video series. We agreed to meet early afternoon at the Maestro's home, while the latter was still sleeping the sleep of the just. We recorded this one, from *Confidences*, and my “Color Changing Deck” from *Card College Volume 5*.

A curiosity aside: The location of the take is Juan Tamariz's home, the exact table and background you've watched if you saw his latest video seminars through Dani's Enfilo web channel.

To watch me perform “The Deck of the Missed Opportunities” [CLICK HERE](#).



Hope you like it!

PS: If you're interested to learn the trick, you can do so from my book *Confidences*. The book is now out of print, but I have a few left, and you can order your copy [HERE](#) – if you want it signed to your name, please mention it in the comment field of the order form. If you prefer the explanation on video (in English or Spanish), you can get it from Dani's webshop Enfilo [HERE](#).



Hello everyone!

Welcome to the 18th offering on the *Magic Advent Calendar*, which is “broadcasted” from my studio, at the table where all my books since 1996 have been written. You’ll have to forgive the not-so-perfect recording, but I did this on purpose, of course, because I believe that perfection only pertains to God... (OK, I stole that line from the ancient Persian carpet makers, who made the most beautiful carpets, but always made a little mistake at the end, well, because...see above). And Goethe should have said, “Good is better than perfect”, but he didn’t. Anyway, why argue about form – let’s move on to the content:

This is my yet unpublished presentation and handling of Dai Vernon’s “Ectoplasmic Aces”. The original idea can be found as a rather cryptic note in Frank Csuri’s *Jacob Daley’s Notebooks* (The Gutenberg Press, USA 1974). If you’re curious, here is the original note from the *Daley Notebooks*:

**70. Vernon's Ectoplasmic Aces**

- 1) **Four aces shown and two indifferent cards between first and other three aces.**
- 2) **Arrange in magic square and shuffle extra card on top of two aces on deck.**
- 3) **Show top card of deck and place on first ace-square. <sup>Turn</sup> Run top card over-is not there-double lift and show ace second from top. This reverses other ace.**
- 4) **Place on second number ace-square and turn ace reversed on top.**
- 5) **Ask which ace to be used next and as you do so cut two aces from bottom of deck to top. Place on third ace and square. Double lift. Repeat with fourth ace and do single lift. May finish by shuffle and produce ace from different packets. V3-p62**

I should mention that at *The Session* (January 2020), Vanishing Inc’s yearly convention in London, Dominic Twose gave a short lecture on precisely this note of Daley’s, in which he spoke about his interpretation of the trick. This stirred up my curiosity, and having studied Vernon and his work for decades, I tried to figure out how Vernon might have really done it, considering his constant search for perfection and artistic criteria. So, what you have here, is the result of my efforts. This is still a work in progress, but you’ll see me do a short

performance, followed by a discussion of some points of interest. I thought it's good enough to be offered here, and I hope it finds your favor.

To watch my interpretation of "Vernon's Ectoplasmic Aces" [CLICK HERE](#).



Enjoy!



Hello everyone!

Here we are with another chocolate on the 19th installment of the *Magic Advent Calendar*: it is a Multiple-Content PDF – I just made up the term...

In 2015 Chris Wasshuber from library.com asked me if I'd be interested to create a new product, which would consist of sending out one "Magic Tweet" per day for a complete year (!) via Twitter and which we would call *Secret Twitter*, akin to *Secret Agenda*.

Naively, I said "yes", as I had also done with Chris's request to start the *Ask Roberto Project*. In both cases I had completely misjudged the time it would take to research, collect, write, illustrate, edit and layout the contents. If I count the hours Barbara and I (and Chris, of course) have put into those projects, we'd get a salary that borders to the illegal because far below the minimal wages. BUT, as in so many cases in life, it has brought pleasure and insight to many people, so it seems, and I'm very proud of both achievements. It shows that money is not important (but unfortunately necessary). At the time Twitter was very limited in text length, and after some trials I realized that it would not be possible to create 365 worthy items. Well, not until it occurred to Barbara that Twitter also allowed photos, not just text. So she set out to design a "photo" of every daily item, and this made it possible to process longer and more substantial texts! That was the egg of Columbus, and the rest is history.

The item hidden behind today's "calendar door" is a small choice from my *Secret Twitter*, and fittingly consist of 24 selected tweets for your edification and entertainment pleasure. Come to think of it: this is a a calendar within a calendar, a sort of "nested boxes" . To read and download the Secret Tweets [CLICK HERE](#).



