

INTERNATIONAL MAGIC MAGAZINE

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JADE:  
THE BEAUTY  
OF MAGIC

BY NICK LEWIN



**H**aving spent the last 12 years writing articles about magic, I have noticed a very consistent pattern. The majority of magicians seem to have discovered magic at about the age of 11 after seeing a magic show. Next their interest in the magical arts was increased when they visited a magic shop and began to buy their first books and props. Shortly afterwards they begin to perform shows and truly start their journey to become magicians.

Jade has had an interesting twist on this evolutionary pathway, and I was fascinated hearing her discuss the role of the brick and mortar magic store in her development and genesis as a magician. However, let me start our story at the beginning, and begin by setting the stage a little with a few personal details about this beautiful and talented magician.

Jade was born in Medan in Indonesia, and by the time she was six years old was living in Taipei in the Republic of China. When she was nine years old her parents moved to San Francisco and it has been

her home ever since. Let's be honest, when you live in that particular City by the Bay--why would you ever move? For the eight years after arriving in Northern California she had no interest whatsoever in performing magic, and it was a curious twist of fate that led to her discovering magic.

The summer before her senior year at high school, Jade looked for a job to bring in a little extra cash. At the age of 17, like most teenage girls, she wanted to augment her income in order to purchase the essentials in life such as clothes, make-up, and music. Little did she realize that her part time job was going to focus and direct her life in quite the way that it did for the next nine years.

The job Jade signed up for was as a cashier at "The World of the Unexplained" located in Fisherman's Wharf in the heart of the San Francisco tourist zone. The museum also featured a small magic store that visitors were funneled into prior to exiting the building. Six months after she started her job she was dismayed to

## JADE

Jade recently appeared on FOOL US in the USA with her wrist tie routine. The photo above is from a live show where Jade performs Snow Storm in China

**"SHE HAD NO INTEREST IN PERFORMING MAGIC, AND IT WAS CURIOUS TWIST OF FATE THAT LED HER TO DISCOVERING MAGIC."**

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hear that the attraction was closing. The only job that they could offer her was working in the magic shop and demonstrating magic.

She thought about it, said "Yes," and changed the entire course of her future life.

Jade quickly began to learn how to perform the various magical items that the store sold. She mastered all the classics such as the Cups & Balls, The Ball & Vase, and Svengali Decks. She took items home at night, mastered them, and was busy demonstrating them the next day. She soon became hooked on the experience of doing what was impossible. "I remember," she says, "Kids would come into the store with their parents and look at me as if I had special powers!" Heady stuff indeed for a rather shy young lady who, until then, had no idea that anyone other than men could become magicians.

One day a customer visited the store searching for material to perform magic at a school show. After watching her spend 40 minutes demonstrating suitable tricks, they had a better idea, and hired Jade to present the show for them. In spite of never having performed magic outside the shop, it was an easy decision for her to say "Yes." "It was a new challenge," says Jade. "I like new challenges because they enlighten you." Quickly other local shows followed from leads and contacts at the magic store. She was soon performing at kids' parties across the Bay Area.

One day the Marriott Hotel phoned the store to ask if they could recommend someone to perform close-up magic in one of their bars. Jade instantly responded, "Yes, I will send her over!" She headed straight over to the Marriott with her close up kit and locked in the gig. The booking lasted 18 months and was a big success. The magic store had given her an overview of magic, allowed her to master her rehearsal chops, and also polished her performing skills. It was a splendid way to launch a career in magic.

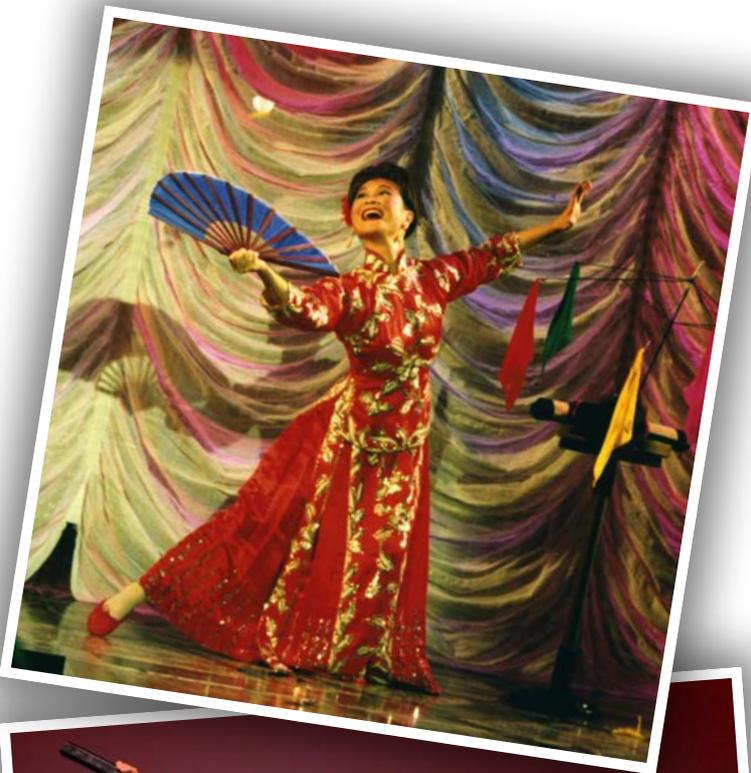
By now Jade had acquired a degree in Mass Communication from San Francisco State University, and had to decide whether to pursue a livelihood in television journalism, or to continue as a magician. She realized that a career on TV was going to have her starting at the bottom rung of the news industry while as a magician she was already getting work and making money doing something she enjoyed. She chose magic and has never looked back.

