

'do you believe in Magic?'



Elliott Smith

Photo: Lois Siegel

By Kim Valentine

I knew I was in for a unique experience on my first meeting with local Magician Elliott Smith. In a world where first impressions count for everything, Smith began our interview by asking if I believed in magic and then verbalizing the card I had just chosen in my mind. A flawless first impression!

This local celebrity makes his home in a space both simple, yet inspiring. The pristine, white surroundings and furnishings hint at a man who is organized, powerful and secretive.

The Ottawa-born entertainer has been a professional magician for forty years. Although he has worked mundane jobs, like anyone, he knew magic was his calling from the time he saw his first magician at six years of age. While other kids were playing at the park, Smith was in his room learning and practicing his art. Visiting the library he would find books on magic and books that taught

magic. He had magic catalogues and would convince his parents, always his biggest supporters, to purchase items in places they would visit on holidays.

Today, Smith is also the educator. Co-author of the internationally acclaimed *Highway to Success – The Entertainer's Roadmap to Business*, he teaches business savvy to the unsavvy. His motivation for the book was a simple desire to inspire people to do what they love.

Smith's co-author is Ian Quick, who was himself inspired by Smith to follow his passion to a life that was more fulfilling. Leaving behind a career as a will and estate lawyer, he is now living his dream, as a magician. The book took two and a half years from its inauguration on Elliott's kitchen table to finally being printed but was well worth the wait.

Highway to Success – The Entertainer's Roadmap to Business is sold through Happy Medium Books and is available throughout Europe, North

America and Indonesia. With the exception of a chapter on agents, the book is applicable to all business people and wannabe business people alike and has attracted the attention of many.

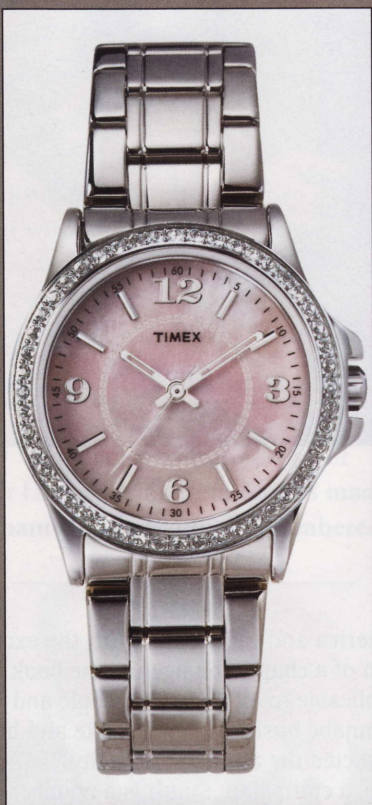
As a craftsman, Smith is a member of the International Brotherhood of Magicians, the world's largest organization for magicians and those interested in that art. The brotherhood has about 12,000 members in over 300 cities worldwide with 'rings' (the term rings symbolizes one of the oldest magic tricks and it also symbolizes meeting clubs for magicians). These rings are also a place aspiring magicians can first be introduced to the realm of magic, that is if they can get in.

A hopeful magician must first meet an established magician, like Smith, and convince them they are serious about the art. The sponsor magician must see them perform and experience their enthusiasm. The wannabe magician must then pass an interview process involving demonstrating capabilities and knowledge of magic.

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Photo: Lois Siegel

Elliott Smith is the co-author of *Highway to Success – The Entertainer's Roadmap to Business*.

If, they successfully prove a genuine desire, the members vote to allow the new apprentice into the ring. The final step in membership to the International Brotherhood of Magicians is a sworn oath, to secrecy, among other things.

Elliott Smith the Magician is also 'Elliott Smith the Speaker.' He speaks to bank clients who have just taken out a business loan, and in board rooms to help with team building. He offers motivational speaking and he speaks at the convention the Brotherhood holds annually. He speaks about good business practices and the how-tos of marketing and selling yourself.

It has long been known that the Canadian market, in many cases, does not support Canadian talent until they have made it big somewhere else. So how can a hard working Canadian magician successfully boost their career? How about slipping your book to a waiter to pass to Jay Leno before he goes on stage at a comedy show? Sounds a little risqué but in this case it resulted in Leno sharing some great leads for marketing the book and the numbers for the bookers of Leno's *The Tonight Show*. It may be a last

minute call to perform on the show but Smith says, "If I'm breathing...I'd be available." In 2004 the stage show *Smith and Quick in Mod Vod* spent one full month at Theatre du Lac Leamy. The show was a great success and represents half of Smith's dream show. The other half would be having his parents in the audience to see what he has become. Does he wish he had quit his day job to pursue this life earlier?

"I wouldn't have been ready then. I'm where I should be at this time. It's all about presentation. If you leave my show wondering how I did something, I've done my job." And it is undoubtedly a job he loves.

This summer Smith will be recognized for his contribution to magic by the Interna-

tional Brotherhood of Magicians with *The Order of Merlin Shield*. This is an award presented to men and women who have contributed for thirty years or more to the performing, advancing and teaching of magic.

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Elliott Smith can be booked for close-up magic, for stage magic shows, children's shows, corporate meetings, trade shows, or as a business speaker. You can also see Smith's Close-Up, or Table Magic every Friday in the Kanata Centrum at Philthy McNasty's from 6:30-7:30pm. For more about Elliott Smith visit: www.seethemagic.com or call Smith at 613-823-0707.

If you would like to purchase the book, *Highway to Success – The Entertainer's roadmap to success* visit Happy Medium books at happymediumbooks.com. ■