

Review from long-time working pro, Nick Lewin

I recently received a book in the mail that caused me a great deal of pleasure. Not just because of the content but also the very nature of the book. The author is Trevor Lewis with Phil Willmarth and the name of the book is ***Routines Matter***.

Trevor Lewis is one of the United Kingdom's most versatile and entertaining performers. I remember how highly Ken Brooke thought of **Trevor's work and the** high esteem in which he held him. Phil Willmarth is a superb editor who cuts away anything that doesn't contribute to the books theme and title.

If you are looking for the latest one-handed center deal then this is not your kind of book. Let's be honest there are already plenty (by which I mean too many) books and videos that can help you discover more and more variations on the physical technicalities of our art.

What is sorely lacking in most magic books is information about the actual structure **and construction of successful tricks**. There are many performers who just want to **entertain a lay audience with some solid** and entertaining magic, the kind of tricks you buy in the magic shop and combine into a solid show. This book is perfect for them.

Trevor Lewis has a **wonderfully** sharp mind when it comes to pruning away the unnecessary from a trick. There is much to learn from his direct and uncluttered **approach** to taking a piece of magic and turning it into a routine. It reminds me a little of the wonderful (and outrageously underrated) books that Roy Johnson gave the magic world. Roy was a little more detailed in the descriptions of his tricks, but the similarity exists in the psychological strength of the routines.

You can read this book as a source of great ideas/gags to make you a better and more entertaining performer. However, if you take a step back and explore the overview that it presents you can learn an awful lot about the true art of seeing magic from a layman's viewpoint. In fact I would suggest employing the mental exercise of translating the words as you read them from the page into a mental movie and try watching them in your mind's eye playing out to a real audience.

Please don't think that I am underestimating some of the really smart and innovative technical magic contained in the book. As someone who has made a living for many years by linking finger rings, I **was** highly impressed by Trevor's handling. For the hundreds of magicians who have bought a Humber Ring and never used it, this is a great routine.

Looking at the list of routines that Trevor covers in his book is rather like reading a breakdown of my actual working material. Strong tricks that will impress an audience and make you a memorable performer. The real work on the real tricks, the stuff that

has put my daughters through expensive university educations, well, OK their scholarships helped. I don't often take the time out to recommend a magic book but this one deserves the attention of anyone looking to improve the commercial smarts in their show.