PAUL OSBORNE'S

# ILLUSION SYSTEMS

BOOK ONE

## BEGIN TO BUILD YOUR OWN ILLUSIONS

By Paul Osborne

# ILLUSION SYSTEMS BOOK ONE

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PHOTOS BY:
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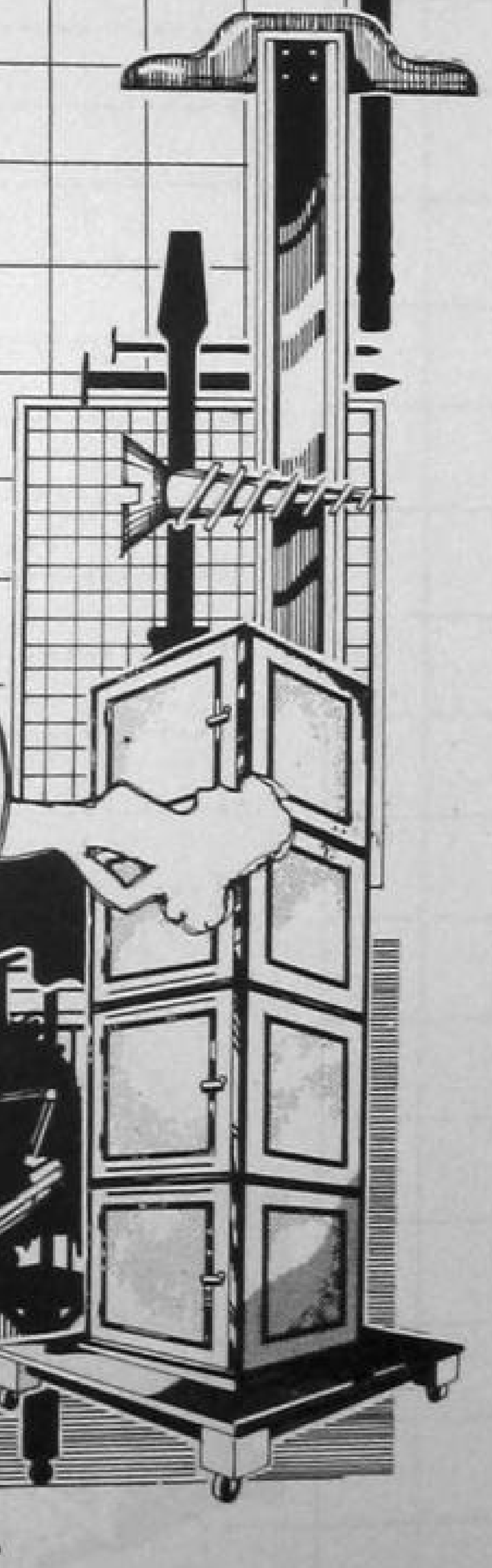

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FIRST PRINTING -
SEPTEMBER, 1981

I would like to gratefully
dedicate this book to two
of the most positive
influences in my life.

My mother was wise enough
to realize that my school
work was important. . . but
so was magic. She continues
to encourage.

My wife, whose in-born
curiosity constantly propels
me to new and different
heights. We reach our separate
goals together.

Thank you Gernadine & Michelle.

# ABOUT Paul Osborne

Paul Osborne's magical career began at age five when he was presented a magic kit by then local magician, Mark Wilson. Through the high school and college years, Paul performed professionally, often touring with bands, and was awarded Best Club Act and Best Act trophies by the Texas Association Of Magicians in Corpus Christi.

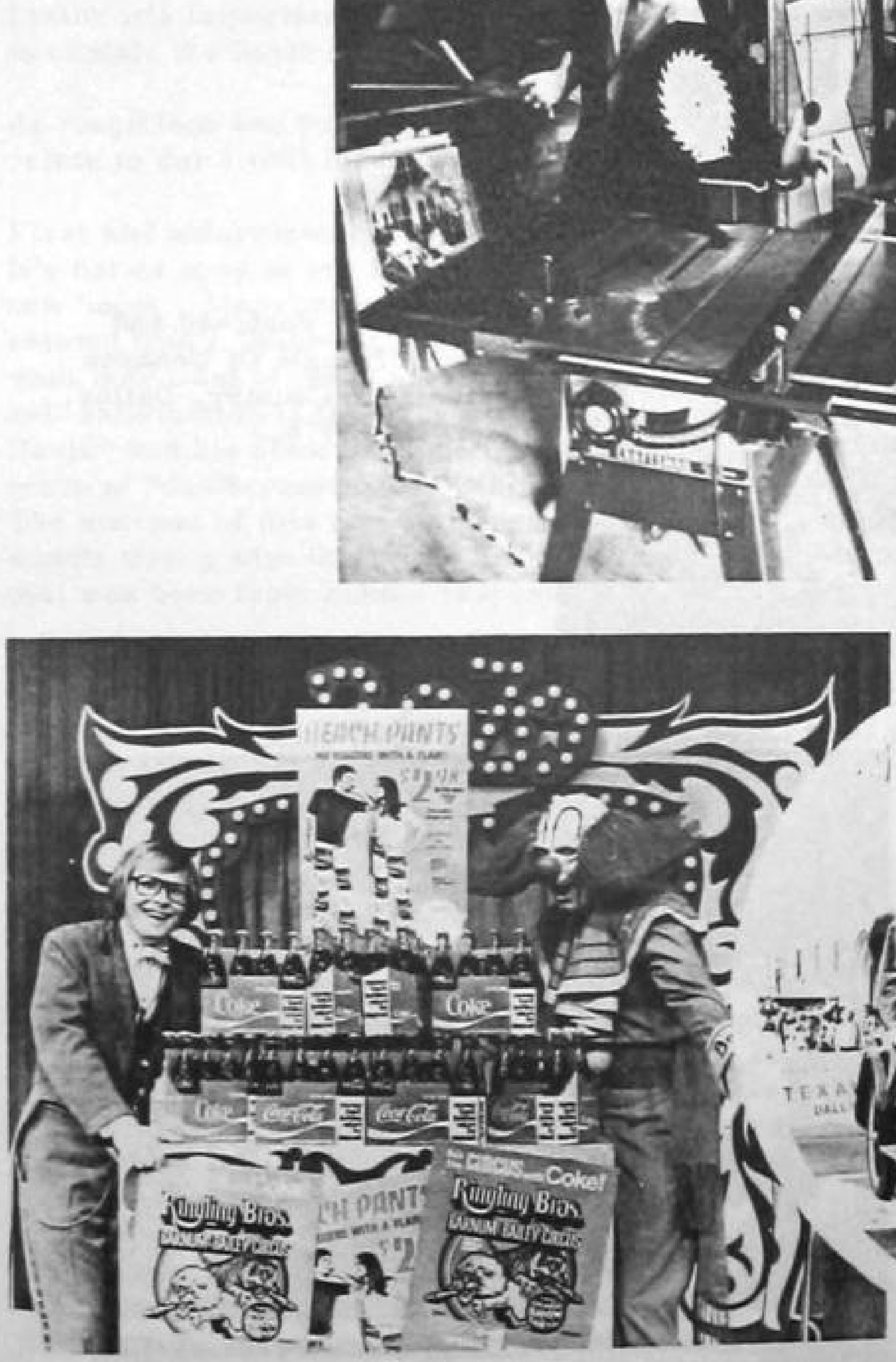
Francis Ireland Marshall published his first book on puppets as he graduated from college to become a local disc jockey and TV's Bozo's Ringmaster, a show which was later syndicated to over fifty local television markets with Paul as second banana to Bozo the Clown.

In 1973, Paul Osborne and Associates, Inc. was formed on $300.00 by Paul and two partners. The firm specialized in creating and packaging costumes, puppets and magic shows for amusement parks across the country. Paul personally designed illusion shows for Six Flags, Disneyland, Cypress Gardens, Libertyland and Great Adventure, to name only a few. Paul Osborne and Associates, Inc. built fifty new illusions each year, all designed by Paul. By now this young company was billing over 1.5 million dollars and Paul had a "top secret" drawer of, literally, hundreds of custom illusion plans, seen only by the four carpenters employed by his company.

In 1976, Bacchus Games, Inc. was formed by Paul and his partners. Bacchus Games marketed and manufactured unique arcade games devised and created by Paul's group. "Morgana The Fortuneteller" was the most notable. At its peak, Bacchus Games was sold and Paul continued creating and designing large illusion shows for amusement parks, constantly adding plans to his "top secret" plan drawer. In November of 1979, Paul arranged with Bill Larsen to begin releasing his top secret drawer of plans to Genii magazine. The first illusion plan appeared in May of 1980 and subsequently, Illusion Systems was born. The gas crisis of '79 forced the budget cutting in amusement parks and the closing of Paul Osborne and Associates, Inc. in 1980.

Paul continued designing and art directing for Broadway's "Peter Pan" and many network television specials in addition to his regular Genii columns and Illusion Systems publishing company.

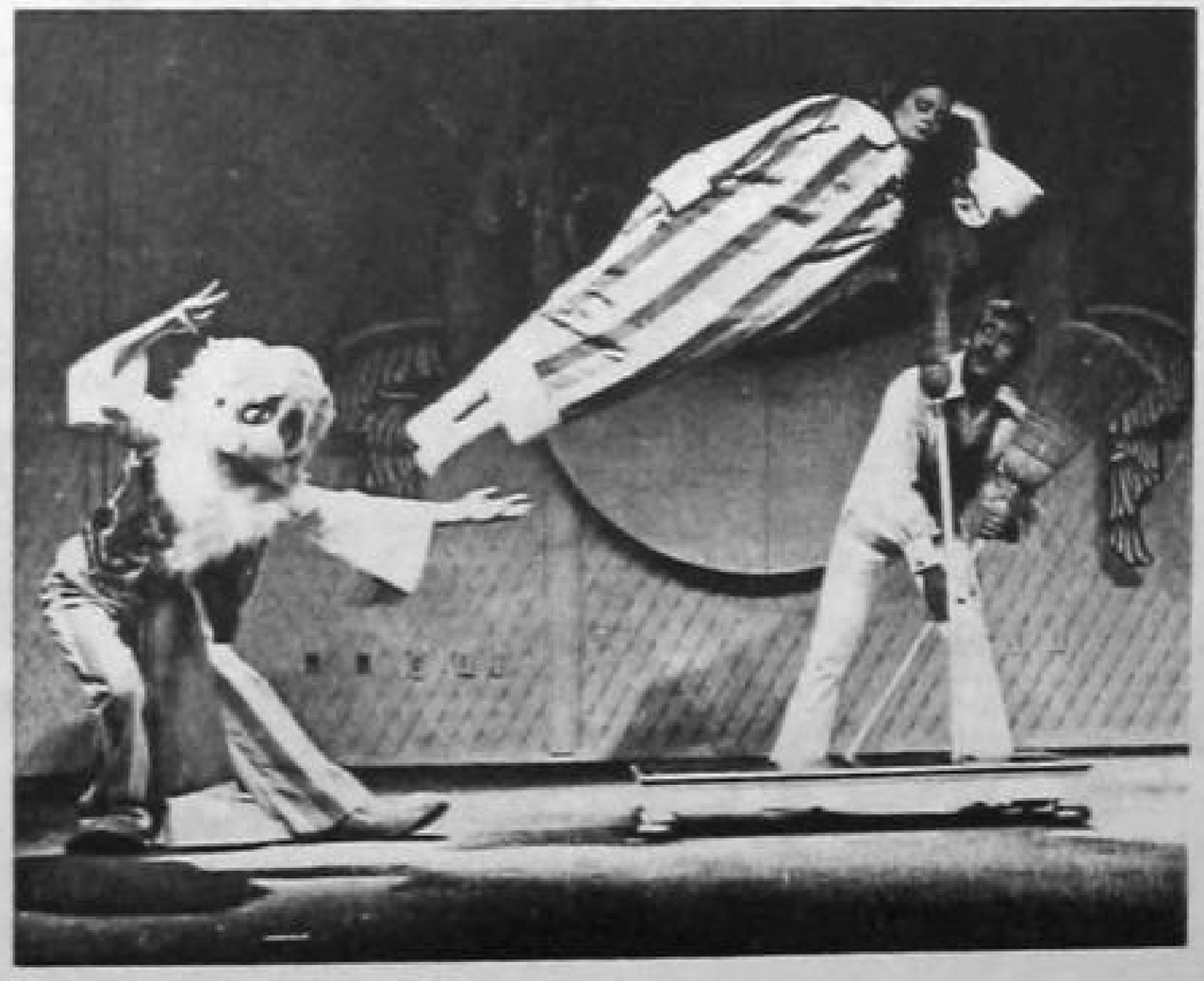
As an artist and theatrical designer, Paul has been nationally recognized with design credits too numerous to mention. As a magician, Paul will continually release his ideas and drawings to the magic fraternity that has given him so much. As a positive thinker, it is Paul's hope that each and every magician will realize that, as a creative person, they can not only perform, but build their own illusions.


Coke
Coke
Coke
Coke
Coke
Ringling Bros
Ringling Bros
CIRCUS Coke!

# PHOTOS.....

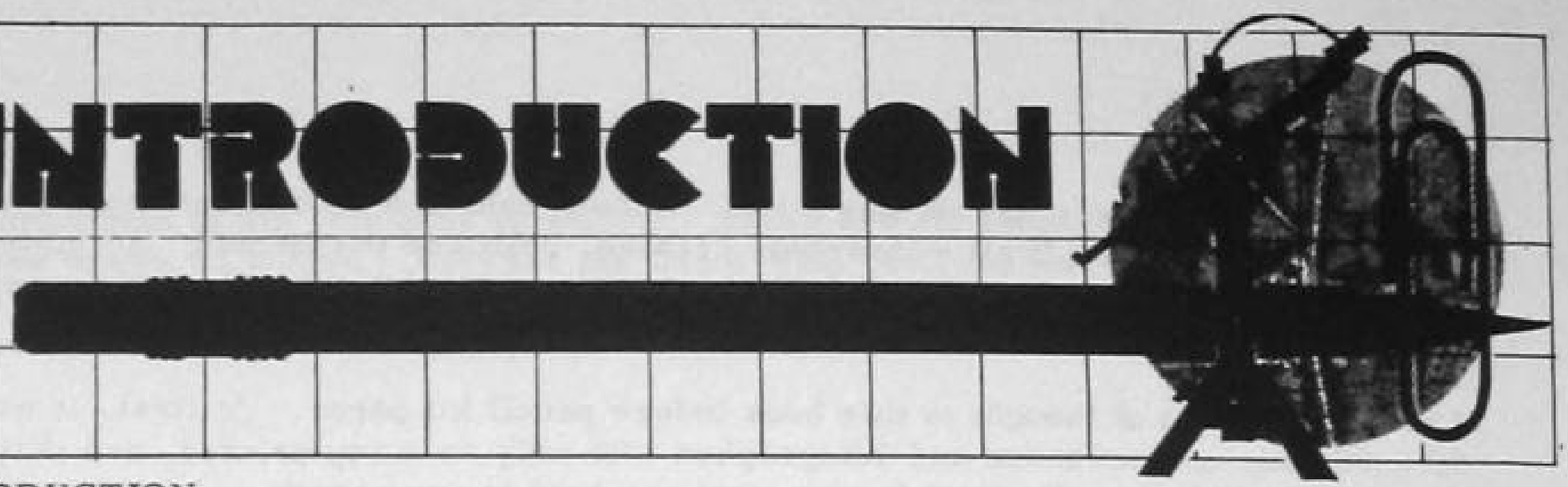
The various photos and advertising sheets scattered through the pages of this book are from the files of Paul Osborne & Associates' many amusement park shows produced across the United States.

A custom designed and built Temple Of Benares for Lion Country, Dallas, Texas, 1978.



Marvelli's Magic Caravan show at Six Flags' Great Adventure amusement park in New Jersey featured this Broom Suspension. Custom designed and built in the Osborne Studio in 1977.

# INTRODUCTION





## INTRODUCTION

I think it's important to take a few minutes of your time and a few pages of this book to explain the basic concept behind Illusion Systems.

As magicians and entertainers I think we have to face two very severe problems that relate to our small industry.

First and unfortunately, the most troublesome is the world economy and money situation. It's not as easy to buy that new illusion now, not to mention that new couch, new car, or new home. Many industries are seeing an increase in "do-it-yourself" and "renovation" related books, supplies and tools. So people are using their resources to still accomplish what they want at less cost. And from this, not only is a goal met, but a great deal of self satisfaction is the by-product. I am gratified to see the success of "Le Grande David" and his show in Boston. As you may know, this is a self-contained, self-reliant group of "do-it-yourselfers" who have a complete "hands on" approach to their show. The success of this type of thinking is symptomatic of what I feel the future holds and what's wrong with that? Le Grande David is a creative, beautiful approach to magic that was born from human resourcefulness.

We all have this human resourcefulness. Unfortunately, in the past it was easier to "buy the prop" than create, design and build the prop, but times are changing. It is my hope that Illusion Systems can open the door of resourcefulness in you. But only you can walk through it.

The other problem I feel the world of magic is, or will soon be facing is the threat of over exposure. Please don't misunderstand my point on this. I strongly congratulate the many talented and creative young magicians this last decade has produced. We have enjoyed the many network specials and considerable news items on all these great performers. But is it too much? Is it doing more harm than good? I don't think it is, provided the creative minds of magic can supply the demand. And, please understand, the demand from the television industry alone is exploding. Within the next ten years most of us will have a choice of over forty cable stations; some small, some large. Special interest programming will be in vogue and home video tape units will introduce a whole new vehicle for video marketing. It's all very exciting and growing every day. But we must be ready for it. Ready with new ideas, new presentations and novel approaches to our ancient art. Obviously, again human resourcefulness comes into play. New ideas. New ideas that you, the performer, creates, builds and performs. I am reminded of the legend of the bee. Did you know that aerodynamic science has proven that there is no possible way that a bee could fly? Its wings are too small and its body is too big. But no one has bothered to tell the bee this, so it flys.

In our business Robert Harbin was a bee. Nobody told him he couldn't invent miracles, so he did. And he did it all - invented, created, built and performed. I firmly believe that within each of us is a tiny Bob Harbin waiting to be let out. Human resourcefulness, that's what Illusion Systems is, a starting place for you, the bee.

I have given a lot of thought to this book before pencil hit paper. At first, it was a $150.00 volumn, numbered and autographed with only so many printed, and that would be it. But, what I really want is now what you hold in your hands. A book that is affordable, a book that sits on your shelf with its covers worn and paint-stained, sawdust stuck to page 14 and page 23 has been removed and left with your tools. A book for "doers".

As you begin to build your own illusions, your eye must be more critical of existing props. Begin to visualize the equipment as you would build it. Does the base look deceptive? If so, why? If not, why? Is the paint job attractive? What would you change to make it fit in your act and how would you make this change? Totally analyze the prop you intend to make. It may be that another performer is using it, but how can you make it different to fit in your show? Perhaps a complete theme change or simple color scheme change would properly adapt the illusion for your needs. Totally customize the prop in your mind so that it fits with your presentation. Do you really want a prop that looks like everybody elses?

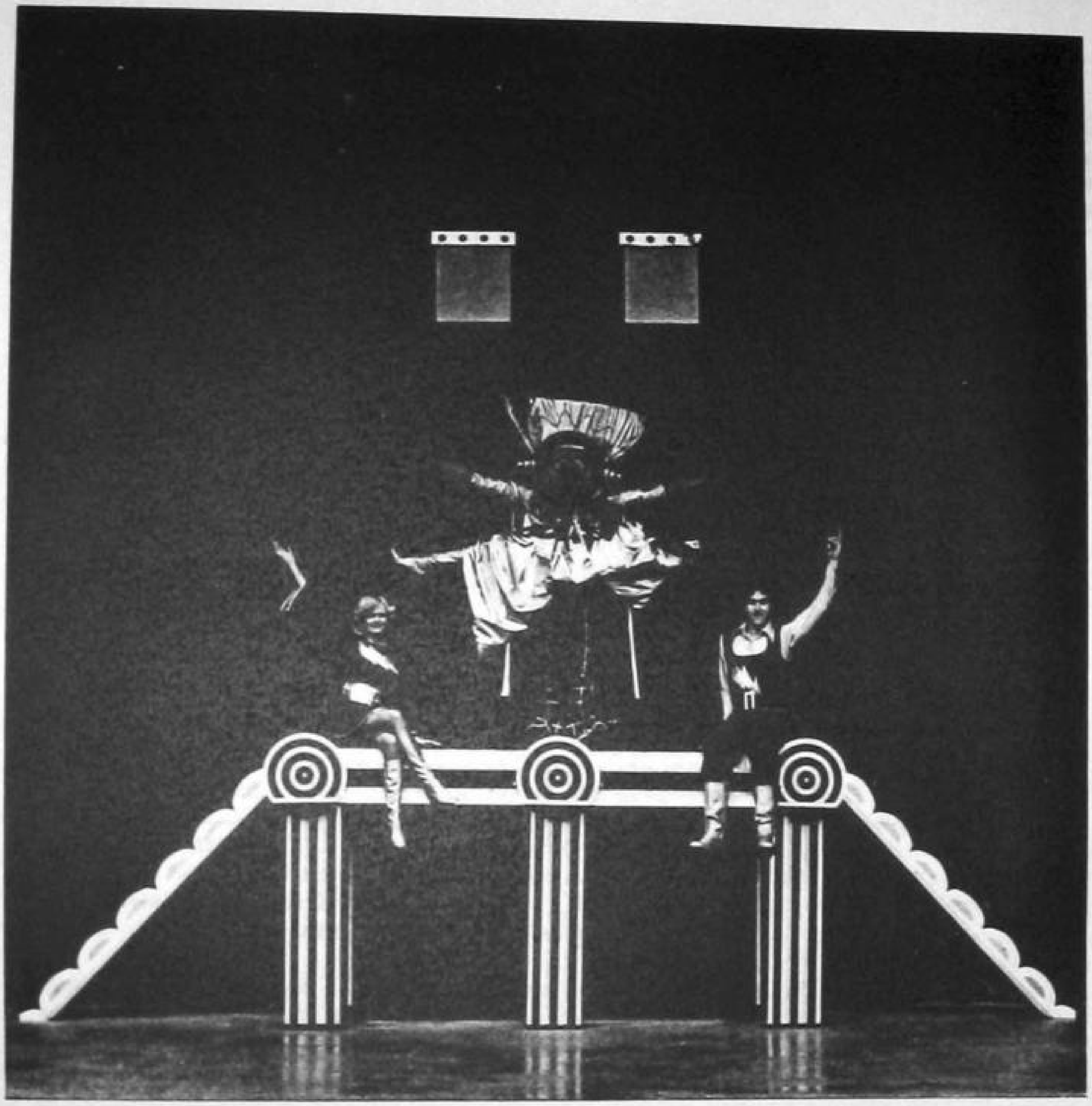
In talking about building your own illusions, we are also talking about building your own show. On a larger scale you must also visualize your act. Do the colors, costumes, lighting, music and choreography all work well together? Do all of your illusions compliment each other? If you use a dilapidated, three year old, battered Doll House after a newly built, contemporary styled Sawing A Woman In Half, then your illusions are not complimenting each other and your act's flow will, visually, be interrupted. The illusion styling should be different, but of comparable quality, design and themeing.

