



Westside Wizards!

S.A.M. ASSEMBLY 291, LOS ANGELES

MAY 2022

Next S.A.M. Meeting:
Tuesday, May 10, 7:00 PM
Theme: Magic Castle Night

Next S.Y.M. Meeting:
Sunday, May 15, 3:00 PM
Theme: Show a trick and learn from the Leaders

It's Magic Castle Time!

Our first in-person meeting for 2022 is at the Magic Castle

The **Magic Castle** has graciously allowed us to use the Albert Peller Theater for our **May 10th** meeting at 7:00 PM. We will be sharing our new tricks and routines with each other in a fantastic environment for what we do! This will be a private meeting for just us and guests attending the Castle that evening will not be permitted in the room. In addition, after the meeting, all Westside Wizards members will be granted access to the Castle to see other shows.

Items to note:

- ◆ **Meet out front of the Castle at 6:30 PM.** The front desk staff will admit the Westside Wizards into the building as a group, sometime before 7:00. The meeting will be from 7:00 to 9:00 in the Peller Theater.
- ◆ **There are no entry fees for our club** but parking at the Castle is \$8 for AMA members, \$20 for non-members.
- ◆ **Westside Wizards will require masks** during the meeting. COVID cases are now steadily rising throughout L.A. County, and the health department "strongly recommends" wearing masks, so please plan on wearing a mask during our meeting in support of fellow members who have a higher COVID risk.
- ◆ Masking once you've left our meeting in the Peller is your decision; the Magic Castle is not requiring visitors to wear masks at this time.
- ◆ This meeting will be for Wizards members and associate members only —we can't bring extra family or friends inside.

Plus... don't forget the Castle's dress code!
This is your big chance to dust off those fashionable threads you haven't worn for the past two years. Check the Castle website for [dress code](#) details.



Upcoming Meetings

May 10 - Magic Castle Night
May 15 - S.Y.M. Meeting (Online)
June 14 - OPICA (Tentative)

No Zoom!

Our May meeting will be in person at the **Magic Castle** in Hollywood:

7001 Franklin Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90028



COVER-UPS, AND COVER BANDS

Andy Deemer Shares His Character Creation Secrets At Wizards' April Meeting

The truth is out there: ask people to name a “conspiracist magician” and they usually think of Andy Deemer. Evidence of a government brainwashing plot, perhaps? No... but it is part of Deemer’s plot, as he explained during a virtual lecture for the Westside Wizards’ April meeting.

Deemer, a Magic Castle and Monday Night Magic headliner who was recently featured on Penn & Teller: Fool Us, has spent years developing his character’s message, dialogue, and props. “If you want to stand out, you have to come up with a consistent, memorable character,” he said. “After a show, the audience should have a strong sense of you beyond the tricks, and how you’re different from everyone else.”

That’s something few magicians pursue. “Ninety-nine percent of us are basically cover bands,” Deemer said. “We’re performing a mixture of other people’s tricks—and most of us perform them as scripted, in someone else’s style.” As a result, “muggle” audiences generally don’t remember individual magicians any more than they remember which cover band is their favorite.

Deemer, who drew inspiration from Henning Nelms’ Magic and Showmanship and Pete McCabe’s Scripting Magic, prefers the approach of magicians such as Lucy Darling, Pop Hayden, Mac King, and Rob Zabrecky... all as memorable for their characters as they are for their magic. By contrast, he said, “most of us are performing as the old Robert-Houdin character. That’s a valid character with valid routines, but since most magicians are playing this same character, they blur.”

Deemer’s conspiracy theorist doesn’t blur. He is out to reveal “the truth” to audiences, working from the zany premise that Earth is actually shaped like a bowl (so the oceans don’t spill out) and that birds are actually alien drones. If there’s any downside, it’s the challenge of playing him during hyper-partisan times. “It’s something I struggle with,” he admitted, noting he leans toward an X-Files vibe, avoiding conspiracies newer than twenty years old. “That’s why I’m trying to make the character more outrageous: I want to steer further from politics. I don’t want to bring that pain that every side is suffering into a theatrical experience.”

