

You Probably Didn't See This

A few months ago, about the worst non-dangerous thing that could happen in the show did. Well, now that I think of it, it's not the worst, but it was pretty bad, it was my nightmare. I don't want to tell you what bit, because, well, I don't want to, and I don't want to tell you what went wrong and I would appreciate it if y'all wouldn't think about it. Please don't try to guess, just let me tell you this story.

It was the middle of the show, and, suddenly, one of the ways the trick works wasn't. It just wasn't working. It was amazing. I was talking, but time stopped, I left my body. I was going, but we didn't have a trick.

The feeling is amazing. The stakes are very low, NO ONE can die, but the feeling is of real danger. My little animal brain just feels it's dying.

I kept going. I did the "moves" exactly like a high school kid would try to hide a cigarette from the principal. Teller didn't really know what was going on, but he could hear the cadence of my voice and had an idea something was wrong. Normally, we throw

focus back and forth, but Teller knew enough to just pull pull pull. I found out later he was really pulling focus—what he was doing was the most interesting stuff in the world. The trick is well enough designed and Teller was on it enough that even though on one level of trickery there was no trickery, we FOOLED EVERYONE. Only Burt and I were dying. Teller and Wiley knew SOMETHING was wrong, but not what. Burt and I were sharing a very private moment in a very public place. My heart was just racing. As the trick went on, I started to realize that we'd done it. It was going to be okay, we hadn't blown the trick to the whole crowd.

After the show NO ONE mentioned it. Now, an audience doesn't remember everything that bugs them, and even if they do, they don't tell us, but there were comments on THAT TRICK and no one said anything fishy (they sometimes do). I guess twenty-nine years of performing, and a perfect partner, and a wonderfully designed bit gives you quite a cushion. —Penn.

Moto Knows
4132 S. Rainbow Blvd., Suite 377
Las Vegas, NV 89103

Change of Address Requested

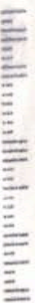
"Teller is the magician—you're his helper."
—Penn's dad.



Issue 19

September / October 1996

60181142733



CURRICAN/PLAYFUL PRODUCTIONS
ANDREW MILLER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
PRESENTS

RECREATION BY PENN JILLETTE

STARRING
DEAN BRADSHAW, KELLY MCSHAIN, ANDREW TOTOLOS

DIRECTED BY MIKE WILLS

U.K. PREMIERE
OPENS MONDAY, 12 AUGUST
GREYFRIARS KIRK HOUSE · STUDIO TWO

VENUE 28
86 CANDLEMAKER ROW 8:00 PM
EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND
BOX OFFICE: 0131-225-36266

NEW YORK PREMIERE
OPENS THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17
CURRICAN, A THEATRE · SECOND FLOOR

154 WEST 29th STREET 8:00 PM
RESERVATIONS: 212-736-2533

MARTHA R. GASPARIAN EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Penn is writing without his Teller. *Recreation*, Penn Jillette's new play, is in rehearsal for performances at the Currican Theatre on West 29th Street that are to start on October 17. Mr. Jillette said his work was about the boundaries of fantasy and reality. "I wrote a play about a guy who just sits in a topless club with a woman, and when she goes away to dance, his thoughts go away with her," he said, adding that he is always looking for new ways to express himself. "Penn and Teller is a very small pond and I'm a huge fish," the hefty Mr. Jillette observed. —*The New York Times*, July 26, 1996.

It has been said hundreds of times how business-like a conductor and composer [Pierre] Boulez is. Yet one of the great acts in music today is Boulez conducting his short 1965 masterpiece, "Eclat," as he did once more Tuesday night. Boulez here is hardly different from, say, Teller, when the magician, Penn's straight-faced partner in a business suit, does something you simply can't believe.... —from a review by *Mark Swed*, music critic, in the *Los Angeles Times* for May 30, 1996.

Submitted by Colman De Kay.

WOTO NEWS

Written mostly by Penn Jillette and Teller.
Most non-writing by T. Gene Hatcher,
with posting, proofreading, and printing by
Glenn Alai, Krasher, and Dan Maizner of alphagraphics.
Sin City is home to P & T: <http://www.sincity.com>

WOTO NEWS



Deborah Harry and her cohorts shall meet again when *Sabrina the Teenage Witch* materializes on ABC-TV September 20 • Photo by Krasher

British Compliments / American Compliments Part 2

On June 20, 1996, the Monte Carlo resort opened in Las Vegas. Penn and Teller were on hand for Lance Burton's first performance in his custom-designed theater.