Think of your act as a symphony with you as the conductor. All of the various elements of your show should work in harmony toward one single goal - pleasing your audience. The illusions are, of course, very important elements of your presentation and should be planned out accordingly.

Since I began selling my plans a dream has come true! What I hoped would happen is going on right now. Magicians from all over the world have called and written, telling me they loved such and such design so much that they built the illusion but, (the part that I love) they changed this or that or added or deleted. If they had built the illusion exactly as I had drawn it, I think I would be disappointed. I want to be a starting point for your own creativity. I want you to top me. I want you to take my ideas to their farthest point and then build and perform them.

The magicians I have talked to are already doing it and so can you. Being a magic craftsman requires little more than patience, confidence, willingness to learn and,

most important of all, you have to want it. These are all characteristics I'm sure you have drawn on before. Because the Great Wall Of China was built one brick at a time, beginning with the first brick, I am going to assume that you think a Phillips-head screwdriver is a flaming Polynesian drink (That's where I began.)



From high a top his pedestal, Cyrus Cosmo levitates a beautiful young lady aided by the powerful "Cosmo Electromagnet". As the magnet was raised, the young lady hovered below. The Cyrus Cosmo Wonder Show played in the Music Mill Theater at Six Flags Over Texas for the '75, '76, '77 seasons.

Cyrus Cosmo, his illusions, costumes and sets were all custom designed by Paul Osborne and built in the Osborne Studio. Those of you fortunate enough to witness the Cosmo mini-spectacles will, no doubt, remember them as the most unusual of all illusion shows.

# STARTING OUT

Even if you aren't necessarily interested in building your own magic, chances are, somewhere along the line, you bought some plans, or a book of plans and you really had no idea what they said. And they may not even show you how the trick works, let alone how to build it. This seems to be the main stumbling block for beginning magical builders. What do I do with the plan?

Generally, all plans are designed to give you the main idea of the trick and basic working dimensions. Most plans assume you know your way around the woodshop and offer little or no actual building or cabinet making techniques. But, in my opinion, this is as it should be. If a plan were to tell you, down to screw head size, what you do; then supply paint stencils and detail out every section, it would cost hundreds of dollars, be voluminous, and would allow no room for originality. So, best to hit the high points and remember, no plan or book is going to make you an expert builder. You are going to make you an expert builder.

Now, let's talk about the basic type of plans that are available today. I will resist the obvious lead-in for a plug on our fabulous, reasonably priced, up-to-date and constantly up dated, scale rendered, and preferred by most magicians, plans. Seriously though, the work in this book should give you an idea of the Illusion Systems' plans. Generally, they would fall into the "blueprint or schematic" category, meaning that they are drawn to scale, showing a front dead on view, (front elevation), a side dead on view (side elevation), and a top dead on view, (plan view). Also certain areas that may need clarifying are drawn either in full size details or cutaway views. Sometimes "no scale" exploded views show assembly methods. The problems or hard-to-understand areas of an illusion generally dictate the basic layout of the drawing. By and large, "schematics" or "blueprints" give the reader a good idea of proportion and building techniques. If you own any Floyd Thayer plans, these are of this variety also, and in most cases are very good. The problem with these plans is, of course, their origination dates. Magic has come a long way since these were first drawn and, for some strange reason, women have gotten taller. No foolin', watch out for this one on several of his plans. I learned the hard way. The Thayer plans are good, though, and well worth the price. Make sure your dealer stocks good, clear copies. Unfortunately, there are many 100th generation prints that are almost illegible.

The Owen plans are more up-to-date schmatics that often feature an extra bonus of a "materials list", which is a nice time saver at the lumber yard. These, too, are good plans and worth their price. I haven't seen a bad or illegible copy. The drawback is the selection, only twenty-one are available. The Illusion Systems, Thayer and Owen plans are the most widely known of the "schematic" or "blueprint" plans.

The next category would be the "workshop drawings". These plans are not generally drawn to scale, but all the pieces have measurements and basic building methods are indicated. Often perspective views, (still no scale), or "exploded views" show the completed illusion. This style of plan is found in the Harbin books, the Robert Veno book and Abbott's sells them for their illusions. I think most people usually prefer the blueprint type plans to the workshop drawing, primarily because the former gives some idea of proportion and actual comparative size of the finished illusion.

None of the plans I have mentioned should ever be labeled as "bad" or inferior plans. Again, if you're a good builder, well versed in magic, all these types of plans will suffice. You may be surprised to know that many top builders don't work from plans. I have been with Les Smith at Owens as he showed me his latest creation sketched out on a paper napkin. And in a phone conversation once, Johnny Gaughan gave me some basic measurements of a prop from his napkin. I, of course, copied them on to my napkin. Actually, I guess if Illusion Systems published "napkins" we would be keeping a great magic tradition alive. Obviously, the more difficult tricks to build are drawn up professionally first to get the bugs out by all the major builders.

For you as a beginning magic builder, plans are very important. You must learn to read them and use them. Only then will the typical situations become obvious to you and almost second nature as you build.

Here are some good rules of thumb to follow as you first begin to read plans:

1. Look for "the mistake". There is always at least one. Remember, draftsmen are just as perfect as you are and it's only natural to mis-measure a scale drawing, mis-label instructions, etc.. Once you find the mistake, if any, correct it immediately.

2. Check the scale measurements with your architect's scale for minor flaws. (I'll show you how-keep reading.) Remember, pencil lines take up space (or thickness) that your finished illusion won't, so make sure this doesn't cause any problems.

3. Visualize the order in which you are going to build the various pieces. Spend some time on this and try to pinpoint exactly what areas you will have trouble with, what tools you will use, when you will paint various pieces, etc.. Your own mental visualizing ability is the most important aspect of any project. Visualize performing only after the prop is completed - first things first.

Now, the **architect's** scale. The tendency for most is to make this simple tool difficult. It's not. You will find its basic shape illustrated at the top of our sample scale page. Basically it's a three sided ruler divided in half with six readable halves, with half of one side actually being a ruler. The other five halves being ten different **scales.** Five read from left to right and five read from right to left. Below the sketch showing the scale **ruler**, I have given you five sample scales which you may cut out to test your ability at scaling an object. These sample scales are the most widely used on magic plans and, of course, can be found on your scale ruler. Remember,

on your ruler some of these scales will read from right to left (3" and 1/2"), but I have drawn them all to read from left to right. The divided areas to the left all equal one **foot**. I have divided the inch indicators into inches (1 - 12) and on the 3" and 1/2" scale your ruler will break it down more, often into 1/8".

To use your cut-out scale, lay it along side the area to be measured. Begin at "0", (unless the area you are measuring is less than 1'. If it is, use the 12" indicator to the left.) Measure out and, let's say the area you are measuring is a little longer than 4', then mark the four foot point and slide your scale down to pick up the inch indicators and you will come up with, say, 4'3".

All plans are keyed to tell you scale, for example, scale 3/4" = 1'0". This tells you to use your 3/4" scale when measuring. Often Thayer plans indicate 1/8" = 1". This is the same as 1 1/2" = 1'0".

Now, let's try some scale measuring with the five drawings on the sample scale page. Remember to check the scale on the drawing and use the correct cut-out ruler.

1. (A) How long is the French leg in drawing #1?
   (B) How wide is it at the top?

2. (A) How tall is the tube in drawing #2?
   (B) What is the diameter?
   (C) How tall is the bottle?
   (D) What is its diameter at the bottom?
   (E) How tall is the glass?

3. (A) How tall is the **Dove Chest**?
   (B) How thick is the lid?

4. (A) In drawing #4, how tall is the entire illusion?
   (B) How wide is the box?
   (C) How wide is the base (at its widest point)?

5. (A) How wide is the Asrah?
   (B) How tall are the legs?
   (C) How thick is the exterior of the base?

You are allowed answers within 1/2" because my cut-outs aren't as accurate as a scale rule. But this should give you the basic idea. Answers are on the back of the sample scale page. If you got them all right, go to the magic dealers and buy some more plans. Buy an architect's rule and keep measuring until you feel comfortable saying, "its 6' 7 1/8 in." with confidence. If you didn't get them right, go back to square one and figure out where you went wrong.

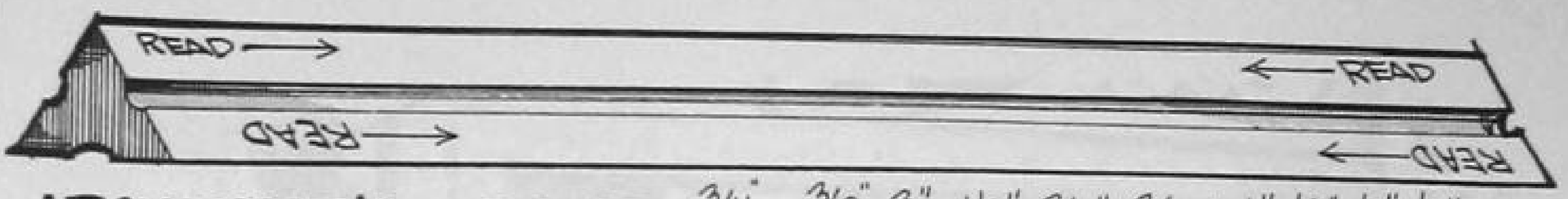
There are many fine books on drafting methods at libraries and book stores. But be sure to get beginner texts so you don't get confused by some of the more intricate methods that really don't involve most magic plans anyway.

As you pass from each phase this book offers, it is most important that you not become discouraged if, at first, you don't understand. Keep trying. I first learned preliminary drafting in a college stagecraft class. I was a pretty decent artist at the time; but drafting (?), scale (?), front elevation? It made no sense to me. Only after careful thought did it become clear to me that I was making it difficult. Such is life - don't make it difficult.

I will also point out that, basically, I am an untrained artist. I have had two art courses in my whole life. The second art course taught me that "professional artists don't use Rapidiograph pens". Of course, 90% of this book and most advertising illustration is done in Rapidiograph pens. I pursued my career in radio/television broadcasting. Good art comes from trial and error, experience, and making as many mistakes as possible; then learning from them. If you feel you have ability in art, use it in your own illusion design. If you don't have any art ability, work on recognizing good design. And remember, it takes no art ability to read and understand a blueprint. Some bankers, lawyers, oil men, restaurateurs and entrepreneurs have to read detailed building documents to get a particular project off the ground, yet they may have no art ability.

You will see me use the word "visualize" frequently in this book. If you can visualize, you needn't be an artist; your mind knows what it wants and your eyes must either find it or recognize it.

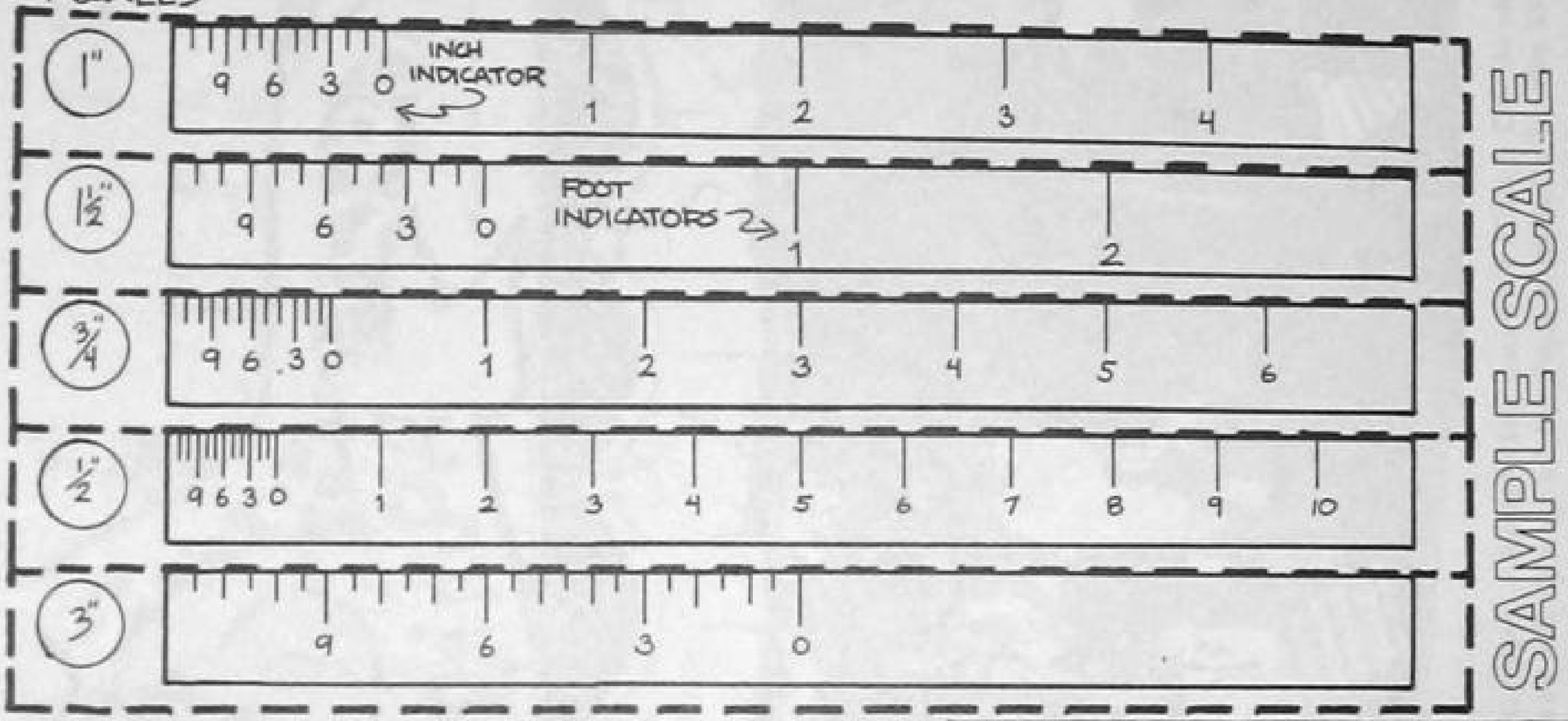
Visualize the illusion as you read the plans. Imagine the completed prop in your mind and you will soon understand scaling and blueprints.



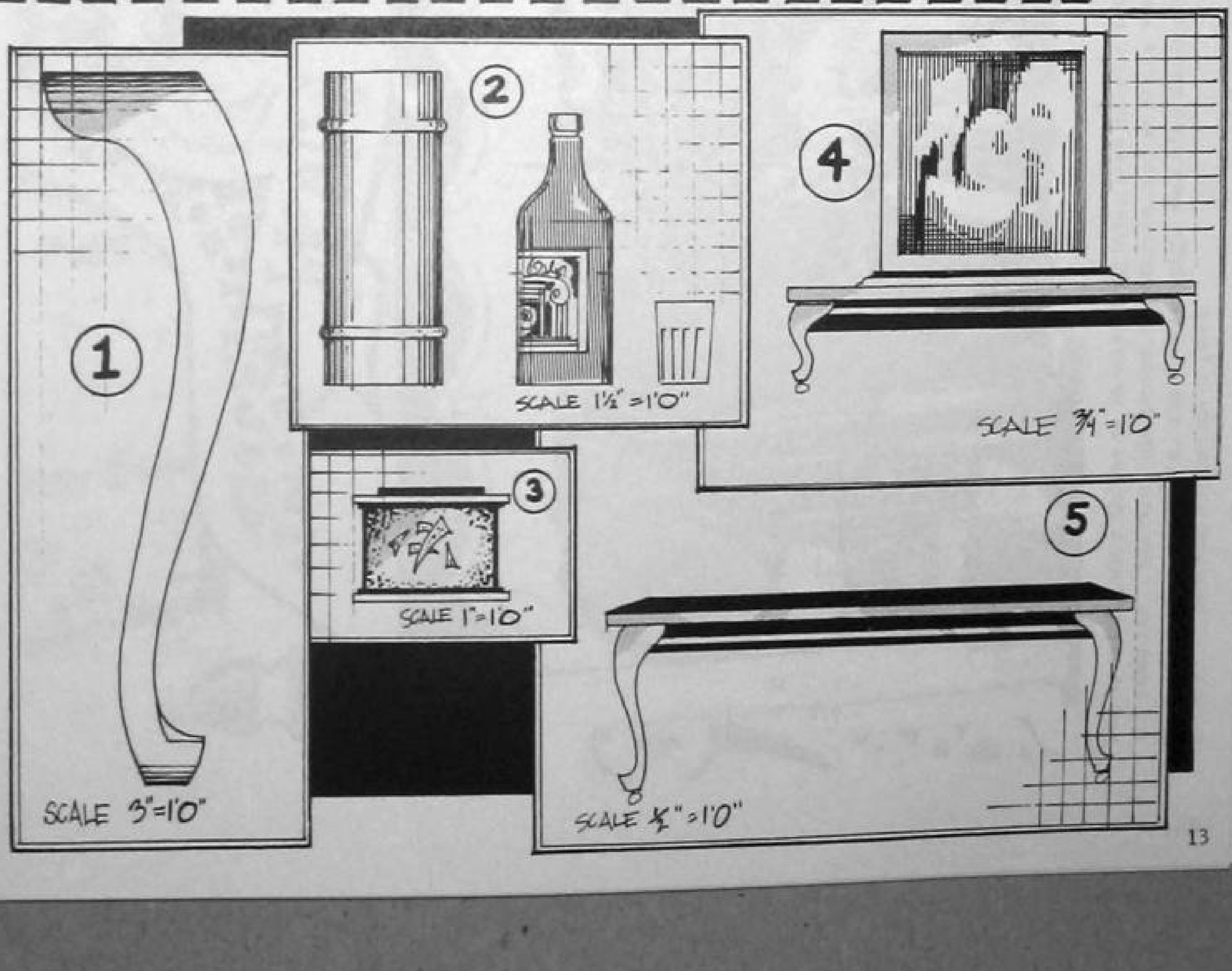

# ARCHITECT'S SCALE

3/4", 3/8", 3", 1½", 3/16", 3/32", 1", ½", ¼", ⅛"
EQUALS ONE FOOT

SHOWS ONE SIDE ~ 2 HALVES
4 SCALES




SAMPLE SCALE



1. A. 1'6"
   B. 4"

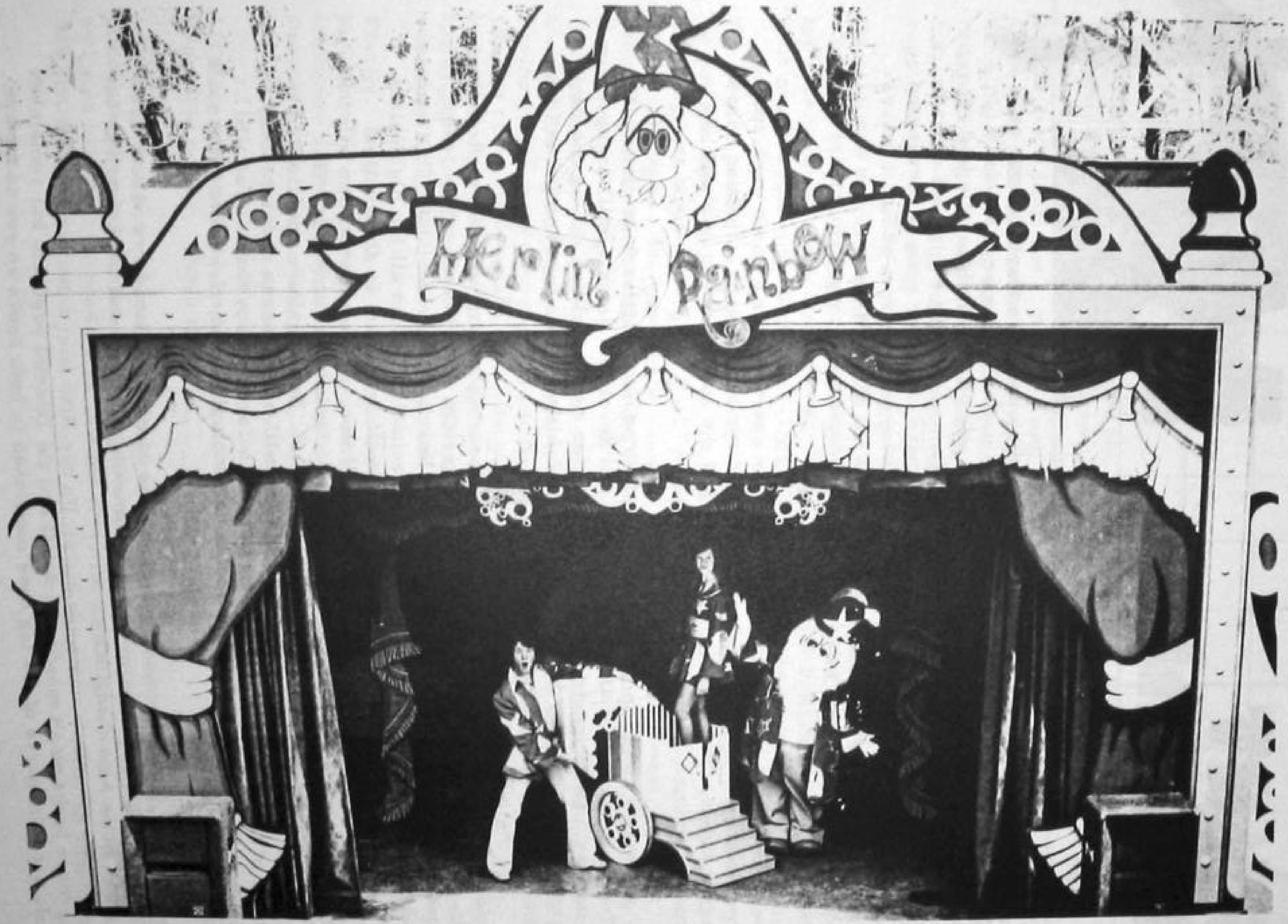
2. A. 1'4"
   B. 6"
   C. 1'2"
   D. 5"
   E. 4"

