

VANISH

Magic Magazine

ANTHONY OWEN

Unlocking the secrets to performing on television



RAY LUM

TRIPLE THREAT

New Series featuring
Illusion builders



JEFF HOBSON

ON THE ROAD

Damned Kids!



ROMANY

DIVA OF MAGIC

Dream it, Believe it,
Be it ...

A man, Ray Lum, is shown in a dynamic pose, floating or jumping in the air. He is wearing a yellow jacket over a dark shirt and dark pants. His right arm is extended forward, and a bright green, ethereal energy or light emanates from his hand, reaching towards the right side of the frame. His left hand is raised, with small, glowing white sparks or stars around it. The background is a city skyline at night, with several tall buildings visible. The sky is filled with a dense shower of golden sparks or confetti, creating a magical atmosphere. The overall color palette is dominated by warm yellows, oranges, and greens, with the city lights providing a darker, textured backdrop.

THE ILLUSION FABRICATION SERIES

Ray Lum is one of three things. He is an Illusionist, Close Up Magician, and Magic Fabricator. Those who have worked with him will tell you he is a perfectionist both in performing and building props. There are very few people in the magic business who are both performer and magic fabricator. This clearly puts him in a class all by himself. We welcome Ray as a new columnist for VANISH MAGAZINE

RAY *Illusionist*
LUM

RAY LUM

THE TRIPLE THREAT

Illusionist, Close-up Magician and Magic Fabricator

Magic came to me when I was eight years old and when Lee Grable came to my elementary school and did an Illusion show. I was mesmerized by his "Floating Piano" and I caught the magic bug. The next time the magic bug bit me, was when Doug Henning appeared on television and did his "Egyptian Theme act", which is now in Greg Gleason's living room) and of course when David Copperfield came on TV.

I wanted to learn everything I had seen on those specials so I bought the "Tarbel Books" and Mark Wilson's Course. I still have these books in my library today.

At the age of 14 I decided I wanted to become an Illusionist but I had no money to buy big illusions. As an eager young kid I grabbed my dad's hammer, saw, and my *Encyclopedia of Stage Illusion Book*. I made a mess in my dad's garage even though I thought I knew what I was doing at first, but of course I didn't. I was making a base and the base came out to be 20 inches thick. First I thought it was cool to make my own wood base, but I just ended up wasting my dad's good wood. I didn't let first experience stop me from building.

At age 18 I pursued different jobs so I could buy Thayer and Abbotts Props just to see how they were made and the quality of craftsmanship. I took various jobs including house construction, jobs in a cabinet shop, car paint shop, and at a metal fabricating shop that made signs. At the same time I was doing small magic shows

on the side but I knew by taking all these jobs it would definitely help me enhance my building experience. The Thayer and Abbotts Props I would take apart to learn from them. To my amazement I was actually able to improve my skills on prop making and better myself by learning from these master builders.

Finally, at the age of 21 promoters from Asia called me to do several Illusion tours. They sent me all over Asia and I was doing Illusion shows in Japan, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Thailand, Philippines, Macau and then I went to Canada. The tour lasted a good several years. As soon as I got back home to Bay Area, California I got into working with several corporate events for clients such as "Silicon Graphics," "3M," "Hewlett Packard," and "Intel." For Intel I made their CEO appear with a custom made illusion, and other corporate companies made me design and build illusions with their company logo on them. Luckily having a shop of my own, I was able to accommodate many clients by creating everything they've asked for.

Back in 1989, while I was touring Japan an idea was born which is now called the "Lumball Machine." I was walking in to a store with my promoter and I glanced at a gumball machine on the side. The promoter said to me, "Ray'son, wouldn't it be cool if you can do something with a gumball machine." I ended up buying every gumball machine that I could find in Japan. I was in my hotel room finding ways to make it into a magic prop. Then it just dawned on me, "why don't I just vanish a

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ring and make it appear inside the capsule of the gumball machine." It took many trials and errors to get to where it is today. Upon my arrival to the United States I found out there were two more gumball machines made using two different methods. Between Hocus Pocus and I we sold over 250 units.

Around the same time I was also working as a close-up magician as well as doing stage shows at different events. I saved my money to buy professional illusions which led me towards John Gaughan and David Mendoza who were the two top builders at that time. I was very fascinated by their fabrication; so again, I bought most of their illusions to study their methods and building techniques. Later I also found other professional builders such Eric Olson and John Uhern, and carefully studied their ways of fabrication. Eric and John's work is amazing and I ended up adapted their way of fabricating. I've known Eric Olson for over 18 years and he is now one of my closest friends. I look up to him and still use him as builder myself. He still often helps me out and offers me tips and suggestions when it comes to fabricating.

In Morgan Hill, California, I started the Lum Entertainment Group/ Fabrication and Restoration Shop. There I began to restore top props build by John Gaughan, Bill Smith, David Mendoza, Owens, Wille Kennedy, Owen Redwine, Creative Magic, Spectrum Studios, Abbotts, Thayer, and Wellington. A recent example was when Paul Gross, owner of Hocus Pocus, gave me a Mark Wilson/John Gaughan Zig Zag to restore. It was Eric Olson who made the Zig Zag originally for Mark Wilson, but I needed help to find out the right colors for it. Eric Olson was extremely helpful on giving me tips to do the restoration. (See next few pages for the photos of the restoration.) The Mark Wilson Zig Zag was the hardest restoration I've even done. I told Paul when I first saw it, *"throw it away coz it's unsalvageable."*

Paul said to me, *"You can do it,"* and I said back to him, *"No, I can't, it's impossible!"* But Paul Gross believes in me so much that he knows I can deliver the job and he refused to give it to anybody else. He wanted me to restore it to its original days of *AliKazam!* It was a very intricate and challenging job and it took most of my time restoring it. The Zig-Zag is one restoration that I will always be proud of, and I am glad that Paul Gross brought it to me to refurbish.





In 2011 I moved with my wife, Marjorie and my son Jaden, to Las Vegas, Nevada. As we all know, Las Vegas, NV is the Magic Capital of the World. My best friend Tim White, a magic consultant for David Copperfield for many years, introduced me to a colleague named Tim Clothier, and I've worked with him as a fabricator for the last three years. In between jobs, I've performed in variety shows here in Las Vegas, N.V; Santa Fe Casino, Sun Coast Variety Show, and Sam's Town and also helped raised money for a High School music band in Mesquite, Nevada.

I also work with one of the greatest inventors and minds in magic, Mike Michaels. I am still performing my Illusion show around the world.

I just opened my own shop here in Las Vegas. My shop is all about restoration, fabrication, and also has an in-house sewing department. To kick-off Lum Entertainment Group/Fabrication Shop here in Las Vegas we made Kevin James' new prop for the Illusionist Tour, an illusion for Victor and Diamond, Greg Gleason, and couple Illusions for a TV project.

Our faculty continues to grow, from years of experience especially in performing close-up magic and large scale illusions, touring, stage craft, and consulting.

If you have any prop that needs fixing, restoring, welding, painting, sewing, and machining, feel free to call us at (702) 515-1600 Business Number or you may email Ray Lum at ray@themagicofraylum.com. Thank you for your continued support and we will continue to serve you.

In the upcoming issues of VANISH I will bring articles on the best of the best Illusion builders starting with Eric Olson (EDF),



Bill Smith (Magic Ventures), Mike Michaels (Magic Garage), Wille Kennedy, Craig Dickens, and Alan Zargorsky of Owen Magic Supreme to name a few.



RAY LUM



AND HIS TEN ASSISTANTS