Jade counts James Hamilton as one of her early mentors, and worked with him in his show. James had been part of the influential Long Beach Mystics club in Southern California and was looking to create a similar group in the Bay area. Jade assisted Hamilton in his Chinese themed act, however, she soon realized that she wanted to create her own manipulative show with a Chinese theme and focus. Jade also made the decision that she wanted to perform this act in Los Angeles at the Magic

# JADE



The Beauty of Magic



Castle. It took her two years to compose and create the act that she visualized in her mind.

In 1985 Jade loaded her props up into her car and drove down to Hollywood to audition for Peter Pit at the Castle. Jade passed the audition with flying colors and received her first booking at the Magic Castle later that same year. Her engagement was a smash and it began a highly successful series of bookings in that esteemed venue. During this time she was nominated as Stage Magician of the Year and received valuable mentoring in her craft from performers such as Peter Pit, Mike Caveney, and John Carney.

Back in San Francisco Jade was now beginning to book and appear in ever increasing numbers of corporate bookings for clients such as Sony, and Levi Strauss. She began to expand her show to include illusions as well as her manipulative and participation magic. The new direction of Jade's show allowed her to begin performing in the international cruise market, where she quickly captivated audiences. In 1990 Jade won the IBM gold medal in the St. Louis International Competition. She says that this award was a real confidence booster and gave her a real feeling of legitimacy as a performer. It also led to her being featured in a NHK magic special filmed in Tokyo in 1991. In 1993 she made quite an international splash when, along with all her illusions, she was flown to Taiwan for another TV special and an appearance on a popular sitcom. Jade also entered the hugely influential FISM contest, which in turn led to her realization that she wanted to explore performing in the fast growing cabaret circuit that was springing up throughout central Europe.

Voronin from Russia gave Jade a list of international agents and she sent mailings and tapes to everyone on it. One of these agents remembered her act from FISM and it led to a series of prestigious cabaret and television bookings across Europe from 1990-2000. Most of these dates featured her eight-minute silent act, but this was all about to change dramatically when Murray Hatfield asked her to participate in one of his Canadian tours. However, Murray needed a 20 minute set, and not an eight-minute one for his tour.

Jade went back to the drawing board for the Canadian tour and reinvented her show by designing her quick-change act. This development allowed her a complete change of character onstage, and her performance now featured commercial stand up material such as the Card Sword, Torn & Restored Newspaper and the Thumb Tie combined with her award winning manipulative act. This

show became the prototype for the act that Jade featured in casino dates in Paris, Nevada, and Atlantic City. One highlight in Jade's career at this time was being selected to perform for the Royal Family of Monaco at the Princess Grace Theatre in Monte Carlo. The performers were invited to dine with the Royal Family and Jade found herself sitting next to Prince Albert. The Prince invited her out to sail on the Royal yacht, but alas their plans could not be aligned enough to schedule it.

In 2002 Jade and her husband Mathew gave birth to her daughter Tessa and it signaled an end to her crazed schedule of global travel, Tessa was soon joined by younger brother Ethan. Jade then began to carefully balance her life as both performer and mother. She made the decision to be highly selective in her bookings and raise her performing fees. This was an excellent choice both personally and professionally and led her to become a highly sought after performer in an exclusive corporate and casino market. Jade also concentrated on her international television appearances at this time with great success.

While appearing at the Magic Castle in February 2015, Jade received a call from Johnny Thompson who suggested that she should appear on the hit CW television series "Penn & Teller: Fool Us." In April she filmed a segment for the show that featured her unique handling of the thumb tie. It was a typically elegant set that received a great deal of praise and attention--even if it didn't fool the duo! The YouTube clip of her appearance registered 157,000 hits almost overnight. You can view at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GMGBGlrF8ys> She recalls the entire experience of filming the show as being one of the classiest experiences in her career. "I enjoyed taping the show so much," she says. "I was more nervous watching the set on TV than performing it!" What is coming up next for this beautiful and talented lady? Jade is preparing a new home based show in San Francisco where she can use her performing skills to create a bridge between the cultures that both she and her hometown share. I have enjoyed Jade's work for many years and I can't wait to see what she creates. I am willing to bet it will be artistic, commercial, tasteful, entertaining, and fun. I suggest you keep track of Jade via her website and follow the progress <http://www.magicjade.com>

You can also view Jade's promotional video at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H84G\\_AbREt0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H84G_AbREt0)