3. A. 8 3/4"
   B. 1/2"

4. A. 3'1"
   B. 2'
   C. 3'8"

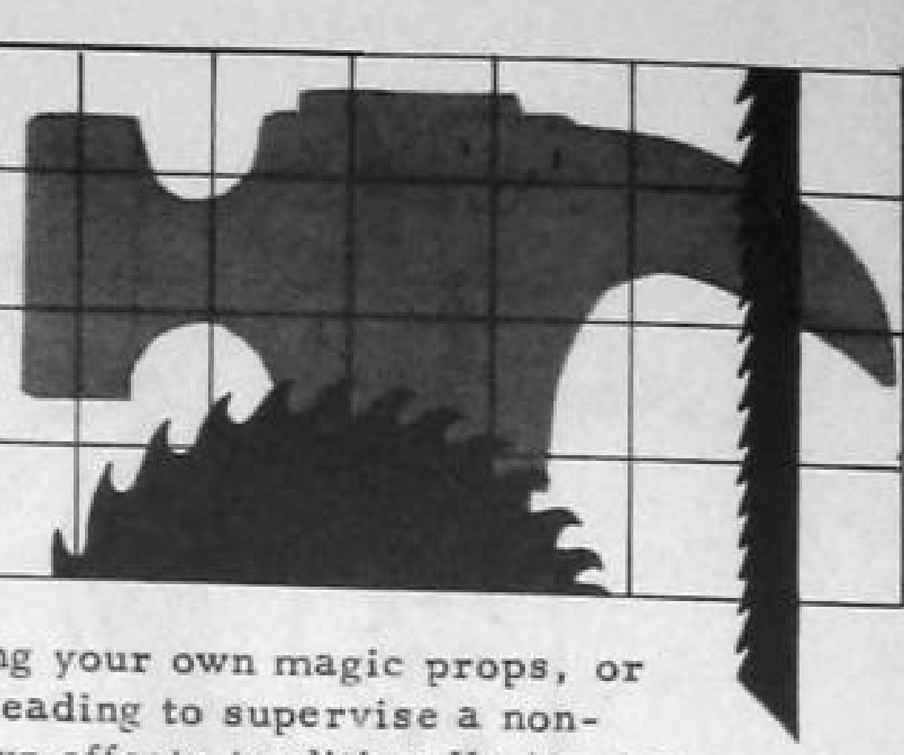
5. A. 7'
   B. 2'2"
   C. 9"

ANSWERS




The most popular Osborne fantasy magician was Merlin Rainbow. Appearing here at Elitch Gardens in the 1977-'78 seasons. Merlin, his props, costumes and scenery were all designed by Paul and built by the Osborne Studio. In this instance, the entire stage was also designed and built in Dallas, then trucked to the popular Denver, Colorado amusement park.

# START BUILDING



I know many of you want to learn how to begin building your own magic props, or at least know enough about cabinet making and plan reading to supervise a non-magic carpenter. The problem with building your own effects traditionally has been the cost and space required for the power tools and woodworking equipment. If you have a home with a garage or basement, you will have an easier time of "setting up shop". And if you are a working professional drawing income from shows it makes good sense to invest in some tools because, unless the tax laws change, you can write these items off provided you do, in fact, build your own magic equipment used in earning income.

In any event, if you are a beginning builder with an apartment or a home work space, it's always much more sensible to begin small and add to your tool collection only as you master each one. So the money you spend and the space you require will be, in the beginning, minimal.

And now, some good news for you beginning craftsmen and apartment dwellers. The Dremel Tool Company has realized your needs and developed some small, inexpensive power tools that, unbeknownst to them, are great for magic building. This chapter will deal with these and other beginning tools and information you need to get off dead center and start "smell'n that sawdust".

First, before we get into the Dremel tools, there are two books that will be of continuing service to you. The first is entitled, "Wood, Materials And Processes" by John L. Feirer, published by the Chas. A. Bennet Co. of Peoria, Illinois, 61614. This book is an excellent text book used in many woodworking schools. It hits all the high points from first projects to industrial woodworking and will serve you as an excellent construction methods reference book for years to come. Assuming that you will be acquiring tools as you acquire knowledge, the other book I recommend is "De Cristoforo's Complete Book Of Power Tools" by R.F. De Cristoforo, published by Popular Science and Harper And Row. This book will assist you in understanding the **potential** of the various tools you may acquire before you buy them. You will learn all the overlapping jobs various tools can accomplish and tricks that adapt tools to your specific needs.

These two books will answer your basic questions of what tools to buy and how to use them. Obviously, there are many good woodworking books on the market today, but these two will make a good beginning.

One thing these books won't mention in detail are the Dremel products but remember these tools are miniatures of the big ones mentioned in both books so you can adapt.

All Dremel products are available from most hobby shops and some chain outlet stores. Be sure to shop them around before buying because, just like anything else today, prices may vary.

The first Dremel product I suggest you buy is the Dremel 4" table saw. It comes complete with an easy to read instruction book of sample projects and, by cross-referencing this booklet with De Cristoforo's book, you will learn all the capabilities of this small table saw. With this tool you can build small stage magic (Die Box, Card Box, Silk Cabby, etc.) and small dove magic (Night Club Chest, Tear Apart, Dove Cabby, etc.), in addition to learning several basics of woodworking - joints, miter cuts, ripping, etc.. Obviously, as with any power tools that can cut wood, they can also cut you, so always pay attention to the warnings and "dos and don'ts" supplied with the tool.

Dremel also makes a lathe just like the larger ones available. Floyd Thayer used a lathe to turn his famous Billiard Balls and some of the most beautiful table legs for illusion bases were turned by Carl Owen. So a lathe definitely has a place in your magic workshop. The Dremel lathe is also available from hobby shops, etc..

The advantage of purchasing this tool is the experience you will gain operating it as you anticipate buying a larger, more professional lathe. The Dremel model will only turn wood 6" long and 1 1/2" in diameter so the items you can make are small. But again, the experience you gain is worth it. You can make some beautiful little magic wands, a small ball vase and some detailed birdcage bars.

Two types of jig saws are available from Dremel, the "Moto Saw" and the 'Moto Shop". The "Moto Shop" includes disc sanding, flexible shaft drilling and routing. Obviously the most powerful and sophisticated of the two. On either of the two you can cut out Run Rabbit Runs, Hippity Hops and decorative cut-outs for legs, boxes and dove chests. Any irregular flat shape can be fashioned nicely with these tools. They work best on 1/8" - 1/2" thick wood and plywood is a snap. No home workshop is complete without a jig saw.

Finally, Dremel still offers its trademark, the 'Dremel Moto Tool". With this tool there is a wide range of attachments that will convert it from its standard miniature drill capabilities to a small scale router and drill press. This standard Dremel tool will cut, drill, polish, carve, sand and screw, not to mention the capabilities it affords with the many attachments available.

I feel these Dremel tools provide you with a beginning of making your own magic at affordable prices. Check them out.

In setting up your own small woodshop you will also have to acquire the basic stable of household tools; hammers, screwdrivers, etc.. Some other portable power tools will also help you; a good saber saw for sure, hand held power saw, router, etc.. And you can't be without a good drill and all its attachments. As you step up to these

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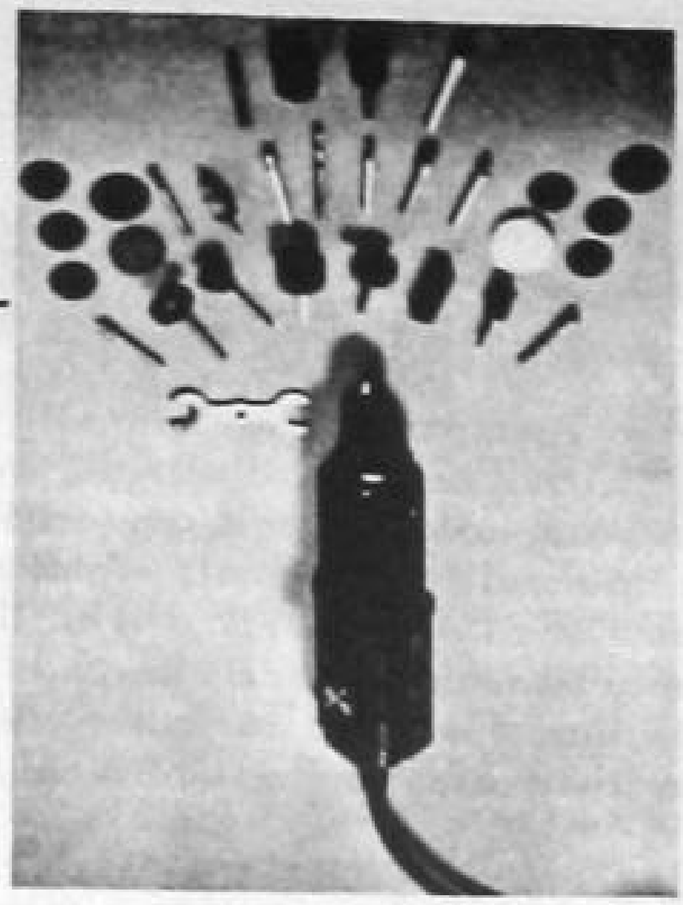
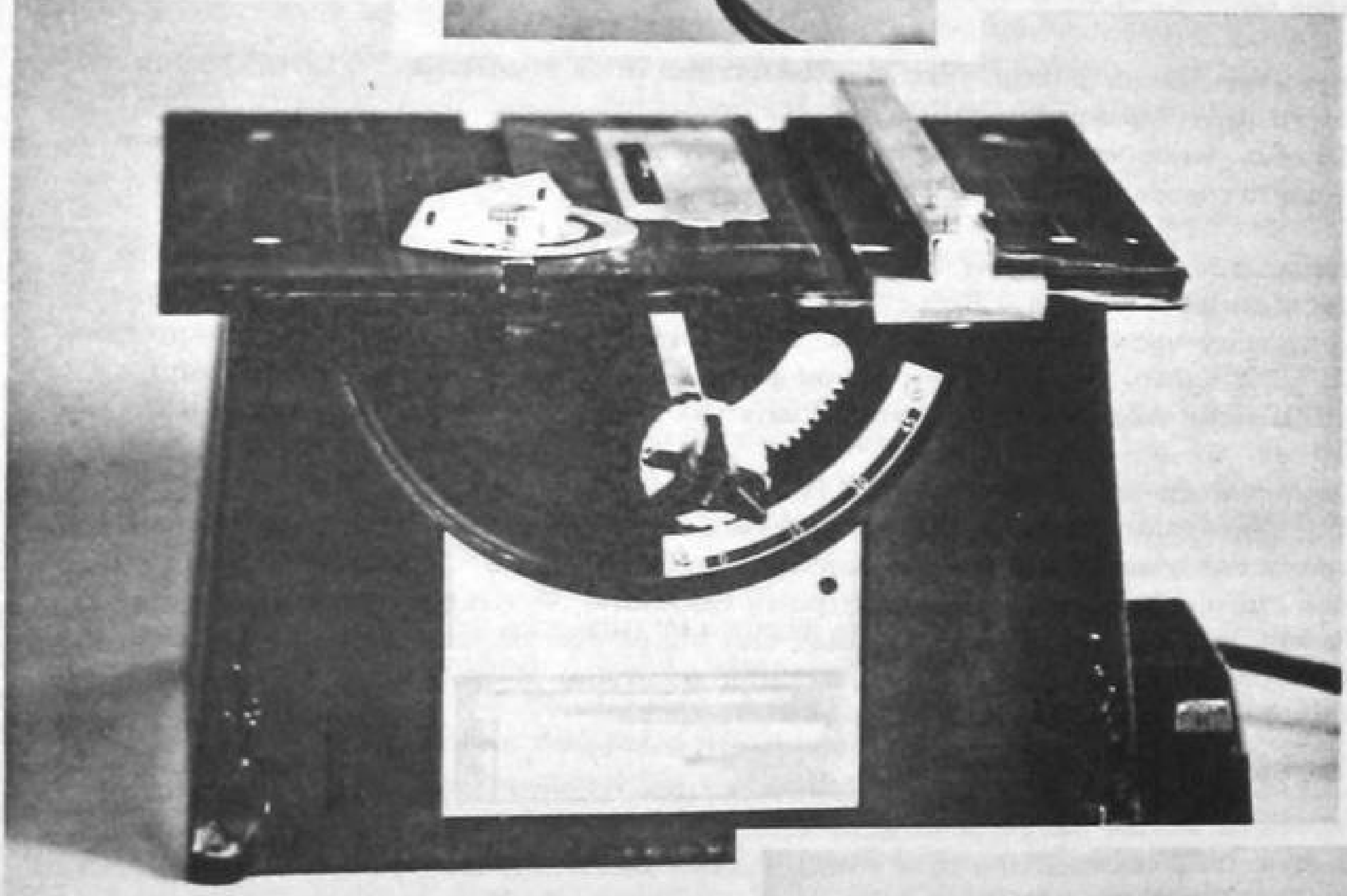
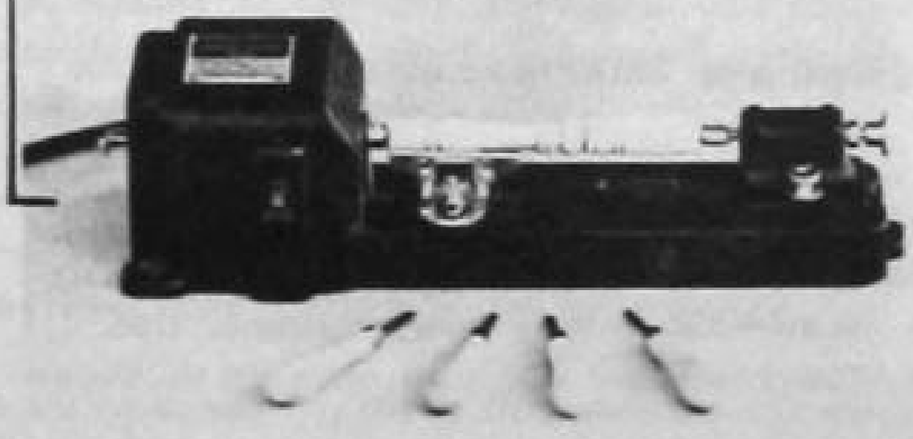
Division of Emerson Electric Co.
4915 - 21st Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53406



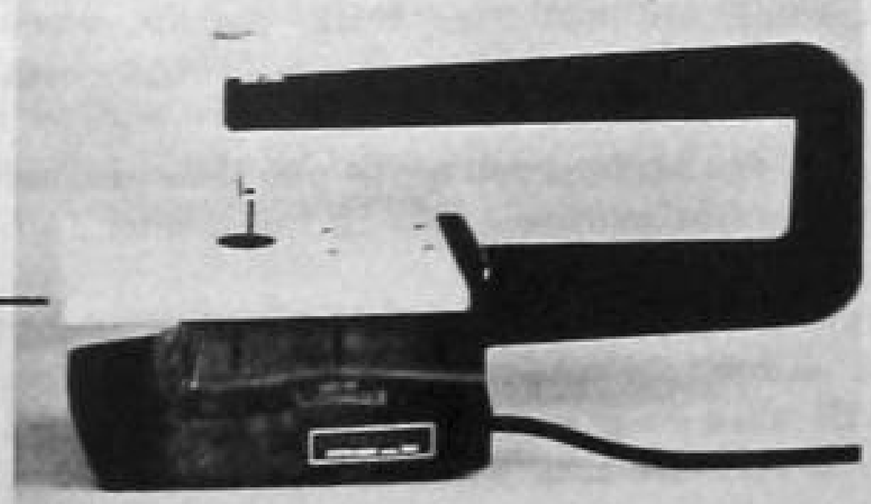
MOTO TOOL

4" TABLE SAW





LATHE

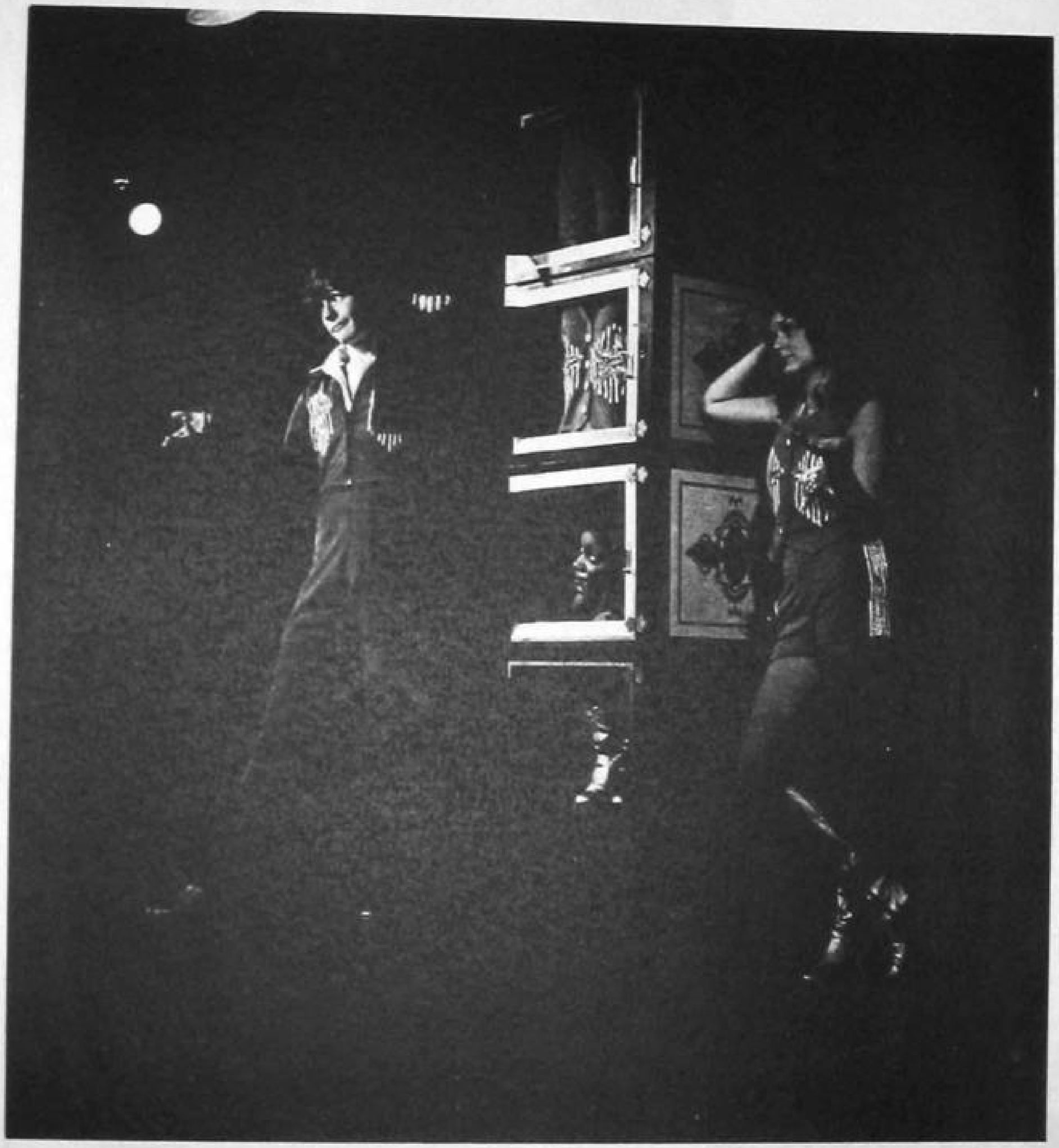


MOTO SAW

tools, I recommend Sears as your first shopping venture. Sears tools are good stand-bys that will last for years. Parts are easy to obtain and the cost is moderate. The Sears "Craftsman" tool series can take you from drills to table saws with full instruction booklets and a wide range of attachments. Sears publishes the finest "magic catalogue" of its kind so you can get Sears tools and parts no matter what mountain you live on.

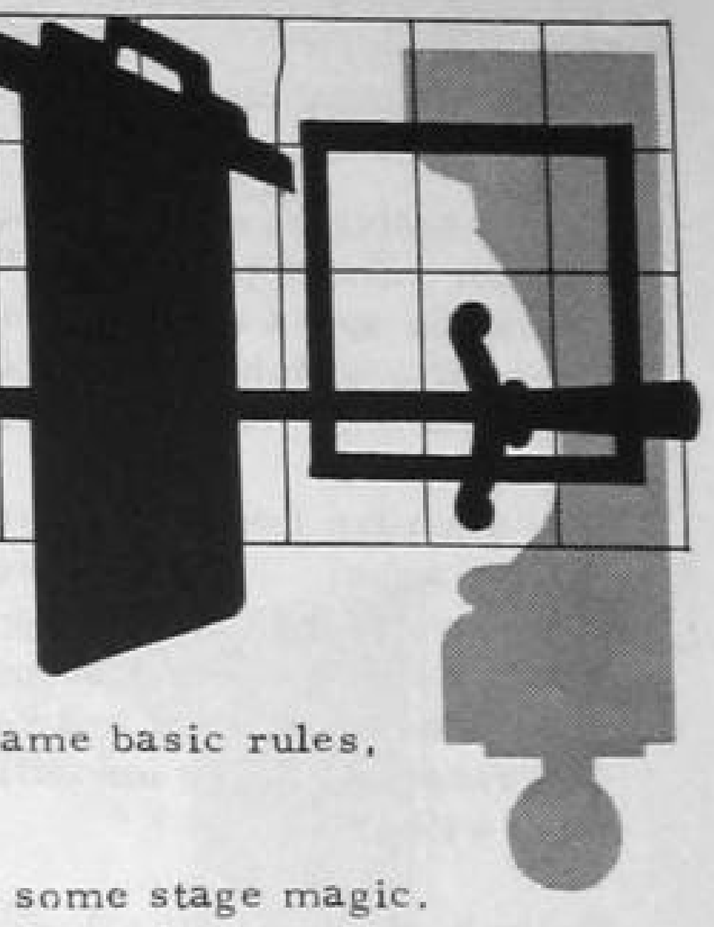
To begin building: Understand blueprints, familiarize yourself with your local lumber yard, begin with miniature Dremel tools, graduate to Sears' hand and power tools and from there on you will develop into De Walt, Rockwell and Black & Decker products.