[Enjoy!](#)

PS: You can still get the complete *Secret Twitter* file in one PDF: it consists of 12 months PLUS 2 free months, total of over 420 magical and inspirational tweets.

PPS: I have a promotion on *Ask Roberto* as an e-book, and you can order it [HERE](#), if you don't have it, yet. (If you want the printed book and live outside of Europe, please order it directly from lybrary.com, as due to Corona the USA only allows express shipping, which costs more than the book.)



Hello everyone!

This is your magical surprise for December 20th of the *Magic Advent Calendar*, and it is a brief but hopefully interesting and inspiring film clip.

Years ago my magic friend Joe Gallant from Boston recommended a documentary to me, *Jiro Dreams of Sushi*. If you're not familiar with it, just watch this two-minute-clip. If you take any interest at all in excellence, and also have a little affinity for gastronomy, you'll want to find the complete film. To me this is one of the best documentaries I've ever seen: it's information and inspiration pure.

To watch the short clip [CLICK HERE](#).



Enjoy!





## Roberto Giobbi Magic Advent Calendar

Hello everyone!

Here we are, on the 21st episodes of our 24-part series in the *Magic Advent Calendar*. Since we're getting closer to the finale, we need extra energy, in the true sense of the word...

Frank Garcia in his two books *Million Dollar Card Secrets* and *Super Subtle Card Miracles*, both containing excellent ideas, had at the end of each a recipe; I recommend you try the "Super Meatloaf" – it's at least as good as the magic in the book. Whenever we have magicians stay for dinner, we – that's Barbara (who does all the illustrations!) and me – serve Garcia's "Super Meatloaf" as the main course. Before serving it, I always ask, "What is the connection of this course with magic?" Almost everyone is surprised when I produce Garcia's book from under my cooking apron: they all know the book, but nobody seems to ever have done the recipe!

I've always wanted to do something similar in one of my publications. Well, I somehow never did it, but today took a chance with my *Magic Advent Calendar 2020*. So, here I am, in my kitchen, preparing one of my favorite recipes, a Graved Lax, as simple as a self-working card trick from my Light-series. As I say in the video, "Any 10-year-old could do it." That's true, even if you have never stood in a kitchen, you can reproduce this to great effect. However, like with all so-called "self-working card tricks", you need to put some time and attention to it, and of course the most important ingredient, a little passion: you must like what you do, otherwise you have nothing to sincerely share. And both magic and cooking are about sharing a part of your life, interests and passion. Besides, as I already wrote in *Secret Agenda*, "Gastronomy is the basis of all good magic. Because gastronomy has to do with eating, if you don't eat you die, and if you're dead you cannot do good magic. Therefore, gastronomy is the basis of all good magic. Q.E.D!" To watch how to prepare this super-simple recipe, which will make you look (almost) like a Michelin star chef, [CLICK HERE](#):



Hollingworth, Maven, Green, Paviato, Bossi, Giobbi, in MuttENZ, Switzerland, Giobbi home, 1997 after FISM Dresden – after "Super Meatloaf" dinner! Bon appétit!



Hello everyone!

I welcome you to the 22nd installment of the *Magic Advent Calendar*, and we're going to talk...cards, what else? So, here is some background information on the *Card College Playing Cards*.

In October 2019 I was invited to visit China by my publisher TCC, who has meanwhile translated and published my 5 *Card College* books, along with the Light-trilogy, total eight books, all in less than three years! We, that's Barbara and me, flew via Beijing to Hong Kong, where we were taken to TCC's headquarters in Shenzhen. From there we embarked on a tour taking us to 9 cities with 26 events (workshops, lectures, masterclasses & shows). That, of course, is another story...and I might tell it in my biography, in case I'll ever write one... Part of the venture were other ideas for projects: lecture notes, a lavish notebook, playing cards, a card clip, a commemorative coin, a box with [my act](#) and all the props to go with it, and more.

Ultimately, only a few saw the light of day, notably the *Card College Playing Cards*. Some of you will have heard of them, and I know a few have bought various editions on the Kickstarter project earlier this year, or from dealers in the past few weeks, but for completeness sake, here is the trailer that publicized the project. To see the short clip [CLICK HERE](#) (or the photo):



Trailer presenting the Card College Playing Cards Collector Edition & Regular Edition

All was done with my authorization and to the highest quality standards I could wish for – both TCC and ARC deserve our thanks and appreciation for an outstanding work. They did even surprise me, when they announced some additional Collector Editions not mentioned in the initial trailer: they are on its way to me shortly, and to those who have supported the project via Kickstarter. As far as I know all Collector Editions sold out after a few hours – I have a few sets left, but will keep them for my old-age-piggy-bank (I speculate that if a single Jerry’s Nugget deck nowadays get’s \$350 per deck, these, which come as a trilogy and are in my opinion superior in any conceivable way, should get a multiple of it...but don’t take my word for it).

