



WestsideWizards!



S.A.M. ASSEMBLY 291, LOS ANGELES

APRIL 2022

Next S.A.M. Meeting:
Tuesday, April 12, 7:00 PM
Theme: **Andy Deemer Lecture**

Next S.Y.M. Meeting:
Sunday, April 10, 3:00 PM
Theme: **Jim Steinmeyer Lecture**

It's Andy Deemer Time!

How to Use Character & Personality to Make You (and Your Magic) More Memorable

Andy Deemer is a headliner at the world-famous Magic Castle in Hollywood, was recently featured on Penn & Teller: Fool Us, and won last year's prestigious "Close-Up Magician of the Year" award from the International Brotherhood of Magicians. He has also been featured at Monday Night Magic in NYC (virtually), Largo at the Coronet, and in Macaulay Culkin and Brenda Song's living room on a recurring basis.



Andy is also a regular performer at tech companies including Google, Apple, and Salesforce, bringing comedy, joy, and a hint of conspiracy theories to Zoom and Meet.

In Andy's lecture presentation on **April 12th**, he'll focus on character, revealing (for the very first time!) the tools he used to develop his award-winning character, the tools you could be using, and how he uses character to infuse almost every line of his scripts. (Okay, he'll also reveal how he did a couple of tricks.)

Whether you're building out a full theatrical character, or just want to reveal a hint of your personality, this lecture will help you add texture and meaning to your magic.

Upcoming Meetings

April 10 (SYM) - Jim Steinmeyer Lecture
April 12 - Andy Deemer Lecture
May 10 - Magic Castle Night
June 14 - OPICA (Tentative)

Using Zoom

If you don't already have Zoom installed, go to zoom.us/download to get the free Zoom application for your computer or download it from the App Store for your mobile device.

Note: Our meeting will start at 7:00 PM, but we will start letting Westside Wizards in around 6:45 PM before opening it up to the public at 7:00 PM.

This month's Zoom meeting info:

Meeting ID: 853 3662 7457
Passcode: 205606

[JOIN NOW](#)

Click on the link above and it will open Zoom and take you to the meeting. You will be then let in by the meeting host.

SILENCE IS GOLDEN (AND MAGICAL)

Mime Artist Chris Herren Teaches Movement, “Giving,” and Character

It sounds like the setup for a joke: *Did you hear the Westside Wizards had a mime give a magic lecture?* But that’s exactly what happened at the club’s March meeting, when mime artist and magician **Chris Herren** presented a virtual lecture as his acclaimed, magical pantomime character, Faust.

While Faust did not speak—verbally, at least—Herren did. Alternating between his silent, masked stage character and himself, Herren offered a wealth of insights on movement techniques and character creation. “I’m not trying to make all of you mimes,” he said. “I’m here to share my journey, because I think it’s relevant to magic.”

That journey is particularly poignant since Herren’s accomplishments—which include performing at the 2021 FISM North American

Championships and winning back-to-back PCAM Gold Medals for Parlor Magic—pale in comparison to his biggest victory: triumphing over cancer.

“Faust was a representation of the loneliness and helplessness I was going through at the time,” Herren said. During his ordeal, he read Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s 18th-century tale of a man selling his soul and realized he actually *sympathized* with Faust. “I asked myself: if the Devil appeared and made this unbelievable deal with me... would I do it?” he said. “Because I understood what Faust was going through. He was desperate.”

Herren developed his masked version of Faust as a reflection of his own dreams of someday escaping that desperation... with Faust’s magic representing those dreams. “It took cancer for me to finally understand that I wanted to move in this direction,” said Herren, who later worked extensively with Jeff McBride to further develop his character, performance style, and magic techniques. He also studied pantomime under the guidance of Dan Griffiths, an award-winning theater and mime instructor who was a student of Marcel Marceau, as well as Japanese Noh theater, which focuses on poetic expression through a performer’s eyes, and *commedia dell’arte*, an Italian form of mask theater.

The resulting act uses a silk knot opener to raise audience curiosity, followed by an upbeat, cut and restored rope routine that invites the audience into Faust’s world. Faust himself is a lively, expressive, and occasionally melancholy character who completely transcends the mask. By the time Herren presents Faust’s core effects,



Chris Herren showcases his alter-ego, Faust

SILENCE IS GOLDEN (AND MAGICAL) (cont.)

he has fully connected with his audience on an emotional level, through mime and music, to create a truly magical experience.