Woodworking could be your second interest and it, obviously, will benefit your magic efforts. But you must crawl before you walk. All the money in the world will buy you the finest tools available, but if you don't know how to use them, they are of little value. It's just like magic equipment, don't be afraid to admit you are a beginner. There is, unfortunately, a stigma to being a 'beginner" in any endeavor and you will run across salesmen, craftsmen and (mostly) lumber yard employees who look at you as if you were the "Elephant Man" when you ask an elementary question. Just remember, "They don't know from thumb tips." And don't be discouraged. You can build your own magic!



In 1978 Paul Osborne created a twenty minute custom illusion show for Libertyland in Memphis. The show ran for two seasons and was a top rated attraction in the park. Among the many illusions highlighted was this Mismade Lady which featured a unique Victorian paint theme with each box color-coded to register only when the boxes were stacked correctly.

# BOXES LEGS SWORDS & BLADES



In magic building, just like everything else, there are certain standard things that keep popping up, over and over. You can't build magic unless you can build boxes - big boxes, little boxes, wide boxes, etc.. And it's all the same basic rules, whether you're building a Silk Cabby or Doll House.

Swords and blades are the staple of many illusions and even some stage magic. Although designs may vary, these, too, have basic common denominators.

Finally legs. Most illusions have decorative legs of some type. In this chapter I plan to wage war against the biggest threat to tasteful magic props today - the "pipe leg", most commonly found beneath the Temple of Benares illusions. How this plumbing fixture found its way into our craft, I'll never understand. Probably because it's easy and quick. I will show you an easy and quick leg that doesn't look like it fell from behind your favorite bathroom appliance.

As you graduate from your "Dremel tool phase" to Sears Craftsman hand tools you will, undoubtedly, encounter these four building exercises. Many of the plans in this book require knowledge of these elements, so begin thinking about them now. Once you have mastered them, remember you can vary my designs, add more detail and customize them to your props or overall act. The rules are all basically the same, but the detail and attention paid to cosmetics will be appreciated by your audiences

## BOXES

Have you ever tried, as an inexperienced builder, to make a simple box from wood? Cut the sides out, perfect straight edges. All the measurements are right, now... time to assemble. Where's my third hand? How do I hold the nail, the hammer and the two sides all at the same time? A simple box, 1' x 1' x 1' can give you all these problems unless you know some basic rules and shortcuts.

A good place to start making boxes is on your Dremel table saw, and I suggest the "Seed Money Box" as a good beginning project.

The "rabbit joint" is the most common form of constructing a box. We will concentrate on it. In this book, although, there are many other methods of constructing right angle corners. The rabbit joint can be made on your Dremel table saw, cut out with a hand saw and chisel, or by using a Dremel tool router attachment. Once the joints are made, they can be glued and nailed. If the box is large enough, I always use picture frame or 90° clamps to hold the corners at perfect right angles as they dry.

Begin building boxes as soon as you can. Remember, we learn from our failures, not our successes, so don't become discouraged at your first effort - learn from it. Work for speed and accuracy. Check all your joints, right angles and construction durability. Making boxes is what magic building is all about and experience is the best teacher. Here's a great 'first box" project:

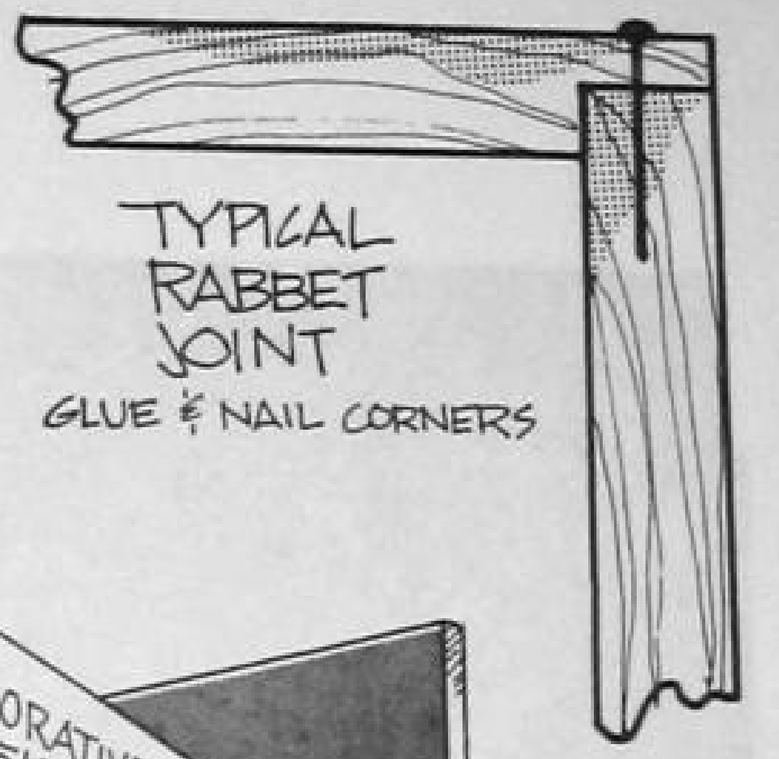
For any plan I design I always try to build a prototype to make sure I know what I'm talking about. For the "Seed Money Box" I splurged and bought teak wood. A pretty fancy prototype, but I think it turned out pretty nice. First let's talk about building it, then I'll give you a sample effect to work with it. The "Seed Money Cabinet" is a great starter project and can be completely built using the smaller Dremel tools. Of course 1/4" plywood will suffice for your first venture, but that teak is great to work with!

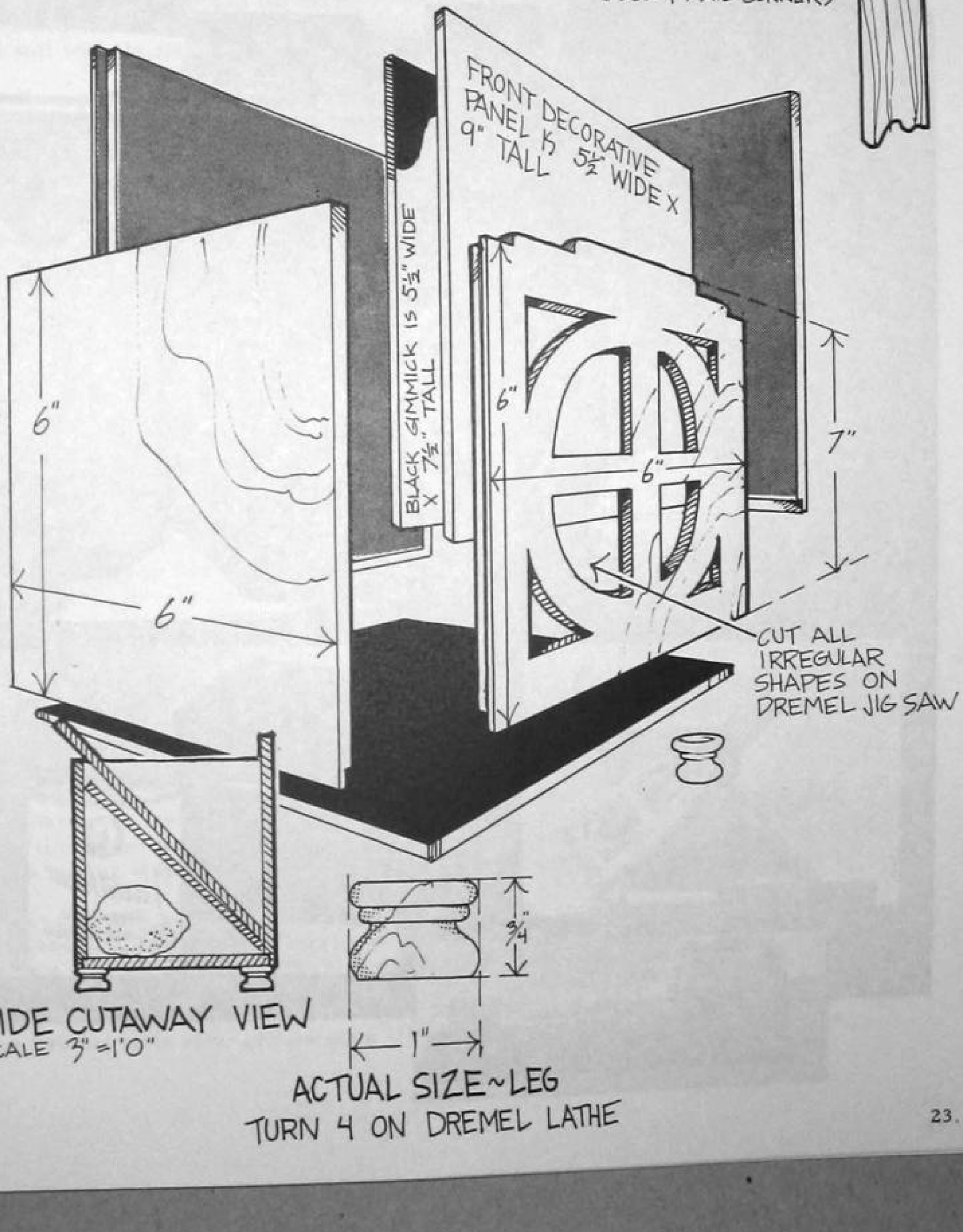
Begin by drawing off all measurements on the 1/4" plywood. Using your Dremel table saw, cut out the four sides, bottom, gimmick and decorative panel. On the four sides form your rabbit joints by cutting out a 1/8" x 1/4" groove on the sides of the front and back panel and the bottom of all four sides. Next, draw out the front panel design and carefully cut it out by first drilling holes, then, using your Dremel jig saw to do the finished cutting. Rough down a 1 1/2" diameter dowel to form a smooth 1" dowel from which you can turn your four 3/4" legs. Paint or finish as desired and you have a nice magic prop that can be routined any number of ways.

I call it the "Seed Money Cabinet" because I use it with the Dollar In Lemon. After tearing the corner off a $1.00 bill, I load the lemon with what's left and put it behind the gimmick panel of the box. The bill corner goes into a small envelope with one sunflower seed. This envelope is put behind a stack of five or six more. To perform, I borrow a dollar, talking about how it takes money to make money, tear off a corner, fold it up with the rest of the bill and place them both in an envelope (switching envelopes top to bottom). Stating that, although the corner will remain $1., the rest of the bill will turn into a $ 00. bill making, of course, a $100.00 bill! Handing the envelope to the spectator to open, his first response is, generally, "OH! OH!" (.00, get it? Well, maybe not.) Anyway, they're usually confused because all they can find is a $1. corner and a small seed. No problem - seed money! Introduce your newly crafted box, show it empty and drop the seed behind the decorative panel. Wait for it to "germinate" and display the lemon. Slice it open and, guess what?! But wait, instead of the $100.00 bill you led your spectator to believe would be waiting for him, there is only a $1.00 bill with a missing corner which, of course, matches the corner your spectator is holding. Explain this fallacy by saying that, although the trick did not work exactly as you had hoped that it would, at least your spectator got his money back.

Just an idea, but I think you'll find many uses for this wonderful prop, not to mention the Sunday afternoon fun you'll have building it.

# SEED MONEY CABINET




SIDE CUTAWAY VIEW
SCALE 3" = 1'0"




ACTUAL SIZE ~ LEG
TURN 4 ON DREMEL LATHE


Varathane
LIQUID PLASTIC
CLEAR GLOSS

## LEGS

Plumbing supplies were never meant to be illusion legs. Paint chips off of them, threads show and they are too skinny. "Pipes are not good furniture." There, now that I have that out of my system, let's talk about legs you can easily build that will enhance the appearance of your illusion.

For the experienced craftsman, beautiful turned legs, cabriole and french legs present no problem. And as you progress in magic building, no doubt you will soon acquire the abilities and tools needed to create these important elements of magic. Until that point, how do you construct a simple illusion leg that will be durable, functional and attractive? It's not as difficult as you may think. The style of leg we will utilize within this book is a simple, right angled, 1" thick cut-out. If you possess a saber saw, some small hand tools and wood glue, you are all set to build what we will call the "angle leg".

I have sketched one artistic approach to this leg for your benefit. But again, once you have the basic idea down, you can virtually design your own "look". On scrap 1" x 6", draw out the grided squares as I have done on the drawing. Then, moving from square to square, freehand the shapes, remembering that one design is 1" less wide than the other. Now, cut both shapes out with your saber saw. Drill all screw and counter-sink holes and begin assembling with wood screws and glue. A two inch square block of wood is attached at the bottom to hold the caster and holes are drilled above so that the leg can be carriage-bolted to its intended base. If you wish, using your Dremel jig saw you can create a decorative cut-out from 1/4" ply to screw down to the leg. And that's all there is to it. In reviewing our plans contained in this book, you will find this leg used. I highly recommend that you include it in your first illusion.

## SWORDS

The Dove On Swords, Swords Through Balloon, Temple Of Benares, Sword Cabinet, etc., all rely on your ability as a "weapons builder". Don't be scared by this simple prop. It's very easy to build and can be themed to fit almost any motif. I have selected one of my favorite designs for your first test sword.

Most hardware stores stock 1/8" x 1" aluminum strips for use in household projects. Often times you can even find it with a gold or brass finish. To cut it you will need a hack saw or a metal cutting blade for your saber saw.

Cut out a 3' long section. At one end, two 45° angle cuts form the point. At the other end drill two holes 2" apart. As an additional touch you may want to lightly sand the aluminum to give it an almost sparkling chrome finish.

On two 6" x 6" x 1" squares draw off your grid and copy my design. Next, using your Dremel table saw, groove out a 1/16" deep cut on the back of both blocks as

indicated.

Once done you are set to begin using your saber saw to cut out both designs. After both are cut out, sand all the edges and make sure your two handles fit around the aluminum. On the inside of one handle trace the holes from the aluminum. Now drill two small guide holes for your screws. "C" clamp the two handles and aluminum sword together and dab a drop or two of wood glue into the holes. Screw down both screws and leave clamped for an hour. After unclamping, sand down and paint as desired.

Once you have practiced "sword building" a while you will be amazed at how quickly you can mass produce a dozen swords. Again, feel free to adapt my basic design to suit your needs. Boy, is this stuff easy!

## BLADES

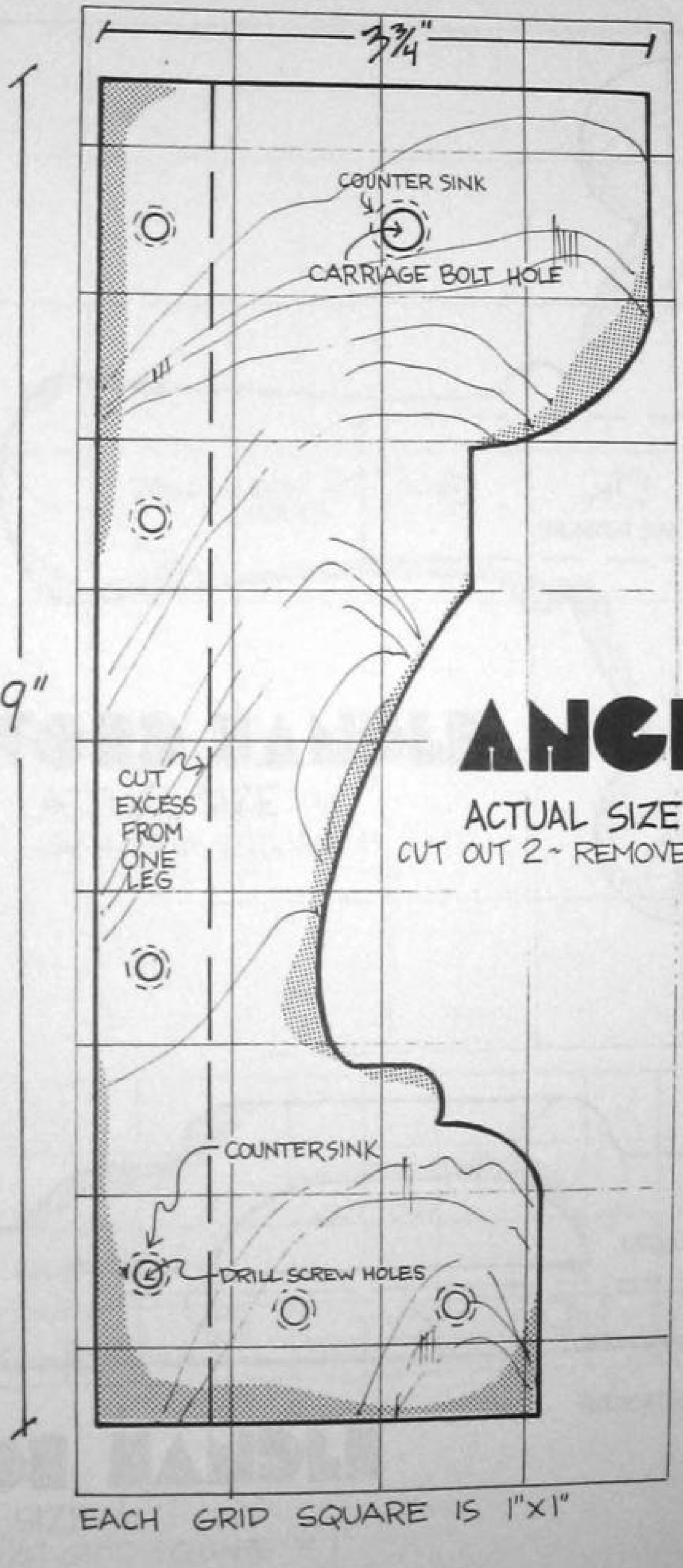
"...and two solid steel blades are pushed through the cabinet." Most commercial blades are made from 1/8" sheet aluminum polished to resemble chrome. You can cut and polish the blades yourself, but I have always used a metal shop to do this because it's usually cheaper and less time consuming. They use scraps and have the heavy duty polishing equipment necessary for the job. The shop I used made five Cutting in Sixths blades while I waited. Usually they don't understand what you are going to do with this stuff, so they don't know how to charge - and you'll get a good deal. Check your local phone books for "sheet metal works" or "aluminum supplies". Ask if they have the capability to cut, grind and polish sheet aluminum. If the answer is "yes", find out who to talk to when you get down there. Take with you the basic blade measurements and ask them to cut it, grind three edges, drill the holes and polish it.

Again, you can get the metal working tools to cut, polish, grind, etc., but why? You are saving your work time and money by finding someone. And when you tell them it's for a magic trick, they will immediately ask you if you are "going to saw someone in half" and then they will ask to see a trick. Good public relations will save you a lot of time and money and you have developed a valuable supplier. From their point of view you will have brought the world of magic to an otherwise boring day of routine metal cutting. Everybody wins.

The typical blade I have illustrated is a Zig Zag blade. Assuming that you are going to farm out the metal work and construct the handles yourself, the basic building technique is not unlike sword making.

Grid off and cut out the two handles. Groove out to allow for the thickness of the blade. Trace and drill your holes, clamp together and screw down.

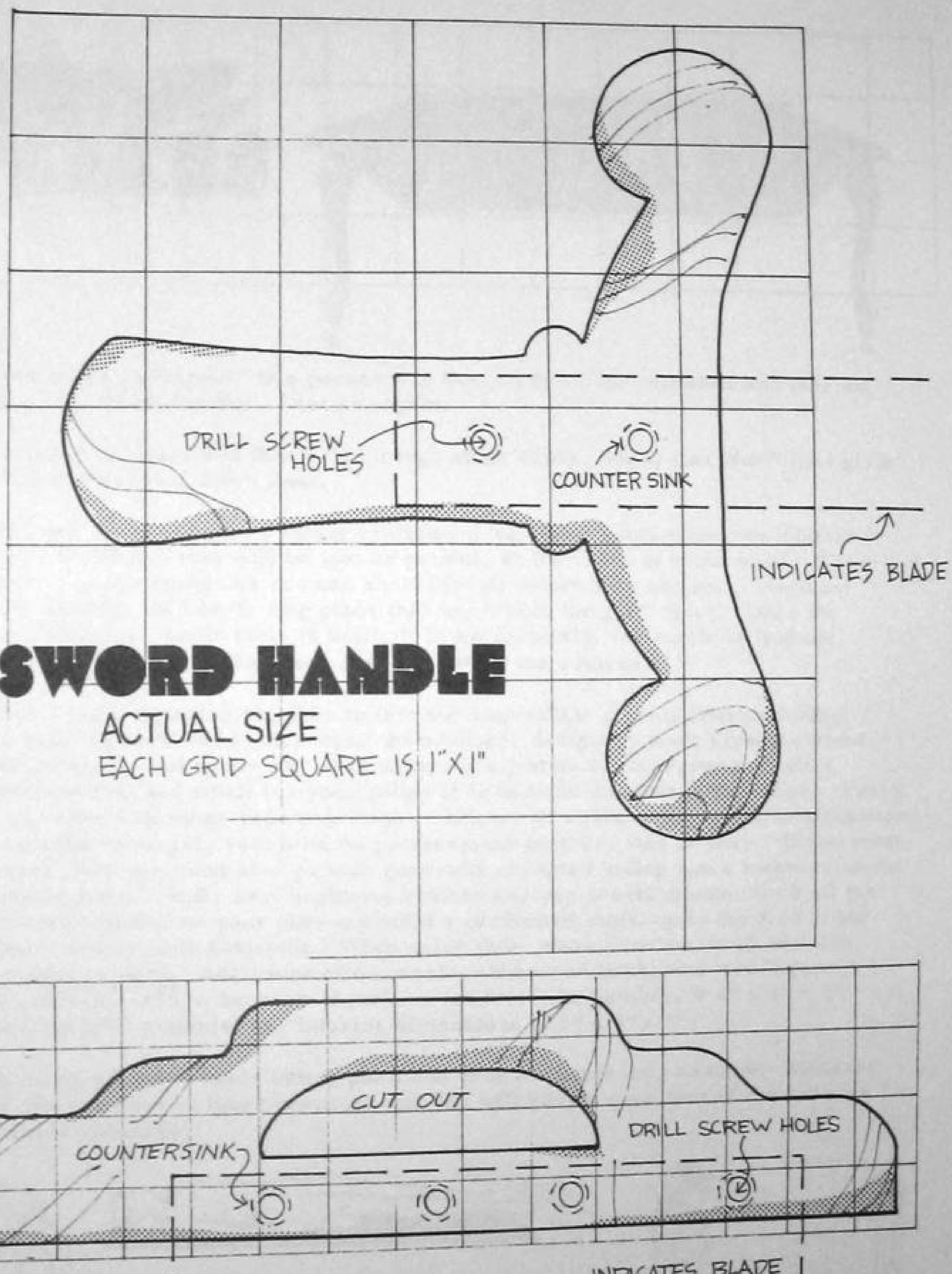
There is no mystery to magic building. Experience is the only teacher and, once you have mastered the standard items, you are well on your way to becoming an experienced magic craftsman.