HOWEVER, for all those who would have liked a Collector’s Set, but could not make it, the good news is that the *Card College Playing Cards Regular Edition* is now out.



Card College Playing Cards red & black

Here are a few of my comments, which have not been advertised:

- Limited First Edition (see below), which will soon be sold out (I’m told).
- The cards come in two beautiful colors: burgundy red & royal blue.
- They are printed by USPCC on their Casino Premium Stock, the best currently available.
- They are cut top-down, i.e. you can faro them as taught in Chapter 35 “The Faro Shuffle” in *Card College Volume 3*. They are NOT cut bottom-up. The latter are called “Traditionally Cut”, and are good for tabled faros and hand-faros done from bottom up. But which insane performer will risk screwing his show up by doing a tabled faro at a payed show? There are only a handful in the world who can do that. The rest of us will want to play it safe. The *Card College Playing Cards*, being cut top-down, will allow for risk-free hand-faros, especially in view of two facts: first, most Faro applications are Partial Faros, second, if a mistake occurs, it will be at the end and not at the beginning of the Faro, but most uses are to get the top section right, not the bottom.

Therefore, for the vast majority of applications in magic a top-down Faro is superior to the bottom-up Faro.

- The quality is such, that you can use them “out-of-the-box”.
- The Ace of Spades has my logo, which is found on some of the *Card College* editions (English, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, but not on the German, Italian, French and Spanish); I’m very happy with its design, and everyone I spoke to liked it, too.
- The 2 Jokers are a conversion of a photo of mine into a line drawing and might be one of the two things I’d like to change if there will be a second printing. The “Guarantee Joker” has a humorous text, which you can use for several tricks (e.g. “Guaranteed!” or “The Fine Print”, both from *Confidences*, or “Card Call” from *Stand-up Card Magic*).
- There are 9 (nine!) surfaces that can be designed on a card case:
  - On the two sides (1 & 2) are two great motivational and poetic quotes (one by Hofzinsler, the other by Socrates). Plus, as a wine aficionado, I have insisted on giving the cards a vintage year: So, next to the quotes, you’ll find “2019” on one side (the year the cards were printed) , and “1st” on the other side (meaning 1st edition). That’s the degree of sophistication I like.
  - One side-tab (3) carries the years the *Card College* books originally appeared in German (1992, 1994 & 2003), the other tab (4) shows my birthday (1st May 1959), so from now on you can send me birthday greetings and gifts ☺
  - The flap (5) has a short but informative text on me, the *Card College* books and TCC as the publishers of the books and cards.
  - The bottom of the case (6) has my logo and that of TCC, the copyright note, AND hidden in the open, so to speak, the formula for the Haymow Shuffle, which is at the basis of several excellent card tricks, with “Dai Vernon’s Poker Demonstration” being top-of-the-list (you’ll find it in Ganson’s *Dai Vernon Book of Magic*, or on my DVD *Dai Vernon Seminar* both in the video and in the enclosed PDF). Or see my column “The Genii Session” in *Genii* of August 2007 called “The Horowitz Poker Deal”. If you are a subscriber to *Genii*, and you should, you have access to all their older issues, and my 14 years (!) of columns, of course.
  - The face of the case (7) reflects the dustcover design of the American edition of Card College and pays tribute to the many years I’ve been working with Stephen Minch and his Hermetic Press, recently acquired by Acar Altinsel and his Penguin Magic.
  - The back of the case is a brilliant nod in the direction of Barbara’s drawings in the books, which were done before today’s sophisticated drawing softwares were available to mere mortals as we were when we embarked on the Card College Odyssey: the hatched back reflects the hatched backs of the cards in the book’s illustrations (yes, check it out).
  - Finally, the 9th surface is the top of the case and reads “R. Giobbi’s Card College Playing Cards”. With this you can perform the trick “Tally-Ho” as described in my book *Confidences*: simply place a Joker instead of a “Six” at the 3rd position from the face, and then substitute “A. Dougherty” (10 cards) with “R.Giobbi’s” including the full stop and the apostrophe in the count (totals 10), Tally-Ho” (7 cards) with “College” (also 7), “Playing” and “Cards” are the same.

When you turn up the Joker, spell “Joker”, and you get to the last Ace. It’s a trick that is lengthy to read, but that everyone who has seen wants to do. It’s an old Henry Christ plot, with a super-touch by Richard Vollmer, and my presentational and handling details.