Routines such as “The Broken Music Box,” in which Faust enchants a damaged ballerina figurine, succeed in part because of a technique that Herren calls “Giving”: subtle, forward-and-back movements that he uses as a “bridge” between himself and his audience. “It’s an attempt to ‘give’ magic instead of showing it,” Herren said. “We always hear that you need interactive magic, but I don’t believe you need people to pick cards to connect. If your body or your physicality says it, they’ll engage.”

Many magicians, he said, don’t understand that their body movements continually “speak” to audiences since humanity relied upon innate gestures and pantomime to communicate before developing spoken language. “That’s why a smile is a smile across all cultures,” he said, “and why you can ‘read’ when a performer is nervous; he emits that in his physicality.”

Now, more than ten years after beating cancer, he is determined to continue presenting magic that goes beyond simple tricks. “I want to inspire people,” Herren said. “And to tell my story about a character named Faust.” – *Dan Cray*

Congratulations to Westside Wizards Member!

Congratulations to Westside Wizards Member **Kenrick “Ice” McDonald** on his election to the Board of Directors of the Magic Castle. He will serve a three-year term on the Board.

“Ice” received the most votes of any of the candidates running for the position. That’s a lot to be said about Ice’s character and dedication as he was one of the petition candidates and not one “suggested” by the Nominating Committee.

When speaking to “Ice” after the announcement, he said he was proud to be a Westside Wizards member and now the Westside Wizards have a voice at the Magic Castle.

Congratulation’s “Ice”! We’re glad to have you as a member of the Westside Wizards.



President's Message

A word from Dan Cray...



Hi Westside Wizards,

Spring is the season of rebirth, so I suppose it's appropriate that this spring brings with it a fresh start and some very exciting times for our club.

First, on **April 12** we have what could possibly be our final virtual-only meeting, with **Andy Deemer** as our guest lecturer. I'm an X-Files fan, and I have a feeling Andy will be channeling that TV show as he discusses his conspiracy-themed character and performance techniques.

Then, if all goes well, our club will be resuming in-person meetings on Tuesday, **May 10**. For that month only, we'll be celebrating our "relaunch" by holding our first in-person meeting at (drumroll)... the **Magic Castle!** The staff there has reserved the Peller Theater exclusively for the Westside Wizards that night, for our usual 7-9 pm meeting time. Should be a lot of fun performing for each other (or simply enjoying the performances) at the Castle!

Please note that our Castle meeting is a tentative plan, and will depend upon COVID transmission rates continuing their recent decline. I understand that some of you have concerns; rest assured that I do as well. The good news is, as I write this column (in early April) COVID numbers have declined for several weeks.

I should emphasize the May meeting will be for Wizards members and associate members only—we can't bring extra family or friends inside. We'll meet out front of the Castle at 6:30 pm then enter the building as a group. Though health department guidelines no longer require masks, they continue to "strongly recommend" them, so please plan on wearing one during the meeting in support of members who are at a higher risk of COVID.

On June 14, our monthly meetings will once again resume at OPICA. More details on that as we get closer.

Definitely some exciting events forthcoming for the Westside Wizards. As always, my sincere thanks for your continued involvement with both the art of magic and Assembly 291. See you online for the April 12 meeting!

Dan

SYM News...



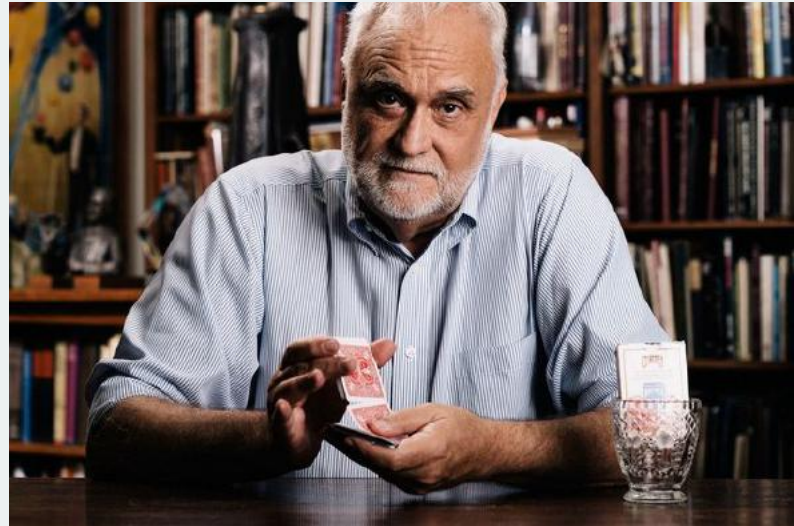
S.Y.M. News

No fooling, great guest speaker this month.