# ANGLE LEG

ACTUAL SIZE

CUT OUT 2 ~ REMOVE EXCESS FROM ONE




# SWORD HANDLE

ACTUAL SIZE

EACH GRID SQUARE IS 1"X1"

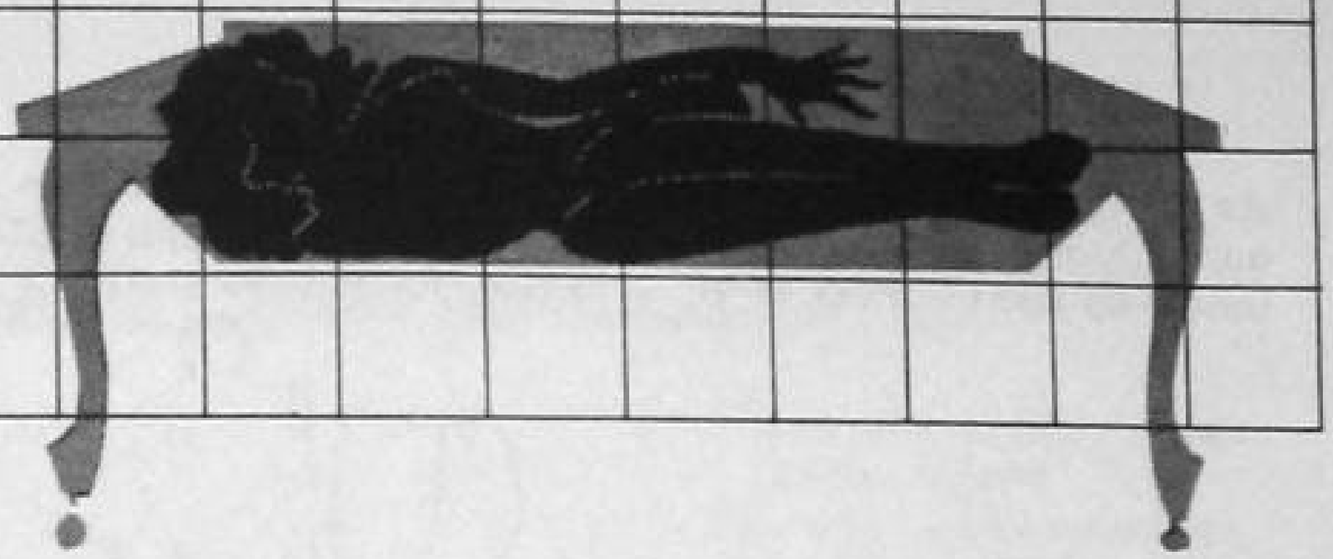



# BLADE HANDLE

HALF SIZE

EACH ½" GRID SQUARE = 1"

# HIDING PLACES



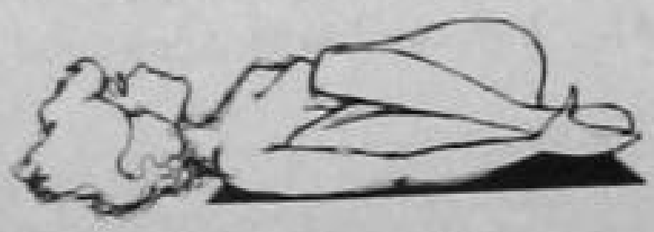
I have always felt an "expert" is a person who has made all the mistakes and learned from them. By that definition, I am an expert.

I have designed illusions that didn't fit through stage doors, bases that didn't hold girls and floating devices that didn't float.

Obviously, for you to grow as a magic craftsman, you must make your own mistakes and, more than likely, they will be just as painful, at the time, as mine were. There are, however, some problems you can short circuit before they happen. The most common of which is the old "hiding place that won't hold the girl" trick. Once the mahogany and walnut Asrah table is built, it is exceptionally traumatic to find out that it will hold little more than your past ten **years' tax returns**

In my plans I urge beginning builders to test the dimensions of your illusion hiding places by building cardboard mock-ups. Remember, designers don't know the sizes of your assistants. And to my way of thinking, it's just as big an error to build a compartment that is too small for your gal as it is to build one that is too large. Every inch you can save will make your base look smaller. Of course, if you are in a position to work with the same gal, your wife or professional partner, this is easy. If you must use different girls you must also go with generally accepted hiding place measurements as supplied in plans. Still, as a beginning craftsman, you should double check all the measurements supplied on your plan and build a cardboard mock-up to the size of the hiding place used by your assistant. When doing this, make sure you work with the interior measurements. Beginners often overlook the wood thickness, and if your assistant won't fit, it'll be because of inches, not feet. Remember, a 4" x 4" x 4" box made from 1/2" material has interior dimensions of 3" x 3" x 3".

I have sketched out some basic hiding positions your assistant may assume. Measure the space she requires in these positions and you will have a good idea of the interior measurements required.



As a beginning builder, train your mind now to think in terms of interior measurements on all hiding places. And double check your building plans by constructing the cardboard mock-up first - F.O.B.B. - "Find Out Before Building".

Many magicians have written asking how to build a bevel base. The answer is, first build a regular base and gain the experience from that. Then, when you are ready, tackle the more complicated bevel base. But first, just for practice, build a small stage effect with a thick tray, such as a Dove In Balloon, or Vanishing Alarm Clock and incorporate a bevel look to the tray. This exercise will get you used to working with the angles and construction methods required. In this chapter I have included typical standard base construction and the bevel base construction. In future writings I will cover the double bevel base (top and bottom) and its construction. But, if you can build one bevel, you can build two and I'll bet you'll figure it out on your own.

One final note on hiding places, "watch those costumes!" If you have a nice thin base your assistant just barely fits into, don't plan for her to appear in a bulky hoop skirt. That base ain't big enough for the both of 'em!

For a small illusion show in New Orleans, I designed a beautiful rhinestone covered costume that draped to mid-thigh, had 12" long bell sleeves and a plunging neckline. From shoulder to hip was an embroidered rainbow that was beaded, sequined and rhinestoned. The costume was designed specifically to be used with a custom Zig Zag painted in the same color schemes and designs as the costume. The girls looked great in the costume, just enough bosom and legs, and the costume next to the illusion gave a nice art-directed look. Can you figure out the problem?

Don't feel bad, neither could I - until dress rehearsal. Now you have to picture it. The girl is in the illusion with the front doors shut and you are displaying the "solid steel blades". A snap of your fingers - she is hypnotized. In goes the top blade... no it doesn't. Why? Because the stupid designer put 12" long bell sleves on the costume. Her hand in the top hole permitted the bell sleeve to dangle down, blocking the top blade's passage. The blade hung up every time. We turned the problem into a solution by putting in a costume change. The minute she stepped into the Zig Zag and the doors were shut, the $500.00 costume "hit the dirt" and all that was left was a $35.00 bikini (with no bell sleeves). The top blade approved.

## THE BEGINNER'S BASE

As you begin to build and create your own illusions, sooner or later you will come to the Doll House or Temple Of Benares. These illusions are relatively easy to build and their bases provide a good beginning point for base construction.

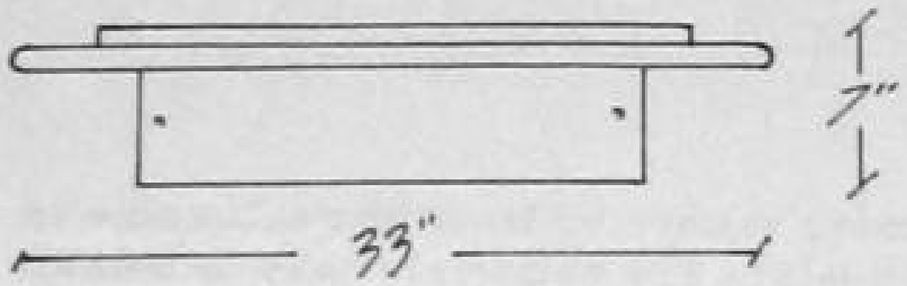
In viewing my drawing of the Beginner's Base you can see the simplicity of this design. The box part of the base is made from 3/8" ply, butt jointed or rabbit jointed. Use Elmer's glue and wood screws in the assembly. The floor to this box is constructed from 1/2" ply, again glued and screwed into position. These items should be constructed first after double checking that the dimensions suit your assistant.

The "ledge" portion of the base is constructed around the box. It is made from 1" x 6" white pine, topped with a decorative 1" x 2" frame. Both these frames should be miter joined and glued and screwed around the box. These are the basics. Certainly you can improve on this design by adding decorative half-round molding, perhaps cove molding, or customize your base with some router work around the edges.

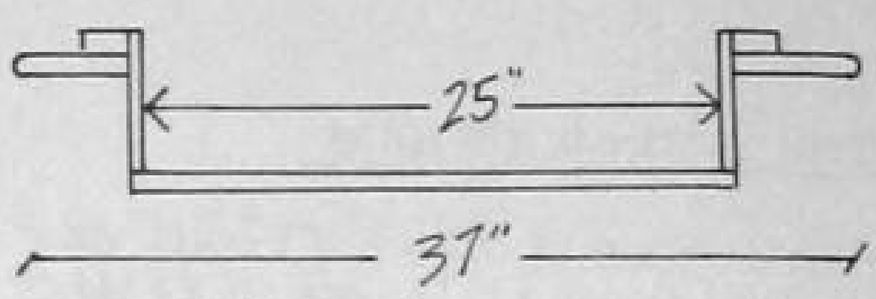
If you can build this base you will soon be constructing Cargo Cages, Doll Houses, Cutting In 6ths, Crystal Boxes, etc. because the construction methods that apply to this base apply to all these other bases. Unless, of course, you are ready to tackle the Bevel Base.

As always, in encouraging you to do your own thing, there are many ways to dress this base up. If you require more than 7" depth, build some molding up on top of the ledge. Another suggestion would be to run a 4" drape down from the 1" x 6" frame. This would cause the base to appear to be thinner. Instead of using my angle legs, you may select the pre-made French legs currently available at some lumber stores. This will give your base an all new look.

In some instances, you may want to cover the bottom exterior of the box portion with felt. This gives a clean, professional look. Well in any event, as you can see, your base can be anything you choose it to be. But whatever look you choose, do the best job you can and you'll have a prop you'll be proud to own for years to come.




FRONT ELEVATION



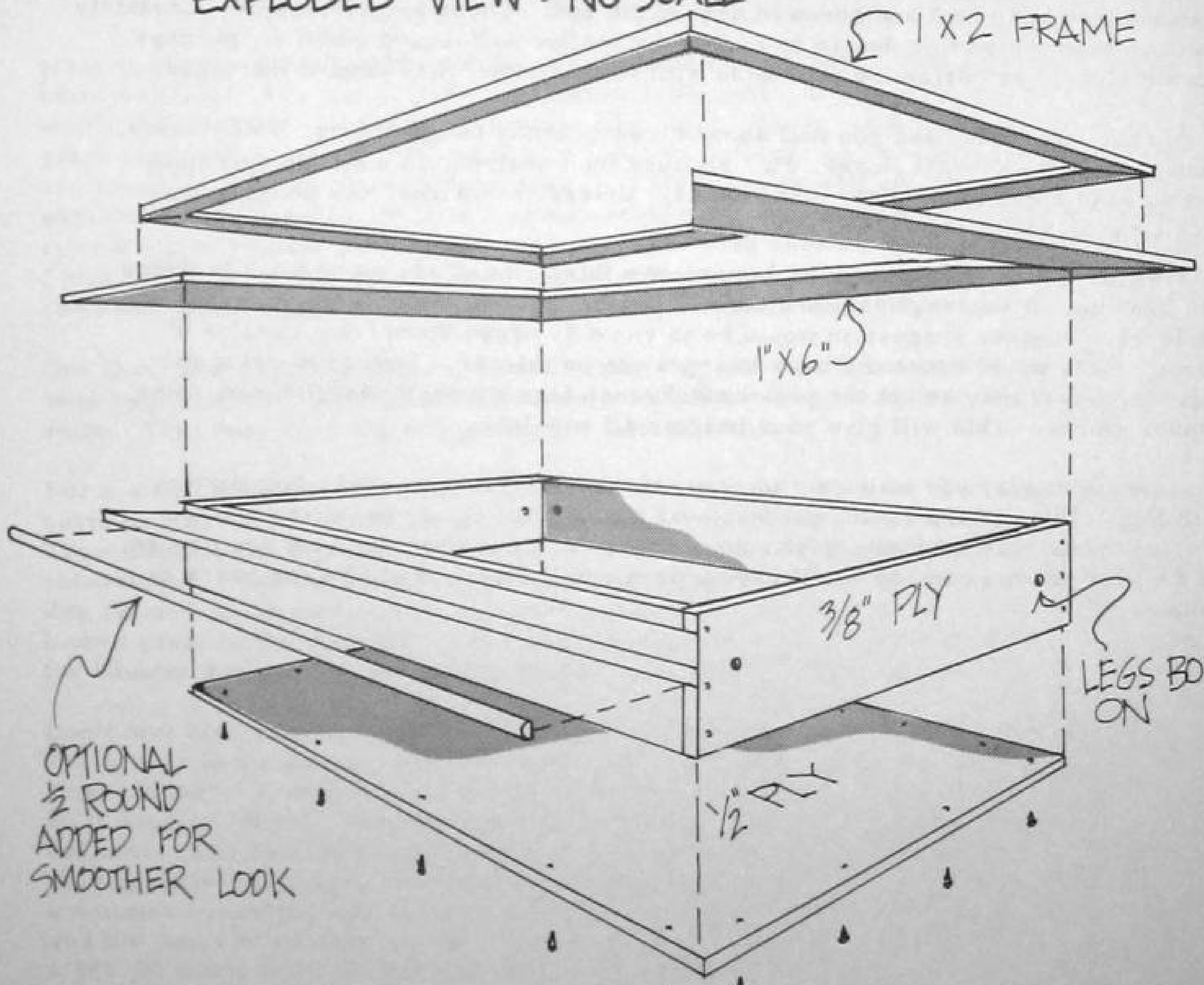

SIDE ELEVATION

SCALE 1"=1'0"

# BEGINNER'S BASE

"DOLL HOUSE" OR "TEMPLE OF BENARES"

EXPLODED VIEW ~ NO SCALE




3/8" PLY BOX & ½" PLY FLOOR ALL GLUED & SCREWED TOGETHER

## BEVEL BASE

Although this book deals with beginning to build your own illusions, I have had so many questions concerning the construction of bevel bases, I feel obligated to at least explain the process in this publication.

To get that deceptive slant on the top or bottom (or both) of your base you will be executing what is called "compound miters" which basically means more than one angle is cut as you run your lumber through the power tool. To determine the angles to be cut you will need a protractor and, of course, a good set of plans on your base. One magic craftsman I know always draws up a "full size" section of his base to make sure all his angles are accurate.

The following page shows a sketch of the typical Asrah base (cross section) and the angles involved in the base rim. Remember, not only does the top and bottom come off the base rim at an angle, but they also must form an angle joint at each corner. Hence the term compound miter. The bottom sketch shows a top view of your table saw as you run your lumber through. Note that the wood is at an angle and the saw blade is at an angle - compound miter.

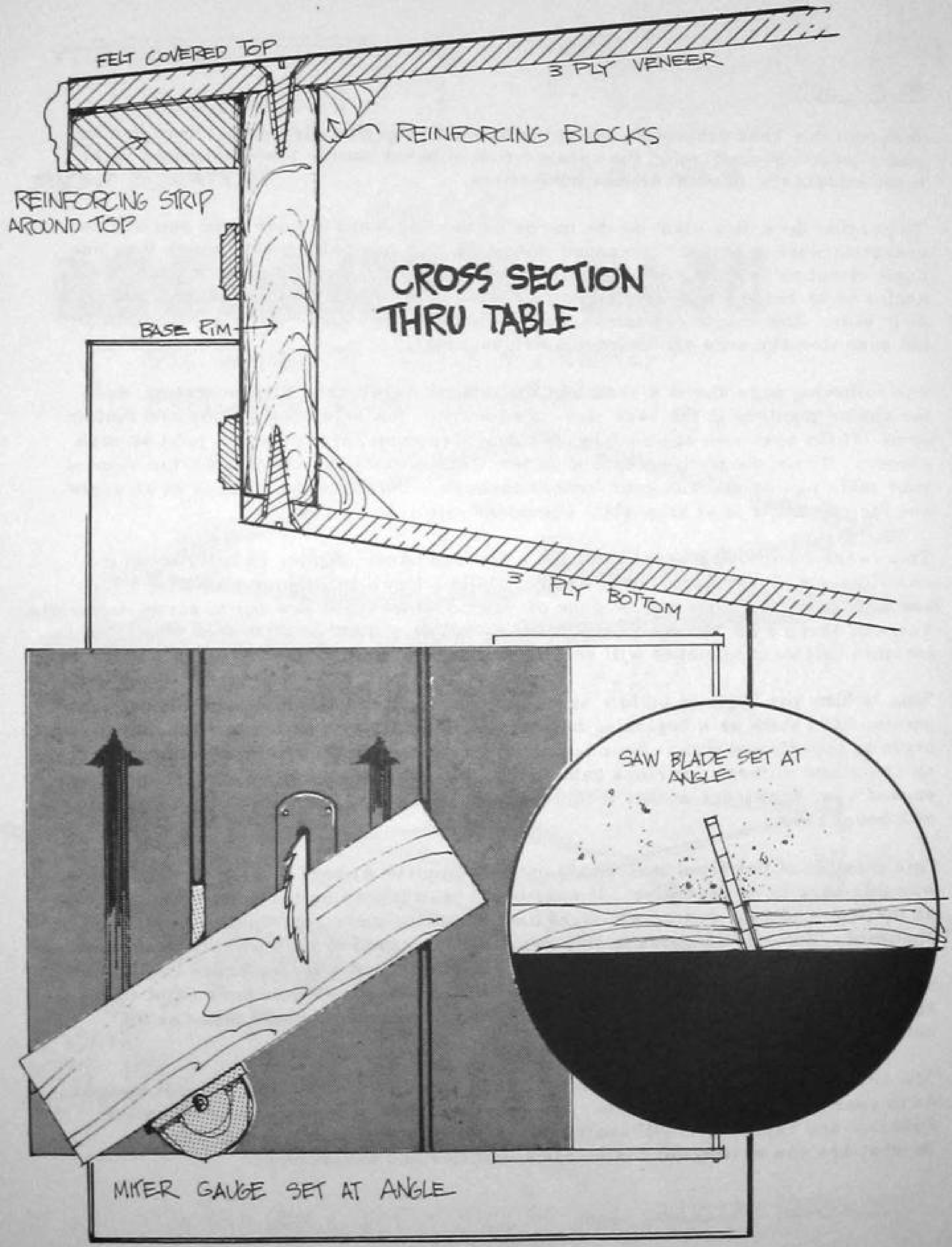
This is the basic building trick behind a tapered base. Again, in building your own illusions, it is best to start small. Build a Dove In Balloon tray with a top and bottom bevel. This can be done on your Dremel table saw out of scrap materials. You will learn a lot about tapered bases by building them in miniature first, not to mention that your mistakes will be miniaturized as well.