After twenty minutes of wandering around the place I found the theater. I was surprised to find that the Monte Carlo has no restaurant called "Rainier's" or "Kelly's," and no boutique called "Off the Cliff."

Pretty much everybody in magic was there: Max Maven, Paul Daniels, Mark Wilson, Jay Marshall.... The president of the British Magic Circle was standing around with his presidential medalion on a ribbon around his neck.

Jay, who has always had an untouchable air of wit and class, and who knows just about everything in the world, walked up and beamed at me. He's VERY fond of P&T. He said hello, and immediately followed this with a joke. I told him I was steering clear of Paul Daniels, as I knew he had recently sent an angry letter about us to *Abra*, and he has a reputation for pugnacity.

Jay said, in his musical voice—his accent lies somewhere between Chicago and the West End—"Why

bent over Paul in his seat. They must have talked for a minute or so. Then Jay pointed to me. Paul looked over. I smiled. Paul looked confused and turned back to Jay. Jay talked. Paul smiled, looked sour, smiled. He stood up.

Jay edged his way down the aisle, Paul following. Jay introduced me. "I want you to know," said Paul, "I still have some good mob connections here in Las Vegas." He laughed tautly.

He handed a pocket-sized camera to Mark Wilson and had him take a picture of Paul with his hands around my throat (Paul had to reach up to throttle me), then a second one of Paul, Jay, and me in a line, leaning on each other.

I said to Paul, "Very nice to meet you after all these years. Last time I saw you was about fifteen years ago on the West End." "You SAW that show?" he asked. "I thought you told the *Daily Mirror* you'd never seen me." "That's Penn. He's never seen you. I saw that show. I especially liked your cups-and-balls opener." He seemed to want to say something civil but to make the point that he's above our jokes. "You know," he said, "I'm pretty much retired now. I have everything I want—a friend

monic course available in three languages. "Spanish in five days" was the only part I understood. He told an anecdote about learning to deliver his magic patter in German. It was funny. He talked fast and really seems to be a quick thinker and a witty guy. Jay stood there like a lead rod in a nuclear reactor, turning fury to useful energy.

I said, "Guess our little feud got us all some nice press, eh?" Paul said, coolly, "I've been in show business long enough to know you have to take care of yourself."

Paul returned to his seat, and Jay nodded to me with Puckish satisfaction. I looked around to see whether Penn and company had arrived. When I looked back, Jay was gone. I assumed he had dusted his hands and ascended into heaven until such time as he saw need of another good deed. When Penn arrived, I introduced him to Paul. —*Teller*.

I shook Daniels's hand and said, "I'm such a big fan." He said half-or-a-little-less-than-half kidding, "I don't know how you can lie like that." I said, "No, I'm not lying now, I was lying on TV. I was lying every time on TV. Now, I'm telling the truth." I laughed a bit and

Back in June, on the news or some C-SPAN thing (I know a lot about this), some guys (how's that for specific) in the New Jersey government had a press conference about some tax thing or something (more specifics), and one of them said something along the lines of "It's just smoke and mirrors. It's Penn & Teller stuff." —*Penn*.



September 12

Tonight Show with Jay Leno
NBC-TV

September 19, 21-25

Bally's Las Vegas
Las Vegas, NV

October 11-12

Yardley Hall
Johnson County Community College
Overland Park, KS

October 16

Weidner Center
University of Wisconsin
Green Bay, WI

October 18

Sangamon Auditorium
University of Illinois
Springfield, IL

October 19

College of Du Page Arts Center
Glen Ellen, IL

don't I introduce you?"

