

**"I MEAN, IF I'M GOING TO DO MAGIC, I WANT TO DO MAGIC! DO STUFF THAT'S JUST CRAZY AND IMPOSSIBLE."**



Ave it!

**C**ameron Francis – perhaps it's not a name that you're all that familiar with right now. But give it a year and odds on you'll be sick to death of hearing about him. Just you mark our words!

This Florida based, close-up magician is sickeningly prolific, highly skilled and massively charismatic. Imagine (if you can) a hybrid of Jay Sankey's colourful plotting, Michael Close's working practicality and Jon Bannon's sheer unadulterated genius.

Cameron excels at creating off-beat plots and his material represents a canny mix of inventive narrative, sparkling performance skills and engaging personality. And it isn't just us here at **magicseen** towers that think so. In the last twelve months Cameron has released material into the magic world via Richard Sanders, Aldo Colombini, Royal Magic, Full52 and Bigblindmedia.

"It's certainly been an incredible twelve months!" Cameron explains, "I honestly can't believe how much of my stuff has gotten out there in such a short amount of time. My first booklet, 'Fresh Mint', produced by Full52 Productions came out early last year and received terrific reviews. And was quickly followed by one of my packet tricks, 'What It Isn't'. Hot on the heels of that trick, Aldo Colombini produced another packet trick for me, 'Twists and Turns' followed by 'Prediction Gone Wild'. Then Royal Magic released 'Red Hot Prediction' earlier this year and last but most certainly not least, Big Blind Media

released my first DVD set 'The Omega Mutation' this past February. And there's a lot more on the way! Whew. Now I'm exhausted. Let me sit here for a minute and catch my breath... Okay, I'm back."

It's certainly funny that he would collaborate with Richard Sanders, as he has often been likened to him (and that other venerable Canadian Jay Sankey). Indeed the common thread that seems to unite the three of them, is an infectious enthusiasm and wide-eyed eagerness.

#### **Can you see that? Do you take the comparison as a compliment?**

"Of course I do," Cameron laughs, "And I will also say that it's really no accident. I find myself very attracted to their work because it's so whimsical and off beat. That's the kind of stuff I love.

"I mean, if I'm going to do magic, I want to do MAGIC! Do stuff that's just crazy and impossible. One of the most magical images I can remember as a kid is from the movie 'Mary Poppins' when Mary and the gang jump into a chalk drawing on the sidewalk. Now that's magic!

"And that's the kind of stuff Sankey and Sanders do on a close up level. It's that stuff that made you giddy as a kid and it's the kind of magic I strive for."

#### **So how exactly did you meet up with Richard Sanders and Aldo Colombini?**

"Well, in actual fact, I have not met either of them. Just communicated via email. It really started with the release of the 'Fresh Mint' booklet last year. I sent it off to a lot of

magicians who I respect and admire just to sort of say, "Hey, I'm a big fan! Here's a sampling of my work. Hope you enjoy it." Richard got back to me because he really loved the 'Fresh Mint' concept. Aldo got back to me because he really loved the card tricks in the booklet and was wondering if he could put one or two of them on a DVD project. So, from there we started communicating more and now Aldo has released two of my packet tricks with a third one on the way. And I've got a project in the works with Richard."

#### **One thing that really seems to stand out with your material is a solid sense of narrative. Lots of magicians simply 'show' you something amazing, but with no framework. You seem to work very hard to develop engaging stories to go with your tricks. Is that something you see as important?**

"I see the structure of effects as more important than anything. In other words, the visual story of an effect is far more important to me than coming up with a clever story to go with it. Usually, when an effect is structurally sound, the patter sort of naturally falls into place.

"Being an actor and a bit of a writer, I think a lot about narrative and structure when I come up with effects. A famous filmmaker once said that if you turn the sound off during a movie, you should still be able to tell what's going on in the story. This is the way I feel about magic. I might come up with some clever little patter for a particular trick.

But, really, that should be secondary to the visual story of the effect. Even if I don't talk during an effect, you should be able to follow what's going on. To me, this is the strongest kind of magic."

#### **You mentioned there that you are an actor by profession – do you think this background and training has impacted on your magic?**

"Absolutely. And that's because acting has taught me to be a lot more comfortable being myself.

"When I was young, I did a lot of children's parties as a way of making extra money when I was in middle school and high school. I went to a performing arts high school and was starting to get very serious about acting. At the same time, I was getting more and more frustrated with my magic show because I was starting to realise that I didn't have much of an act. I was just doing a bunch of tricks. I didn't really know any other magicians at the time and had no idea how to make my act better. Plus, I was just really uncomfortable being me on stage. I thought that I needed to be playing a character totally different than