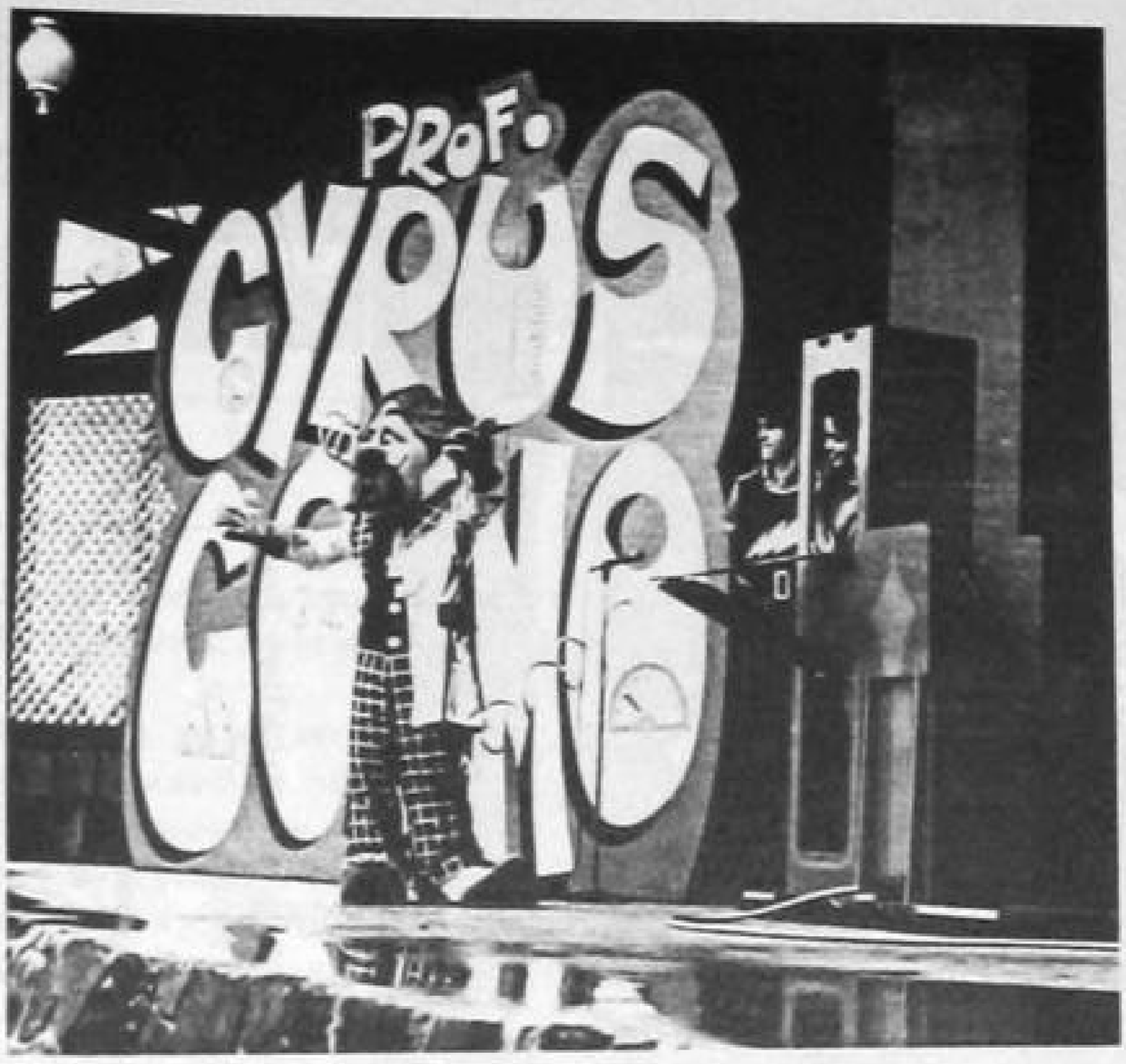
This is how you begin to build a bevel base. Admittedly, I have only hit the high points, but I think as a beginning builder you should have the basic methods to begin to experiment with. Your bookstore or library will have more information on compound miters in various cabinet making and fine furniture books. Begin to expand your knowledge of this technique and before long you will be building your own bevel base.

This mention of the bevel base would not be complete without a quick thought on why this base is so deceptive. If your bevel base tapers on the bottom and not on the top, and your audience's sight line is looking down, the thickness will not be apparent. The effectiveness of this principle is geared to the audience's position in relation to your base. If you work on a platform with your audience looking up at you, your taper should be at the top. And conversely, if you work night clubs and your audience looks down on the club floor, your base should taper at the bottom.

The bevel base can hide more depth than any other base style, but careful thought as to your particular performance set up will dictate your use of this technique. Practice and experience will assist you in building this unique magic concept. So what are you waiting for? Get some practice and experience!

# CROSS SECTION THRU TABLE





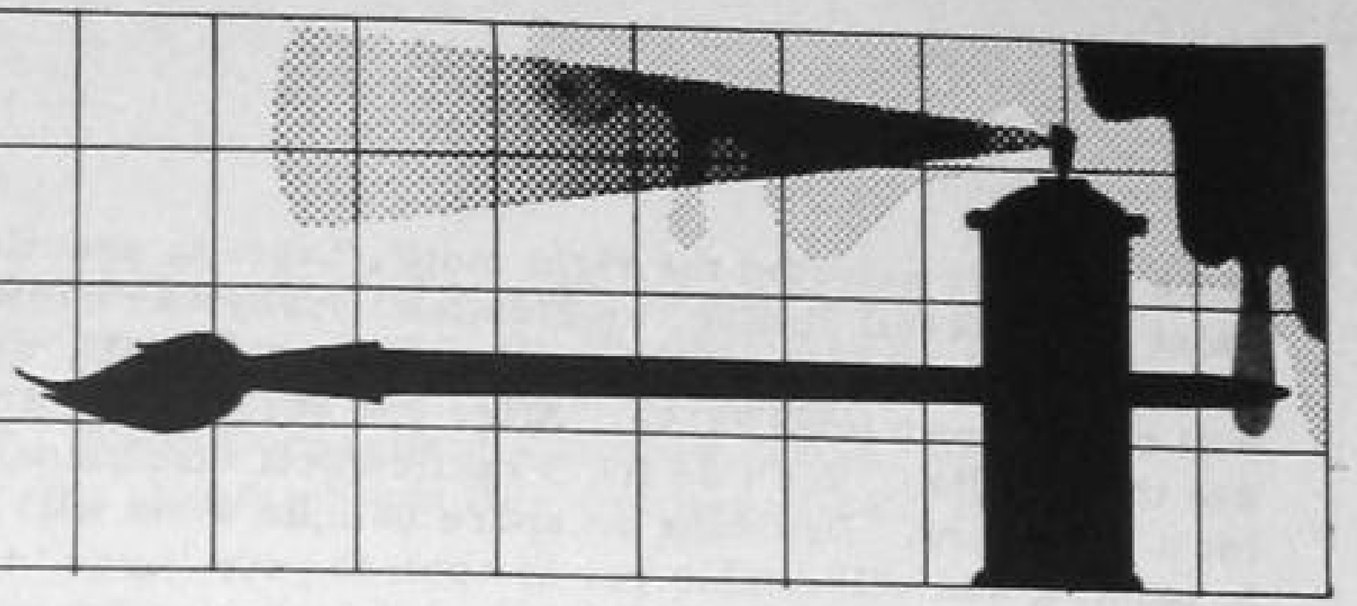

From the 1975 Cyrus Cosmo show at Six Flags - Robert Harbin's Upside Down Girl. A most unusual illusion because, although we presented it many different ways, the audience never applauded at its conclusion. Why? They were too busy trying to figure out what they had just seen.

From the 1976 Cosmo show - Johnny Gaughan built this Mismade for us at the last minute because all 14,000 sq. ft. of our studio was filled with puppet shows for Kings Dominion, King's Island, Busch and Valley Fair amusement parks.

Cosmo premiered this never-before-seen illusion, "Orbes", based on the smaller Stratospheres effect. Cosmo rearranged the "molecules" until he accidentally created Woman!

After much trial and error design work, the prop was built in our studios. Cosmo used it four times a day for 115 days straight. The illusion proved itself to be durable and the hit of the show!

# PAINT & FINISH



In the theater, most scenery and props are painted in flat colors to form a duller background, visually pushing the actor into the foreground

Illusion painting is, generally, just the opposite. In most cases, the only flat paint that is used is black, and its main purpose is to hide things, thicknesses of bases, box dimensions and depths. It's because of this use of flat black that our props are always shiny and glossy. It's the contrasting textures that causes the flat black to disappear. The glossy finish visually forces the eye to look at it and assume the flat black is nonexistent, or is a shadow.

Not only is this use of texture important in illusion building, but also choice of colors. The eye will grab a gold, yellow, silver, red or orange before it will concentrate on blues, greens and purples. The brighter colors should always be placed near the flat black thickness you want to hide. The eye will register the color and not the black. A good rule of thumb is to always use the bright enamel colors on things you want to be seen and use flat black on the things you don't want to be seen.

The best method of hiding interior box dimensions, as in the Modern Cabinet or the Doll House, is the use of "confusion". A wild, contrasting color, patterned fabric will do the trick. We always shoot for a black and white geometric print to line the inside of our illusions with. The eye is confused by the severe color contrast and can not register depth. Hold the potential fabric up in the cloth store and if it's confusing, then it's just right for inside your Temple Of Benares.

A good way of diminishing the size of a box, say a Mismade Lady box, is to run a 1/4" flat black pinstripe around all the edges. This causes the eye to only see to the edge of the enamel paint and ignore the black. The box seems smaller.

These are a few painting theory basics, but each illusion is different and requires its own deceptive paint job. As you begin to build the illusion, concentrate on how you are going to paint it and what techniques you are going to use to make this look thin, this look colorful and this to disappear. Painting illusions is an art in itself and deserves the same careful thought and planning that you would put into the actual construction.

In our chapter on the Bottom Line Illusionist I mention some ways you can get a "professional" paint job. If you are planning to go it on your own with a can of spray paint, please keep in mind this, too, is an art in and of itself, as is stencil craft. The only way to become a proficient spray can painter is to practice. There are some books available on stenciling and many art stores carry paperback stencil books that actually have Egyptian, Oriental and Art Deco stencils. Shop around.

Once you have selected the right motif, begin to practice all aspects of your illusion's paint job - stencil cutting, application, spray can use and distance of spray, etc.. Practice application of masking tape and, above all, be aware that your worst enemy will be your own impatience. After you spray/stencil something, you are anxious to see the results...don't do it! Practice self discipline. Turn around and walk away for a few hours. Dry runs on spare sample wood will give you the needed experience in painting and will enable you to control your "urge" to remove the stencil or masking tape at the "moment of truth" (before it's dry). Practice does make perfect.

The proper finishing of illusions and stage props will test your patience during every phase. It will be the longest process involved in building an illusion. And because it's the final step, you're already mentally performing your latest creation. So take your time, think things through, watch your drying times and don't rush any phase of this final, important step to illusion building.

When your illusion is ready for painting and you have decided on the basic look and type of paint you desire, it is best to put a primer coat on first to seal the wood. Allow this to dry and, using light sandpaper, go over the entire prop, sanding until smooth. Then spray one more primer coat and allow to dry and sand again. If done properly, the illusion should be smooth as glass and ready to take your decorative paint.

Unless you go first class with an air compressor and automotive enamels, you may, like other do-it-yourselfers, elect to go the spray can route. Make sure you select a good grade spray enamel in colors that suit your needs.

There are many books available on stenciling. When I work with a stencil I usually transfer my design on to clear frisket masking (available at most art stores) then, very carefully with an exacto knife cut out the stencil on the prop. This is just one way to go. I have seen stencils cut from cardboard, metal and contact paper. Obviously, if it is a repetitive stencil, the cardboard or metal versions are best. In many instances you may just be working with a masking tape stencil. If such is the case, always make sure your tape is stuck down tight and there is no opportunity for spray mist to get where it shouldn't.

Now, as far as the actual spraying goes, once the stencil is in place, lightly mist the area to be sprayed. Do this four or five times to slowly build up the paint, allowing each layer to dry before spraying the next. It all goes back to your own patience and your willingness to let the paint dry as it should.

There is one other form of stencil known as a liquid frisket. This is used by many airbrush artists and may be of interest to you. Basically it's a paint-on liquid latex stencil. Check your local art supply store for more information on this new method.

The most important information you can gain from this chapter is the knowledge that paint and finish are the final elements in a chain of events that actually customize your illusion. The paint and finish of an illusion is what your audience will see first - treat it accordingly. And remember, your paint job must accomplish two things, it

should look good and be deceptive.

Having a design background, it was always my goal to color coordinate props and develop a "look" for our amusement park shows. Other magicians have "looks" to their acts, for example: Doug Henning - clouds, rainbows, mysticism, fun and ethereal stuff. David Copperfield - chrome, glass, art deco, sophistication and subtle style. Siegfried and Roy - glitter, flash, danger, fast, big and European charm.

What is your look? What adjectives do people think of when they think of your act? Make sure you finish your props to reinforce those adjectives. The theme and look of your act is largely dependent on the design, paint and finish of your props and how well they tie in to your costumes, music and overall presentation.

So, although paint and finish is often the last step in illusion building, it is also the result of planning ahead and proper thought. Remember, your audience will mentally assemble all the elements of your act and judge you by the sum total of your parts. How your illusions look is a big part of your act!

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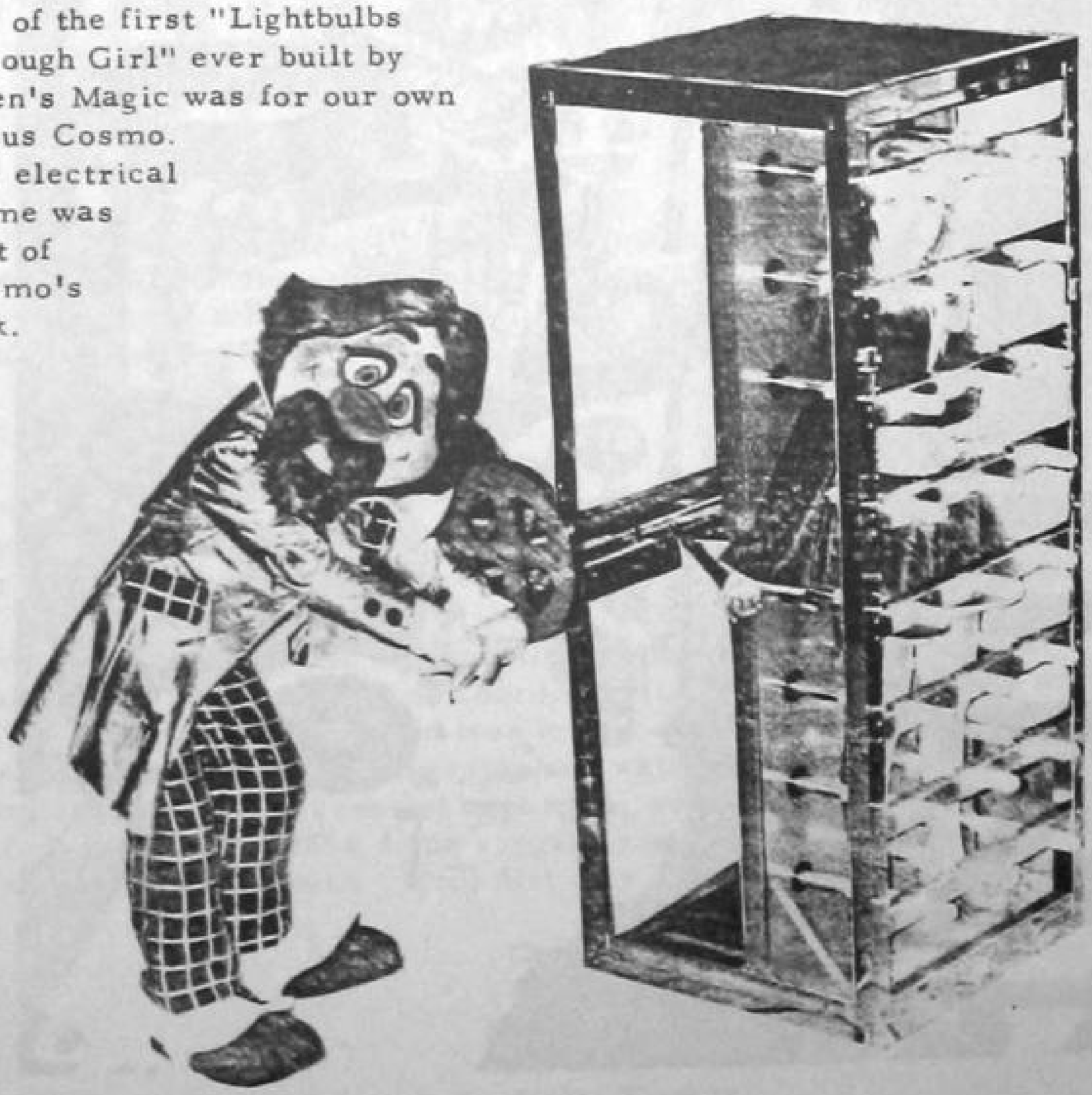
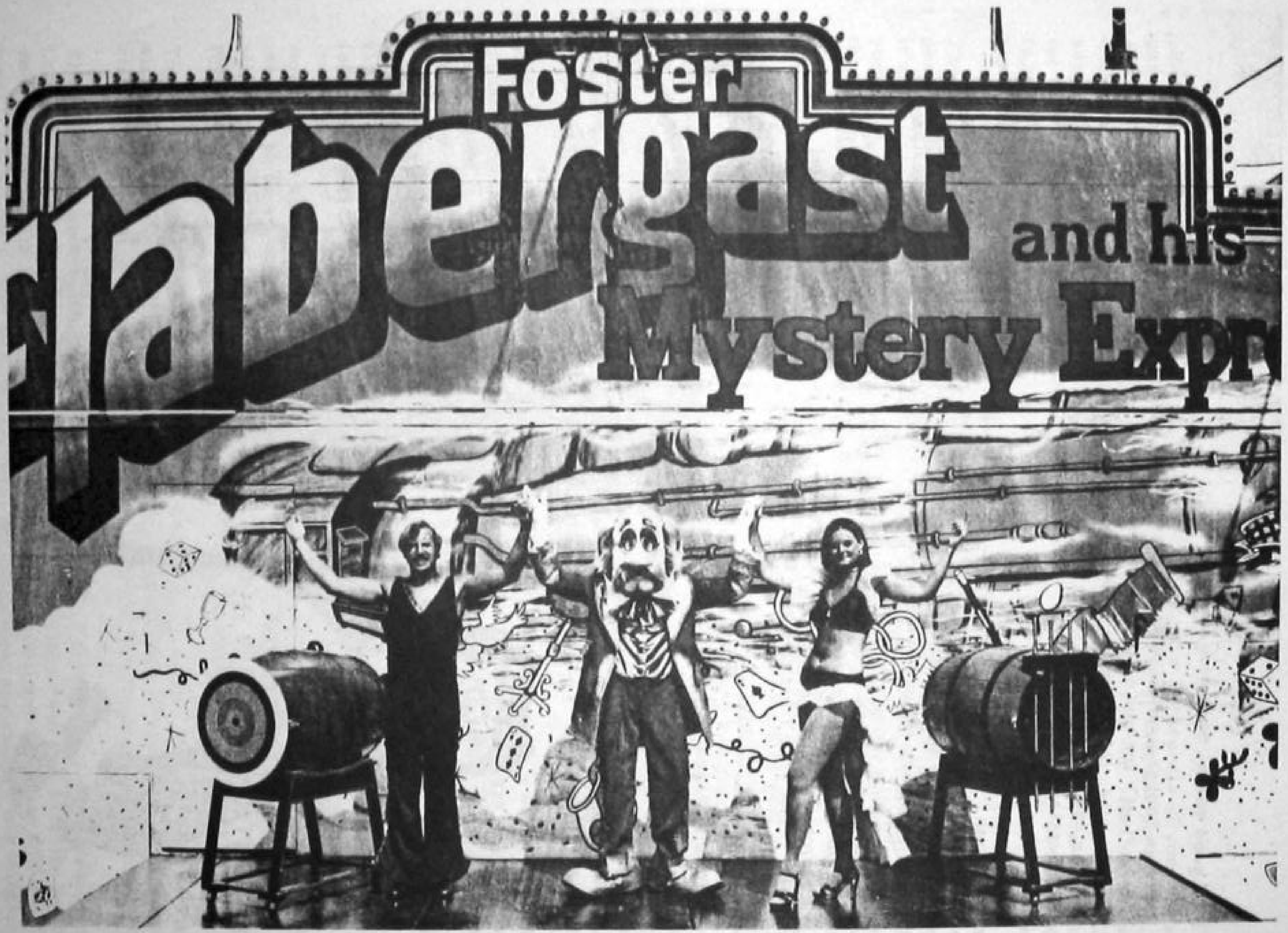
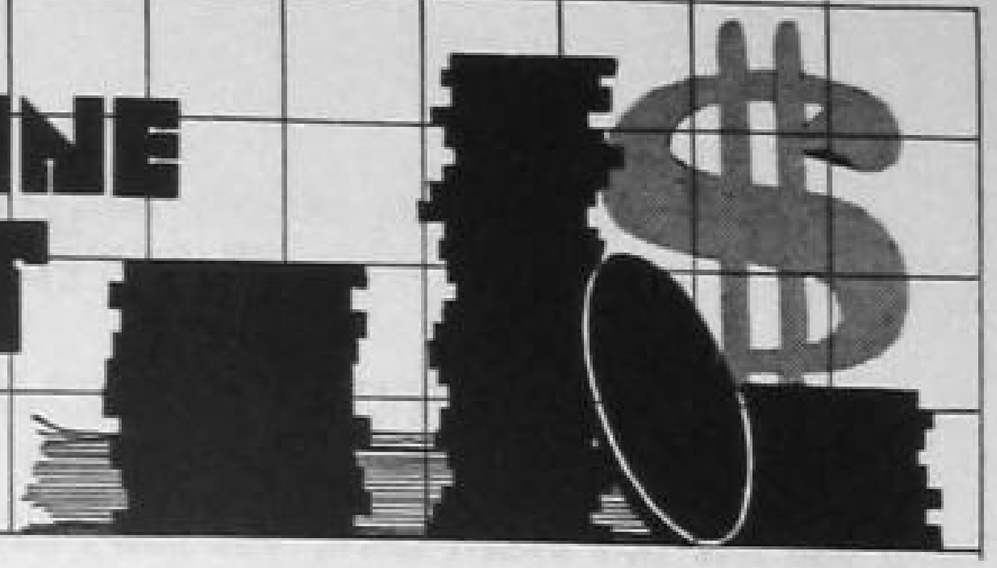
One of the first "Lightbulbs Through Girl" ever built by Owen's Magic was for our own Cyrus Cosmo. The electrical theme was part of Cosmo's look.






In March of 1979, a forty foot semi truck was brought from Canada to Dallas' Osborne Studio. By May of '79 "Foster Flabergast And His Mystery Express" was touring Canada with Conklin's shows.

# THE BOTTOM LINE ILLUSIONIST



If you are a collector, hobbiest or just lover of magic, this chapter isn't necessarily for you. On the other hand, if you are a working pro, full or part time, and make income from your efforts, you are probably a "bottom line illusionist".

Over the years man has done an excellent job of confusing the very basic accounting and profit principle, "If you want to make profit, don't spend more than you make, and don't owe more than you have." Isn't that simple? Aren't I a genius? This logic, of course, has been ignored by banks, lending institutions, insurance companies and credit card firms. Up until now we have all been encouraged to "get in over our heads", "charge it", and "not worry about the monthly payments".

Fortunately, now in the '80s, credit cards are being vandalized by scissors in much the same fashion as the brassiere was victimized by fire in the mid '60s.

So we're slowly getting back to the basic economic method. A few bureaucrats will be out of work. . . but who cares?