Jim Steinmeyer, magician, author, consultant, and creator of magic will be joining us on Sunday, April 10, for the monthly S.Y.M. online meeting.

Jim began his career by serving as Doug Henning's Illusion Designer, working with Doug on two Broadway shows and numerous television specials and guest appearances. He created many of Doug's most memorable marvels, including Origami, The Pole Levitation, The Magic Elevator and Walking Through a Mirror.

He suggested the idea—the sequence and secret for causing the Statue of Liberty to disappear—purchased by David Copperfield and used on his 1984 television special. This iconic television moment became a trademark for Copperfield throughout his career.



Jim also created special illusions for Siegfried and Roy, Harry Blackstone Jr., Orson Welles, Lance Burton, and Ricky Jay. His inventions represent hundreds of popular and game-changing mysteries featured around the world.

Through his career, Jim has made a specialty of interpreting the great magic of the past, writing numerous books about magic and magicians.

From 2018 to 2020, Jim served as President of the Academy of Magical Arts, the club at the Magic Castle in Hollywood, and served on the Board of Directors for seven years. There, he rewrote, designed and produced the new edition of the Houdini Séance, the immersive show, which re-opened in 2022.

You don't want to miss this meeting.

Sunday, April 10 at 3:00 PM Pacific Time.

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

Les
S.Y.M. Leader

Magic Castle Swap Meet!

It's been about three years but the Swap Meet is back!

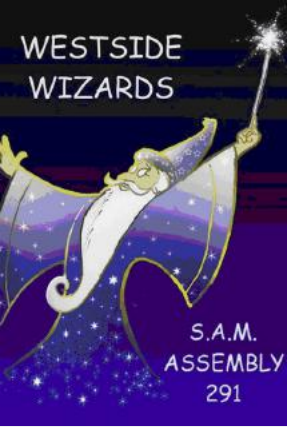
The Magic Castle will be closed for business on **Saturday, April 23** during the day (i.e. no brunch) as the Swap Meet will be taking over the entire building. From the Terrace Room and all the dining rooms all the way down to the Inner Circle, you'll find an array of magicians and vendors with great deals on stuff you might be looking for. You'll find hard to find gems, books, new and antique magic props, videos, cards and more at what might be some of the best prices around.

All **AMA members** will be allowed in starting at **8:00 AM** at no cost. Guests of AMA Members as well as members of S.A.M. I.B.M., and The Elders will be allowed in starting at 9:00 AM for \$10. It's expected that the Swap Meet will run until around 1:00 PM but all the good deals generally are gone by 11:00 AM so plan on getting there early!

If you would like to have a table to sell any of your stuff that you've been accumulating in those drawers and boxes over the years, request the application form by contacting swapmeetapplication@magiccastle.com. Tables will be limited and going quickly so contact them ASAP if you're interested.

Parking for AMA members will be \$8 and it will be \$10 for non-members.





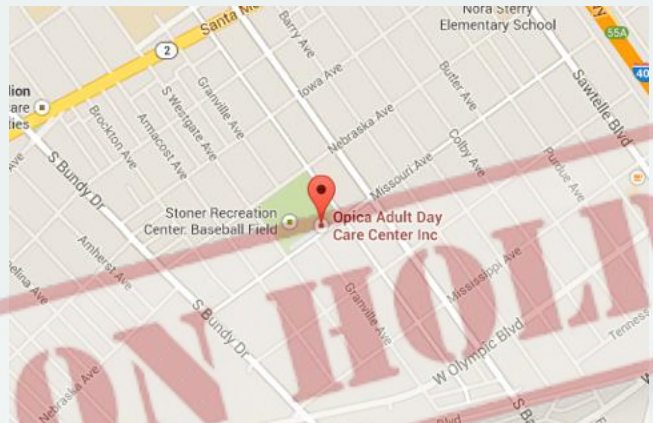
The **Westside Wizards** was formed to give the West Los Angeles area a Magical presence and hopes that you will participate and be active in Assembly 291. We also welcome your participation in the youth program with the **Westside Junior Wizards**, Assembly Y141.

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

Past Presidents

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



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

Contact us: WWW.WESTSIDEWIZARDS.ORG
INFO@WESTSIDEWIZARDS.ORG OR SYM@WESTSIDEWIZARDS.ORG FOR THE JUNIORS