As a conspiracy buff in his own right, Deemer recommends performers pull from their own unique interests, then “turn up the volume on it” to grab audiences. Most important is scripting, then weeding out generic dialogue that any other magician could say. “As I script, I say, ‘which lines make me fade into this magical



Andy Deemer instructs Westside Wizards on how to have audiences buy into conspiracies

COVER-UPS, AND COVER BANDS (cont.)

blur, versus make me stand out?" he explained. "My goal is that every word I say is going to be unique to me."

That usually means recrafting those decades-old, generic presentations that are included with marketed tricks. Rather than asking an audience member why they chose a particular number, as most mentalists do, Deemer asks whether the chosen number "just popped into your skull, or did you actually feel the tendrils of control, almost like a squid sucking at your neocortex?" The line not only gets a laugh but describes the sensation the way his "paranoid basement dweller" character might phrase it.

"That's what's so great about having a well-defined character," Deemer said. "Once you have a presentation, it's going to fit your character like a jigsaw puzzle piece fitting into the puzzle." – *Dan Cray*

SYM News...



This month, we'll be sharing magic among ourselves and our S.Y.M. leaders will be teaching a trick or two. So, make sure to get a trick ready to show and get some paper ready so you can take notes on what you learn from others and from our S.Y.M. mentors.

The next S.Y.M. meeting will on **Sunday, May 15th at 3:00 PM PDT.**

Zoom meeting link will be sent to S.Y.M. members and leaders in a separate email.

Les
S.Y.M. Leader

President's Message

A word from Dan Cray...



Hi Westside Wizards,

Yes, it's finally happening: we're resuming in-person meetings!

Our virtual meetings (two years of them!) went very well, with month-after-month of solid attendance, outstanding guest lecturers, and many new members joining us along the way. Thank you for keeping Assembly 291 going strong!

That said, I'm looking forward to seeing all of you at the Magic Castle this month to celebrate our in-person "relaunch." If you'd like, bring some magic to perform for your clubmates. This month's theme is "Magic You've Been Working On Since 2020!"

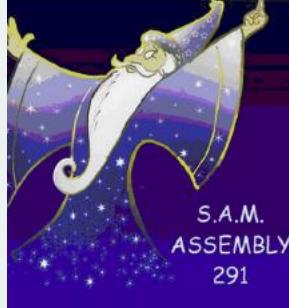
Of course, our May meeting is just the beginning. On June 14, monthly Westside Wizards meetings will resume at OPICA in West Los Angeles. We're hoping to have a virtual component to that and all future meetings for those who would like to continue joining us from afar, so check this newsletter next month for the details.

Right now, though, I'm too excited about May to spend much time discussing June. The talent level in this club deserves a Magic Castle stage, and now, with the Peller Theater reserved exclusively for Westside Wizards members, that's finally going to happen. For those of you who would rather not perform, trust me when I tell you that your love and knowledge of magic is just as welcome, and necessary, especially when we're meeting at one of the world's most vaunted magic locations.

As you can imagine, I'm thrilled to finally have an opportunity to host a meeting where we're all in the same place. Hopefully, pandemic conditions will cooperate and we can continue gathering in-person from here on out... and yes, we'll be masking during our meetings—this month's included—with that spirit of health and safety in mind.

I look forward to seeing you, in person, on May 10 at the Magic Castle!

Dan



The **Westside Wizards** was formed to give the West Los Angeles area a Magical presence and hopes that you will participate and be active in Assembly 291. We also welcome your participation in the youth program with the **Westside Junior Wizards**, Assembly Y141.

Westside Wizards Officers (2021-2022)

President	Dan Cray
Vice President	Phil Goodman
Treasurer	Doris Roach
Secretary	Brian Schwartz
Member at Large	Raul Fernandez
Member at Large	Jim Witoszynski
Immediate Past President	Les Cooper
M.U.M. Editor	Dan Cray
Newsletter Editors	Phil Goodman & Dan Cray



Westside Wizards Meeting Location
Stoner Park OPICA Adult Day Care Facility,
11759 Missouri Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90025

Between S. Bundy Drive and S. Barrington Avenue. Park off Missouri Avenue, next to the ball field

Past Presidents

2015-2020	Les Cooper
2013-2014	Bill Bedecarre
2011-2012	Frank Padilla, Jr
2009-2010	Raul Fernandez
2008	Les Cooper