Now, how does all of this effect you? If you're a working illusionist you must, of course, have the props. Now, enter the variables. You can spend $4,000.00 one month with one of the many leading illusion manufacturers and get, undoubtedly, a beautifully hand crafted piece of art, actually well worth its price in today's economy. If you can afford this, and many can, this is the simplest solution and you have made a good investment. Congratulations!

If, however, you want a little more control over your props, want to save a little money and want a truly custom prop, you can either build it yourself or have it constructed locally. It's to these folks I am hoping to address myself.

The bottom line illusionist will substitute his time for his cash outlay. He will build it himself, (no labor charge) or coordinate its construction locally with an "inexperienced" magic builder and spend less money than with an "experienced" magic builder. But he will have to closely supervise and watch his carpenter's progress. Illusion building requires many areas of expertise, some of which you may have. If you do, great! If you don't, I have some suggestions on finding "sub-contractors". First, analyze what you may need. Your list may look something like this:

Carpenter
Artist/Sign Painter
Seamstress
Enamels Painter
Metal Worker

Machinist
Electrician

Now again, you may have one or more of these talents, or you may have none. Here's where and how to look.

If you live in a small town, you don't have to look as far or as hard. Small towns are great for building illusions because you'll usually hear, "Machine shop? Yeah, Ole' Gus's got one in his garage." You have just hit pay dirt! I've heard this same line from Denton, Texas to Estes Park, Colorado. It's music to my ears.

In a bigger town start with the phone book. For carpenters check cabinet makers, mill shops, woodworking supplies and school woodworking classes. Listen to this deal, it really happened: The magician bought a few hundred dollars in materials, the school woodworking class built him an illusion show as their semester project. He teamed up with the school drama department on the school stage and presented a fund raising illusion show. The school raised $7,000.00 in ticket sales and he walked away with an illusion show. Everybody was happy! The lesson here is to always think "trade outs and deals" as you contact sub contractors.

Even if you live in a large city and you walk into a woodworking supply shop or lumber yard, look for a little cabinet making business card stuck on the wall. Tell people what you want and train your ear to listen for "Ole' Gus's. . . .", then find Gus.

Artists and sign painters come in handy for decorative magic tables, large Hippity Hops and Mummy Cabinet illusions. Poke around art supply stores, school art departments, sign shops and display houses. You'll find an artist.

Seamstresses can make great costumes, Asrah cloths, Sub Trunk bags and Crystal Casket covers. First, check your family. You're bound to have one aunt who sews. If not, fabric stores, school home economic and drama classes are your best bet.

If you've just completed building or having built a Thin Model Sawing and you want it painted in a smooth, professional, high gloss finish just like magic builders do, there is only one person that can do this for you - an enamels painter - with his compressor and spray gun. Enamels painters usually hang out in car body shops, just waiting for dented Volkswagons. But, in you walk with your prop, or maybe a photo example, and your artist. The artist works with the enamels man on the design and you end up with a professionally finished illusion.

Metal workers cut great Zig Zag blades, Hippity Hops and Die Box fakes. If you have a company that sells and services drainage gutters on houses in your town, you have just found sheet metal working capabilities.

Machine shops make great Levitations, Suspensions and Bending Spikes. They are accustomed to auto parts and industry gearing mechanisms, but they'll consider you

their most fun customer. Most machine shops are listed in the phone book and most machine shops can tell you where to get something chromed, which pays off if you're building a Sword Suspension.

Electricians can wire up Flash Pots, sound systems, Fade Away Cabinets and Electric Chair illusions. Check with your local Radio Shack or electrical supply house. They'll know a "Gus", too, who's just been waiting for some extra money.

Remember, whatever capability you want, you can find it. You just have to get out, look and talk to new people. There's a whole world of talent out there just waiting to service your needs.

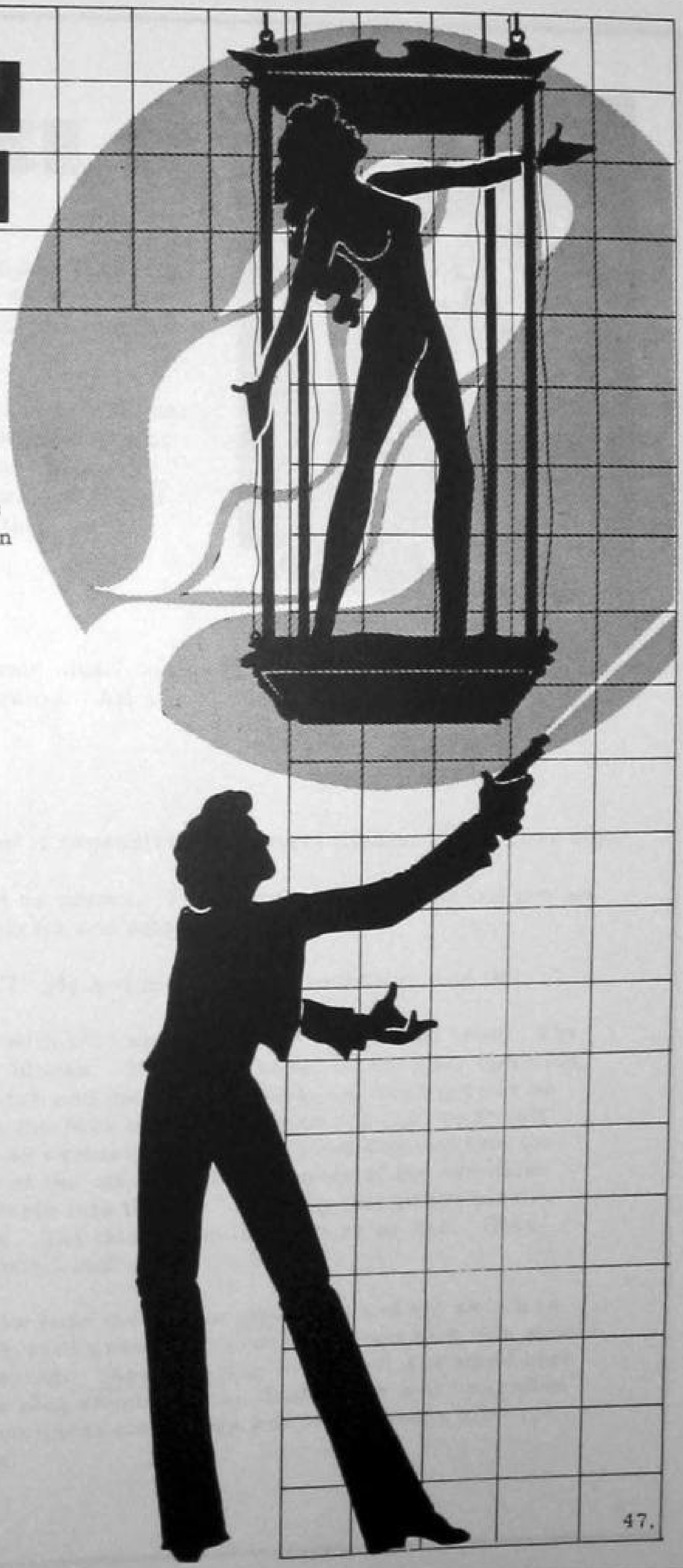
Obviously, it's my goal that some day you won't need a carpenter - you'll want to do that part yourself. But there's no better way to learn than to hang around with pro cabinet makers. Get a good focus on what part you want to play in the construction of your own props. As you get into it, you will find it's more fun than just buying an illusion. It's a whole new interest that benefits your magical end-product. And, because you've saved money, you'll make more, and become a Bottom Line Illusionist!

The photo on the following page depicts one of magic's most unusual illusion shows.

In 1979, during the heyday of rock music's Kiss group, Paul Osborne created and art-directed the ultimate "rock fantasy" - TRIKZ, for Sportland Pier in Wildwood, New Jersey. It played for a full season then was brought back to Dallas for a Halloween booking at Six Flags.


A PAUL OSBORNE & ASSOC. INC.
PRESENTATION
Don't miss this unique experience into the world of unexplained illusion! Appearing for limited time only at
SPORTLAND PIER

# ILLUSION SECTION



From my files I have selected the following seven illusions because they are easy to build, travel well and audience tested.

Within these plans you will find uses for many of the subjects discussed in previous chapters.

I sincerely hope you will find this chapter a good starting place to.... Build Your Own Illusions.

I. Flash Appearance

II. New Palanquin

III. Queen's Cut

IV. Chest Of Enchantment

V. New Wave Modern Cabinet

VI. Chest of Nefertari

VII. Costume Trunk

# FLASH APPEARANCE

## INTRODUCTION

There is nothing more magical than appearing in a puff of smoke. Generally you don't see this effect because of the problems of transporting a large, black backdrop.

One great thing about flash appearances is that they can be anything. Ours is themed almost Moorish, but they can be Chinese, Egyptian or modern chrome. They breakdown and travel well and most important of all, they quickly establish you as a magician.

## EFFECT

The curtains part as the symphonic music builds to a crescendo. Standing on stage is a mysterious Moorish alter frame. All of a sudden, in a blinding flash of light and smoke - there you are!

## METHOD

This effect could easily be the least expensive and fastest illusion you'll ever build.

Cut from 1" x 6" the two uprights as drawn. From spare 1/2" ply cut out the two back braces that support the uprights and attach pin hinges.

The top cross bar is cut from 1/2" ply and hinged in the middle to fold flat.

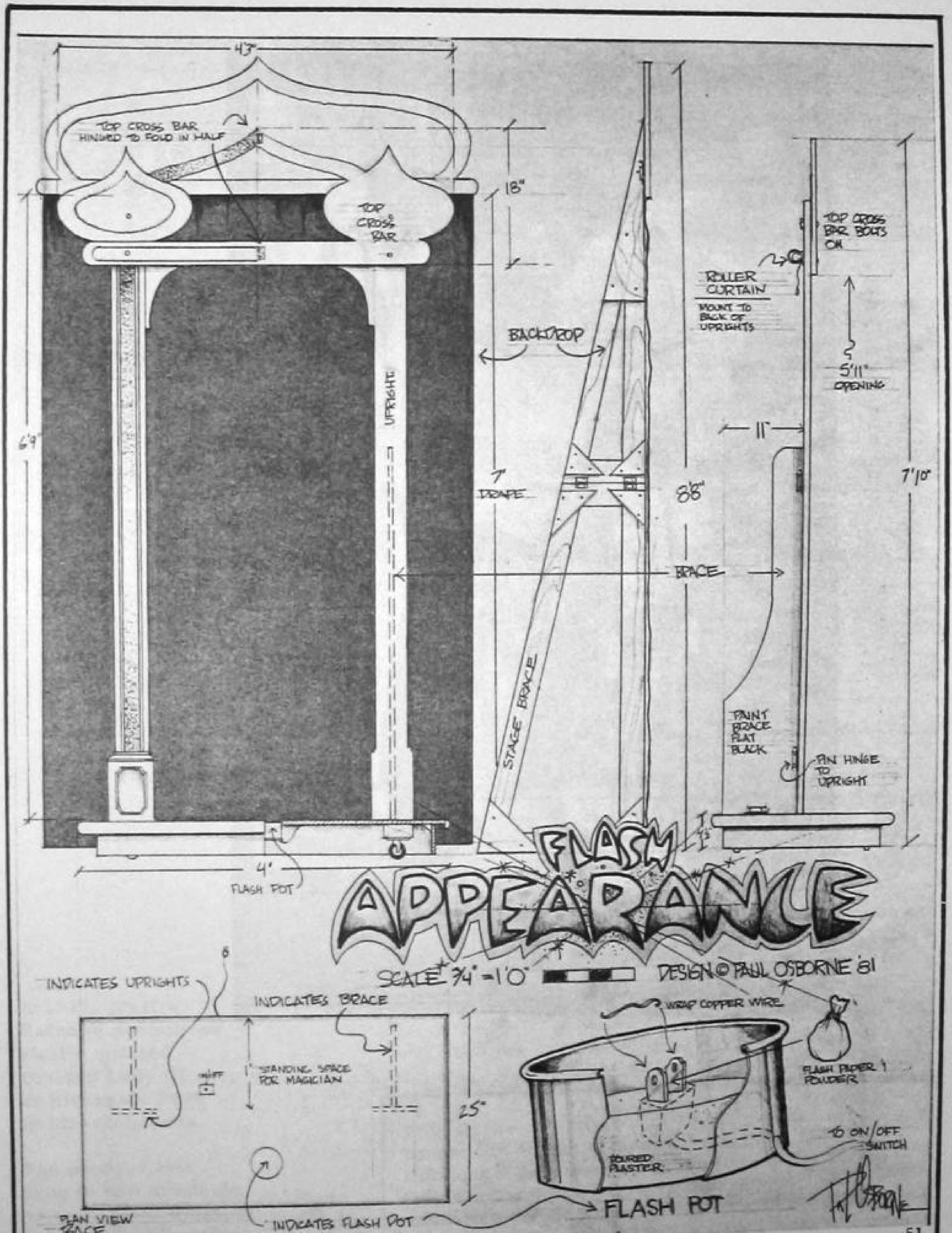
The base is made from 3/4" ply with 1/2" skirting and 1" half-round trim. The casters are attached to 4" x 4" blocks. Within the base, mount your flash pot, wired to any standard on/off switch and then out the back. A flash pot can be easily made by drilling a hole in the back of a 4" diameter x 2 1/2" to 3" tall can. Snip off the "male" end of an extension cord and insert this end into the can with the wires extending out of the can. Hold the prongs of the extension cord up as you pour plaster of Paris into the can, stopping just as the plaster rises to the bottom of the prongs. Let this set up for an hour or two. Once dry, wire this up to the on/off switch and out of the base.

When you load the flash pot, make sure the unit is unplugged and the switch is off. Wrap a single strand copper wire around the prongs and touching this should be the flash paper and powder packet. Carefully plug in the unit and stand back as you switch the pot on. As the plug shorts out the flash paper will be ignited by the sparks. From time to time clean the prongs and always make sure the unit is turned off when not in use.

Assemble the illusion by positioning the uprights on the base and applying pin hinges. The top cross bar should bolt on to the uprights, allowing for your height. Behind the cross bar mount the roller shade with black Duvatine cloth matching the backdrop. By practicing with this illusion you will find you can pull the shade all the way down, place one foot on it to hold it down, then hit the flash pot and release the roller shade. Timing is critical.

The backdrop has a top cut out of 1/2" frame with a black Duvatine drape attached. To support the frame, a standard stage brace or pipe configuration can be constructed.

The Flash Appearance works well in small to large stage conditions. It can be easily constructed and is a marvelous "first project".


43"
TOP CROSS BAR HINGED TO FOLD IN HALF
TOP CROSS BAR
UPRIGHT
6'9"
18"
BACKDROP
7' DRAPE
88"
BRACE
STAGE BRACE
ROLLER CURTAIN
MOUNT TO BACK OF UPRIGHTS
TOP CROSS BAR BOLTS ON
5'11" OPENING
11"
7'10"
PAINT BRACE FLAT BLACK
PIN HINGE TO UPRIGHT
4'
FLASH POT
FLASH APPEARANCE
SCALE 3/4" = 1'0"
DESIGN © PAUL OSBORNE '81
INDICATES UPRIGHTS
INDICATES BRACE
STANDING SPACE FOR MAGICIAN
25"
PLAN VIEW BASE
INDICATES FLASH POT
WRAP COPPER WIRE
FLASH PAPER & POWDER
TO ON/OFF SWITCH
BURIED PLASTER
FLASH POT

In 1975, Merlin Rainbow premiered Paul's updated Divided Lady illusion at Riverside Park in Massachusetts.

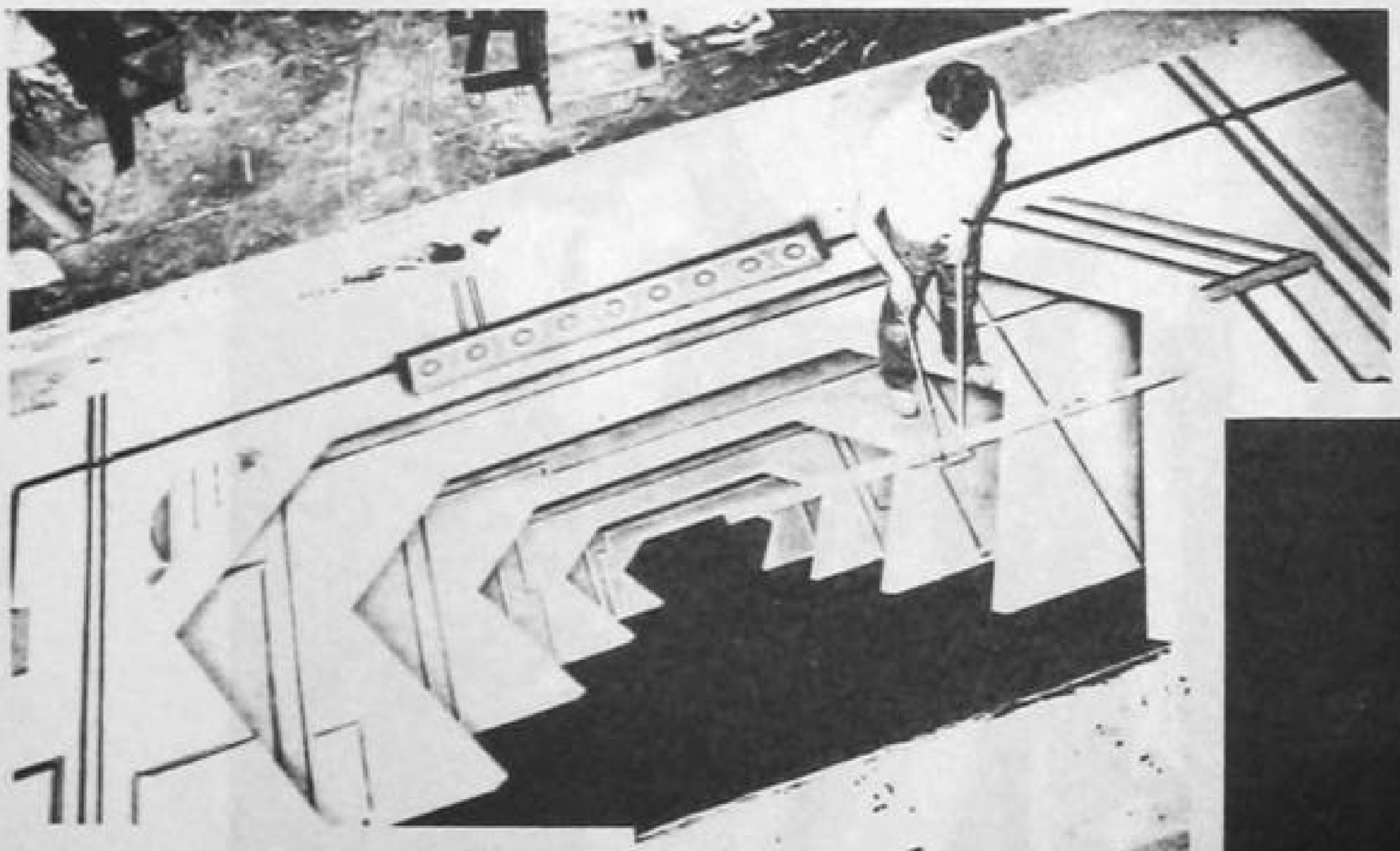
The plan for this prop is now available as an Illusion Systems' Series Two blueprint.

Paul Osborne's studio was an all-purpose production house manufacturing props, costumes, sets and illusions for amusement parks across the United States. The following is typical of some of the advertising done during '77 - '80.