- It’s still not all: the cards have a very subtly one-way design, which n-o-b-o-d-y will see at first sight, but once you know it, you will immediately and clearly see it, even in a hand- or table-spread. They did not tell me when they designed it, and I was a bit taken aback at first, but then found it a very good idea, and now I’m quite happy with it – the design is truly excellent.
- Oh, and there are two trick cards, double-backers that come with it, too, but I’ll stop here before losing everyone...

A red banner for Roberto Giobbi's Magic Advent Calendar. On the left, there is a white card with the number '23' and red diamond symbols, next to a sprig of greenery. On the right, a photo of Roberto Giobbi is shown holding a stack of cards and a small white object.

## Roberto Giobbi's Magic Advent Calendar

Hello everyone!

Welcome to December 23, with flashback to December 21: Remember – we prepared a Graved Lax.

Here now is what happens after the salmon has been marinated for 48 hours: it's all really straight forward and simple. As long as the fish was very fresh to begin with, you can keep your Graved Lax in the fridge for at least a week, wrapped in cling film. And don't worry about not being able to cut large, thin slices like a pro; you can also use a normal sharp knife and cut shorter slices, about three fingers long, and even a bit thicker, very similar to the Spanish ham served as tapas, and it will still look and taste very good.

Clearly, preparing food for yourself and guests is marrying necessity with personal pleasure, which leads to an esthetical and social experience; the result is more than the sum of its parts, and is the expression of something which cannot be put into words. This reminds me of Goethe's definition of Art: "Art is a mediator of the unspeakable." So, you see, there seems to be some kind of affinity between Art, Gastronomy and Magic...

To watch and learn the presentation of our Graved Lax [CLICK HERE](#).



Reaction you can expect from your guests when serving Graved Lax!

PS: I received quite a bit of feedback on this one (almost more than the magic!), and José Angel from Vitoria (the home of Fournier playing cards!), a friend of many years and a talented chef, suggested pouring some vodka on top of the sugar-salt-mix before covering it with dill. I made a note for next time...



Hello everyone!

We've come to the 24th and last installment of the *Magic Advent Calendar* – sniff, sniff... BUT I left the best (?) and certainly most personal item for the last day, and here it is:

In 2004 director Matteo Bellinelli from the Swiss-Italian TV TSI approached me for a documentary on me and my magic. We included information that would educate the public about magic, its history, science, psychology, and also some of my talented colleagues. I'm happy to say that this is not just an ego-tripping showcase, a danger every "documentary" runs, but an informative and entertaining look at the art and science of magic.

You'll get a glimpse of me at my home, as well as on tour in Paris, Milano, Saragossa, and of course my hometown Basel, where I perform and meet magic friends. We visit the Playing Card Museum in Issy les Moulineaux, George Proust's Musée de la Curiosité in the Marais, arguably Paris's most charming quarter, a magic convention in Spain, see Juan Tamariz, Vanni Bossi, Manolo Tena, Bebel, Yves Carbonnier and other remarkable magicians perform and give original insights into magic, plus lots more.

I think that this documentary, whose original title is *Il giardino dei giochi segreti* ("garden of secret games") was inspired by an old Italian manuscript on magic, gives a truly inspiring view of the world of conjuring. This is the version subtitled in English and called *The Secret World of Magic*, which never aired, as far as I know. The original Italian version was broadcasted in 2004 on various channels in Switzerland and Italy. The first airing was on a Sunday evening 8 pm, prime time, on TSI1 (Televisione Svizzera Italiana).



To watch [CLICK HERE](#).

# Farewell



Dear reader!

This PDF is a collection of the 24 posts I wrote for my first *Magic Advent Calendar 2020*, with few editorial touches, and it might suggest that there will be another one for 2021, but don't take my word for it 😊

It was much more laborious than I assumed; this shows you that I have not learned much from my past experience as a writer...but that keeps me humble, and that's a good thing, all things considered.

I'm reminded of Schopenhauer, who once wrote, "My philosophy never earned me anything, but it saved me a lot." He hit the nail on the head, for there are so many things in life than cannot be measured or expressed in figures but are important. Einstein is credited with having said, "Not everything that can be counted counts and not everything that counts can be counted."

This work was created in the pandemic year of 2020, and it brought me and those who followed me pleasure and insights. It forced me to review many of my notes, and it made me rediscover the wonderful complexity of the art and science of magic. For this I want to thank you!

With much affection,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roberto Giobbi".

Roberto Giobbi