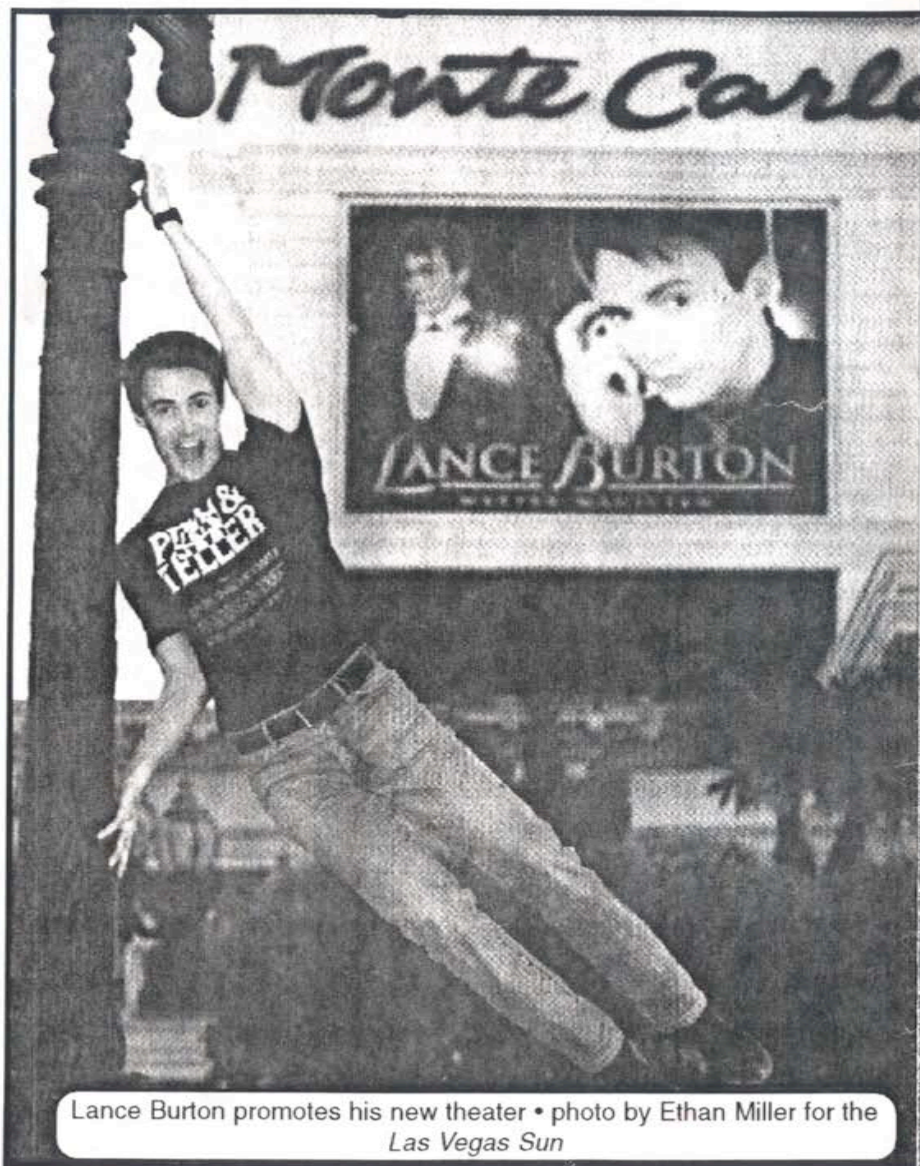
I didn't think that was a good idea. Jay—sensing, I think, an opportunity to exercise his divinity—said, "Ah, come on. I'll go first." So the two of us shuffled in Paul's direction.

Jay edged down the aisle first and

gave me very smart financial advice when I was thirty, and I played that well.... And I have my language courses." "Language courses?" I asked. Jay explained, "Paul has a language learning system that's very successful." Paul recited the advertisement for his language and mne-

he laughed a little less. He was pretty gracious, considering. —Penn.

Somebody with a camera tried to get a picture, but Penn was too tall to fit in the same frame with the Lilliputian Daniels. —Teller.



Lance Burton promotes his new theater • photo by Ethan Miller for the Las Vegas Sun

Three guys were being guillotined over in France. The first guy, well, the knife slipped and he didn't die. So the executioner says, "Well, you've paid your debt," and sends him on his way. Second guy, the same thing. Third guy says, "Hey, I can show you how to fix that thing." —Sam Jillette, Penn's dad.

My parents reported that in the *Philadelphia Weekly* a woman in the personal ads was advertising for "a Penn Jillette type." They sent the ad to our office. —Teller.

The personal ad said, "Are you Penn Jillette in body and spirit?" and went on to say the chick was voluptuous and liked all music—"Chopin to Springsteen." She wanted her Penn Jillette to be 25-30 years old. I called and left a message that said I am Penn Jillette in body, spirit, and any other way you could imagine. I am Penn Jillette and I'm flattered about the ad, but, I didn't leave my number because I'm 41, and that's just plain too old. —Penn.

October 23
State Theatre
Easton, PA

October 24
Strand Theatre
York, PA

October 25
Performing Arts Center
State University of New York
Purchase, NY

October 26-27
Staller Center for the Arts
State University of New York
Stony Brook, NY

October 29
Willet Hall
Portsmouth, VA

October 31
Eisenhower Hall
U. S. Military Academy
West Point, NY

November 2
Mendel Center for Arts and
Technology
Benton Harbor, MI

November 3
Macomb Center for the
Performing Arts
Clinton Township, MI

November 6-9
Lincoln Center
Fort Collins, CO

November 10
Pikes Peak Center
Colorado Springs, CO

Schedule subject to change. Damn it.