

LOTZ OF MAGIC FOR KIDZ BY JOHN BREEDS

Reviewed by Paul Romhany in Vanish Magazine #52, page 85

I remember growing up in magic when everything on the market was geared toward kids' performers. Those days are long gone, yet the kids' market and kids' entertainers are still the busiest and hardest working magicians out there. The books that I grew up with are very dated and recently a small handful of great books for kids' entertainers has come on the market. I would consider this to be one of them. With over 200 pages this is jam-packed with original material for today's kids. It comes with two introductions by two of my favourite family entertainers, John Kimmons and Christopher T. Magician.

The routines in here are varied but my eye was immediately drawn to a Mental Epic routine called **Pro Epic**. This is a real novel approach to Mental Epic and big enough to be seen in large venues. He has taken one of the main flaws of Mental Epic and fixed it, which I talked about in a book I wrote on the subject (Mental Epic Compendium). This is not just a great kids' trick but can be used for adults as well. This has to be one of my favourites.

This book is filled with effects that range in age for kids from very young to teens, and there are lot of DIY tricks in here. So if you enjoy making props you will find a lot of great things to build in here.

From reading the material I can see John has a real sense of what today's children want to see in entertainment. It needs to be quick and moving, not slow and long-winded like in the good old days. He has all the right elements in here to keep them amazed and entertained.

There are a few electronic routines in here such as **Lie Detector Jr.** and his **Buzzer Opener**. **The Great Escape** is a terrific escape routine for kids, and his handling on **The Breakaway Wand** is definitely worth reading. The book also contains some very funny gags such as 'popping your ear' using something we all own. You can throw these little one-off gags in at any time and not only do the kids laugh but the parents will find it funny too. If you just filled your show with the gags in here you'd be making some great additions to your act.

As well as great tricks there is great advice. I like the way John says that many entertainers measure the success of a kids' show by how loud kids can shout - which doesn't prove anything. The truth is that it's the look on their faces when you amaze them with the magic and give them the gift of laughter. The old school type of entertaining kids is lazy and fails to understand the psychology of the child in an audience at a fun magic show. John really has found the secret to great magic and entertainment for kids, and now he is sharing it with all of us.

Take time to sit down and read this entire book. Choose one of two effects that really appeal (that's the hard part because they are all so good) and work on adding those. Don't just read the tricks but really study what John talks about. With people like John around entertaining, magic for kids won't be looked down upon. As John says there are some real hacks out there but I hope every single kids' entertainer buys this book and studies it.

This really is a lifetime of magic in one book. John has put together all of his tricks he used professionally for many years, and they are as fresh now as they were when he created them.

5 STARS