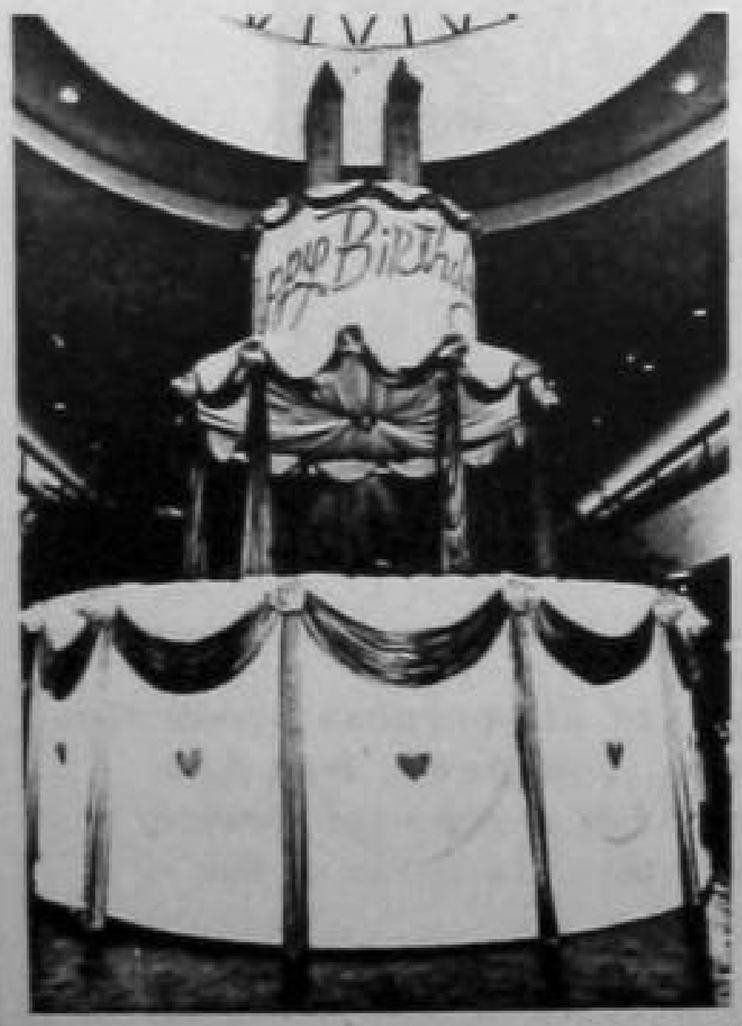
# PAUL OSBORNE & ASSOCIATES SCENIC SHOP

**DROPS, PROPS, DRAPES, SHAPES, SCENERY AND EVEN GREENERY!**

**All the magic and tinsel of the theatre is possible and practical with our newly expanded scenic design and construction department.**
**Headed by Hollywood scenic artist and painter Jim Finger, whose work has appeared in "FUNNY LADY", AIRPORT 75", "EARTHQUAKE", "THE CHEAP DETECTIVE", the movie version of CAMELOT starring Richard Harris, (as well as numerous other movies and plays), the PAUL OSBORNE & ASSOCIATES, INC. SCENIC DEPARTMENT can produce settings and props for any need. Whether it is a full scenery package for the grande opera, trade show setting, or a scenic/display decoration package for a shopping center, we can handle it like a trouper! We back all of that "tinsel and glamour" with talent and craftsmanship!**



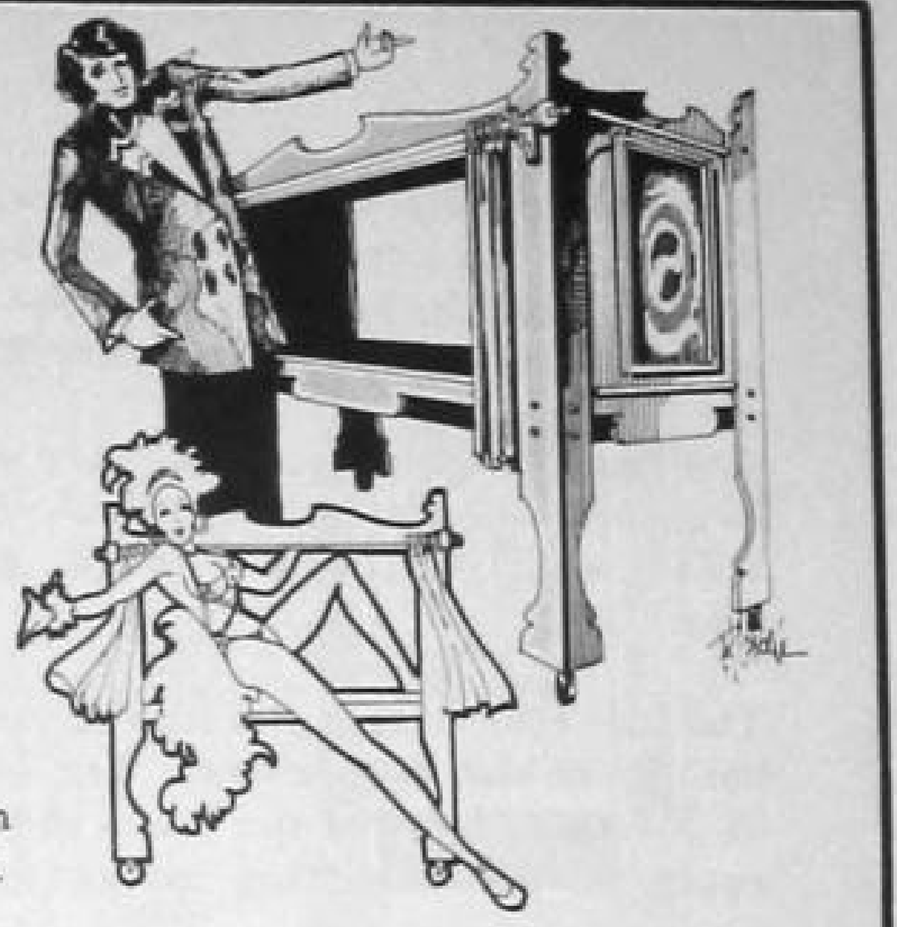
- Painting a space age back drop
- A 30′ promotional birthday cake
- A trade show setting

. . . AND DON'T FORGET OUR CUSTOM PUPPETS & COSTUMED CHARACTERS AS SEEN IN TELEVISION SHOWS, INDUSTRIAL SHOWS & THE NATION'S LEADING AMUSEMENT PARKS!

**PAUL OSBORNE & ASSOC. INC., 1162 SECURITY DR., DALLAS TEXAS 75247, 214-630-7800**

# NEW PALANQUIN



## INTRODUCTION

The Palanquin illusion is truly one of the most versatile effects you can present. I have seen them styled as TV sets, puppet theaters, haunted houses, Santa's chimneys and sedan chairs.

Our Palanquin was used as a spirit cabinet which caused bells to ring, tambourines to rattle and a live "spirit" to appear, all under the cover of a white sheet.

Let your imagination run wild and you, too, will find all sorts of unique presentation ideas for this outstanding illusion.

## EFFECT

When used as a standard illusion, the Palanquin is wheeled out on stage, the curtain drawn and the inside shown, obviously empty. The curtains are again closed and the entire prop revolved to show all sides. A drum roll, cymbal crash and the curtains are parted to reveal your beautiful assistant!

## METHOD

Our design for this illusion has been modified from other plans to allow it to pack flat and speed up your assistant's duties in "appearing".

First of all, in reviewing the plans, you will notice the basic elements of the prop are: four support legs, a top, two end panels, two side panels, a base, a gimmick door, traps, a curtain rod and curtains.

The top designs are cut from 1" x 4" white pine and assembled to form a box. Into this is laid a 1/4" masonite top. The top ledge is made from 1/4" ply and affixed with a bullet catch, magnetic catch or latch to receive and hold the gimmick door in position.

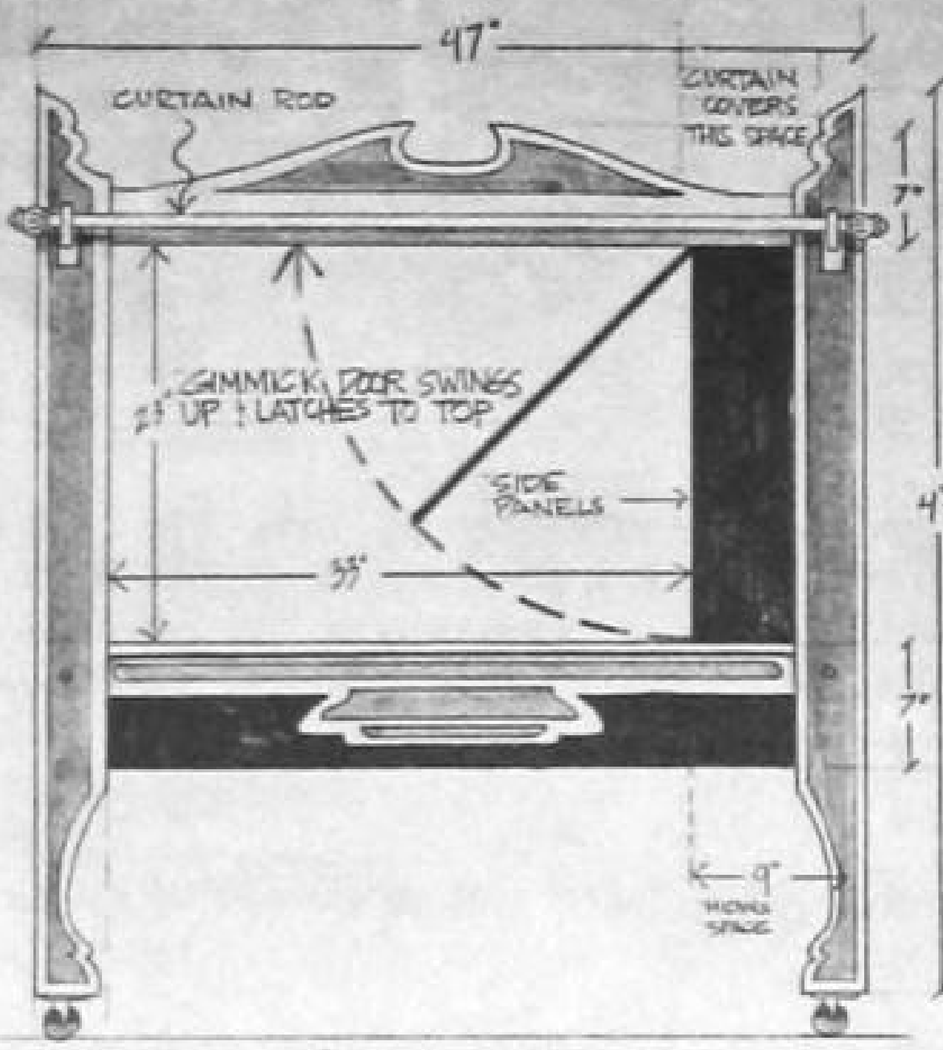
The four support legs are cut and assembled from 1" x 3" pine. These should be assembled with glue and wood screws for maximum strength, as they hold together and support the entire illusion. These legs carriage-bolt to the top and base in all four corners. Casters are mounted to the four 1" x 1" x 2" blocks affixed to the bottom of the legs. On the inside of these legs, and resting on the base, the 1/2" ply end panels pin-hinge. Decorative molding is applied to the outside of these panels.

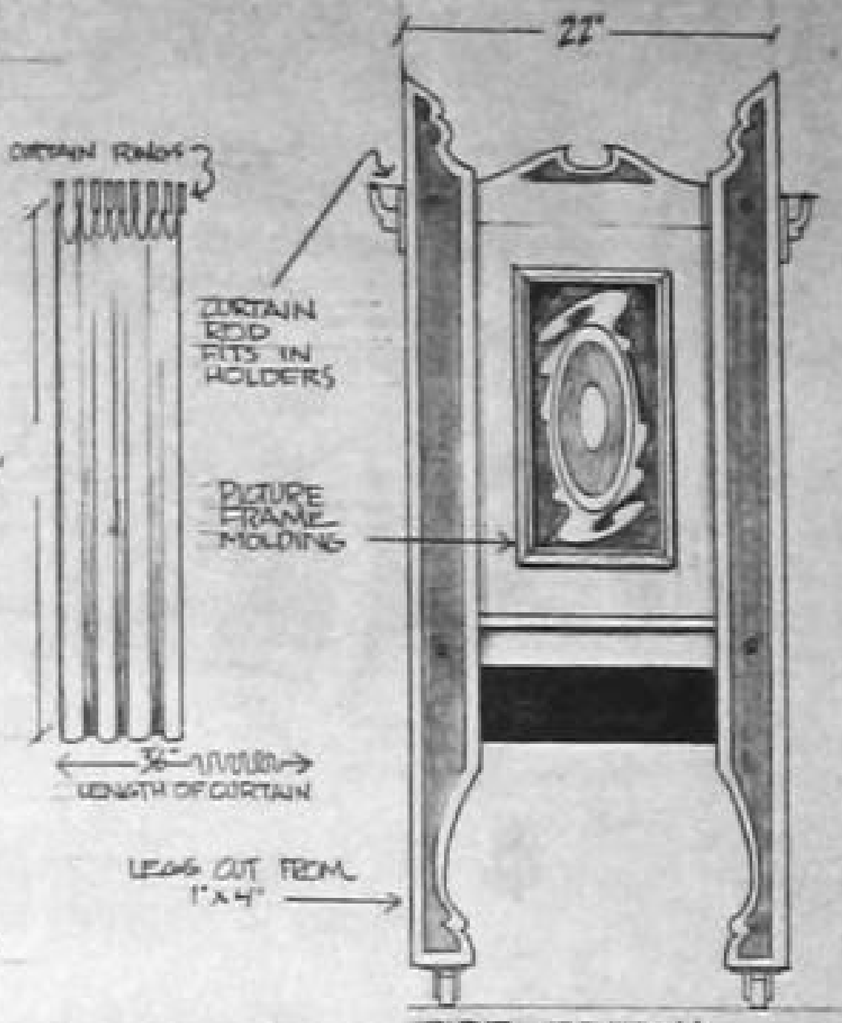
The side panels also pin-hinge within the support legs and rest on the base ledge. In the upper corner of each side panel is mounted a 1/2" x 1" x 1" block drilled to accommodate the pivot bar of the 1/4" ply gimmick door which swings up, on its pivots, and catches on the top ledge.

The base is made from 1/2" ply sides and 7" deep, 3/4" ply bottom, with decorative 1" cut-outs and half-round. On the inside of this base, mounted 1/2" down, is a 1/2" x 1" ledge, which supports the 1/2" thick "three-fold" trap.

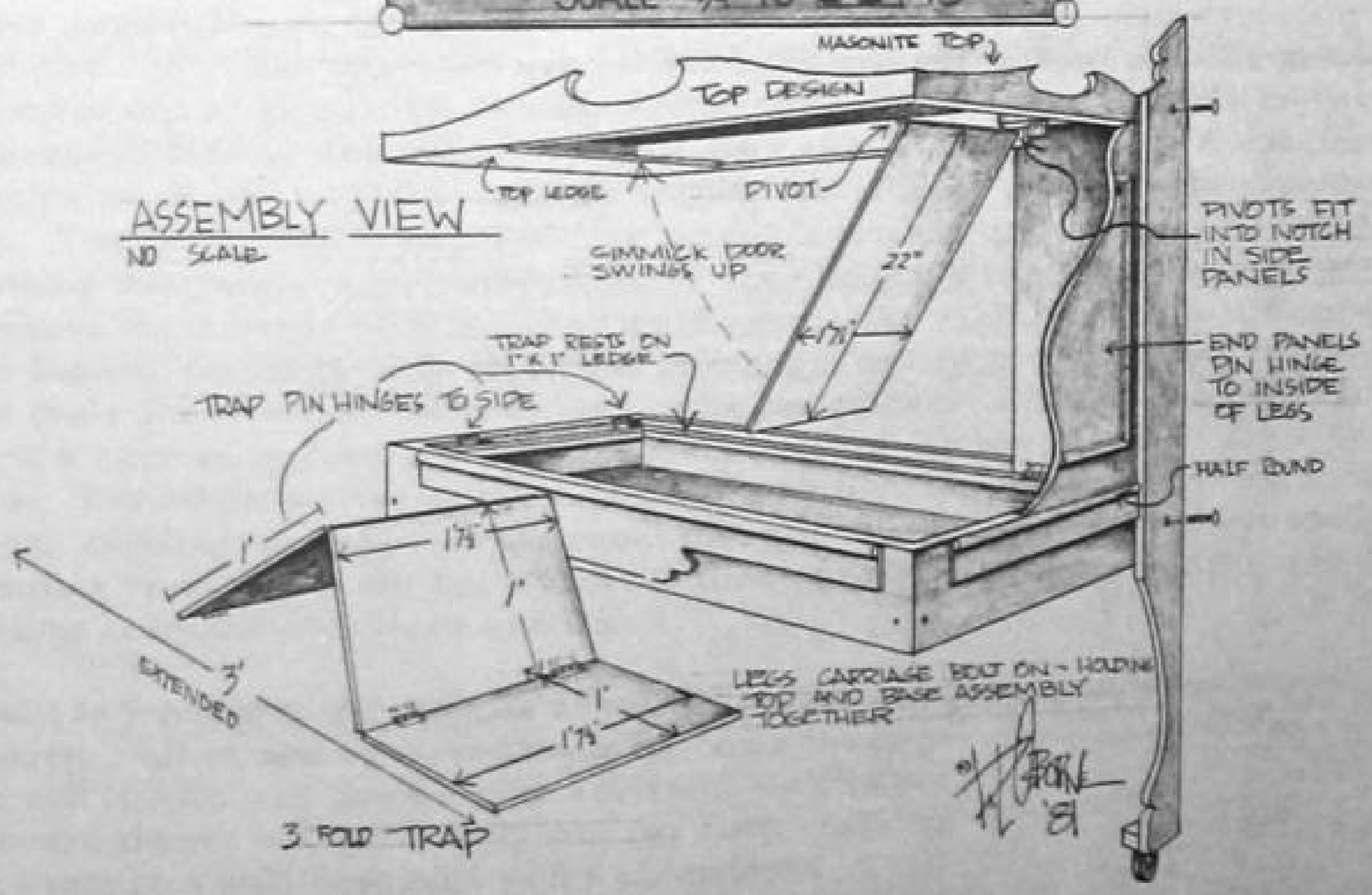
The exterior of this illusion is outfitted with curtain rods and curtains on both front and back sides. The idea being that the curtains are pulled back just in front of the black side panels to deceptively hide the 9" hiding space the girl is sitting upright in.

For your assistant to appear, it's a simple matter for her to push forward the gimmick door engaging it in the top ledge latch and then pushing forward the "three-fold" trap enough to enable her to get up on it as you are revolving the cabinet. Then, as the curtains are parted. . . it's time for magic!

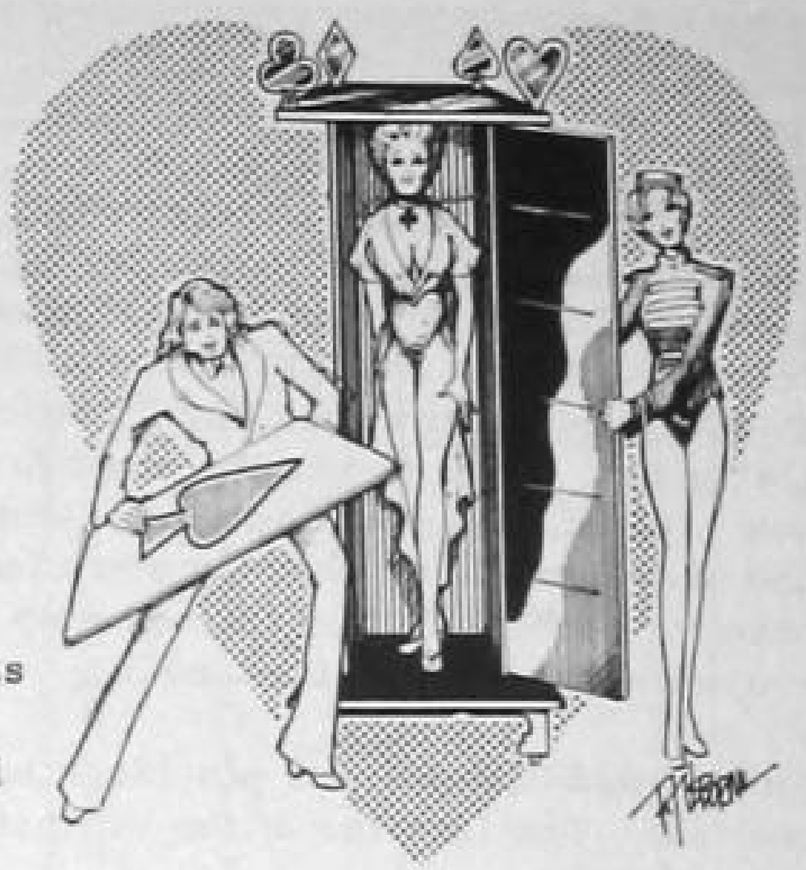

47"
CURTAIN ROD
CURTAIN COVERS THIS SPACE
GIMMICK DOOR SWINGS UP & LATCHES TO TOP
SIDE PANELS
55"
9"
HOW'S SPACE
4'4"
17"
FRONT ELEVATION


CURTAIN RODS
CURTAIN ROD FITS IN HOLDERS
PICTURE FRAME MOLDING
36"
LENGTH OF CURTAIN
LEGS CUT FROM 1"x4"
SIDE ELEVATION


PLANQUIN
DESIGN © PAUL OSBORNE 1981
SCALE ¾"=10" =10'


MASONITE TOP
TOP DESIGN
TOP LEDGE
PIVOT
ASSEMBLY VIEW
NO SCALE
GIMMICK DOOR SWINGS UP
22"
17½"
TRAP RESTS ON 1"x1" LEDGE
TRAP PIN HINGES TO SIDE
PIVOTS FIT INTO NOTCH IN SIDE PANELS
END PANELS PIN HINGE TO INSIDE OF LEGS
HALF ROUND
1"
17½"
1"
3'
EXTENDED
1"
17½"
LEGS CARRIAGE BOLT ON - HOLDING TOP AND BASE ASSEMBLY TOGETHER
3 FOLD TRAP

# THE QUEEN'S CUT



## INTRODUCTION

This thematic version of Arthuro's Cutting A Girl In Sixths made its first debut in Kansas City's Worlds Of Fun amusement park. It was of particular interest to the audience because several members were invited on stage to aid in a "card trick".

We managed to extend this two and a half minute trick into four minutes of mystery and audience involvement, just by using cards instead of blades.

Obviously, this is one of those great illusions that could be anything - a mummy case, a grandfather clock, a crate, or a tall pagoda. In our case, the "Queens Cut" provided a theme that opened up a lot of spectator by-play. Maybe this easy to build illusion will work for you.

## EFFECT

Seven audience members are requested to step on stage to aid in a "card trick". As they assemble, an upright cabinet is wheeled on stage and your assistant is introduced. A collar is placed around her neck and two 6' long ribbons are attached to either side. She is helped into the cabinet and the collar's ribbons are threaded through two holes, one on either side of the illusion. A spectator on each side of the cabinet assists in holding the ribbons tight and the girl in place. The front door is shut and five large playing cards are handed to each remaining spectator, with instructions to examine each card and then hold it high above their heads with one hand as the magician explains what will happen. As he begins, the stage helpers behind him begin to tire of holding the cards above their heads and some valuable laughs are gained. Finally, the magician selects a card to be inserted into the middle slot of the box, dividing the lady in two. The magician assists the spectators as they insert all five cards into the box, dividing the lady into six equal pieces. And of course, there is much screaming from inside the box which, if timed properly, evokes some great reactions from the new stage assistants.

The box is revolved, the ribbons are still taught, and yet she is divided into six parts. All is now reversed, and out come the cards, with yet more by-play, and finally, out comes your assistant - all in one piece, but with seven tiny heart shaped boxes of candy-one for each assistant-which they take to their seats to a well deserved round of applause.

## METHOD

This illusion was built in one day by a semi-experienced builder. Begin by constructing the four exterior 1" wood frames. To the inside of the two side frames, attach a sheet of 1/4" x 2'10" x 6' ply. Your sides are now made. To the inside of the back and front frames, attach six 1/4" ply panels spaced 1/4" apart. (This forms the slots for the cards.) Your front and back are now formed. As you plan this, remember the 1/4" ply attached to the sides and back extends all the way down into the base and bolts to the side of the base for stability. The frames stop at the baseline. The door stops 2 1/2" above the baseline on the molding.

The two 1/2" thick traps pin-hinge to the sides and rest on the front and back lip. The interior of the cabinet is painted flat black and all sides pin-hinge together.

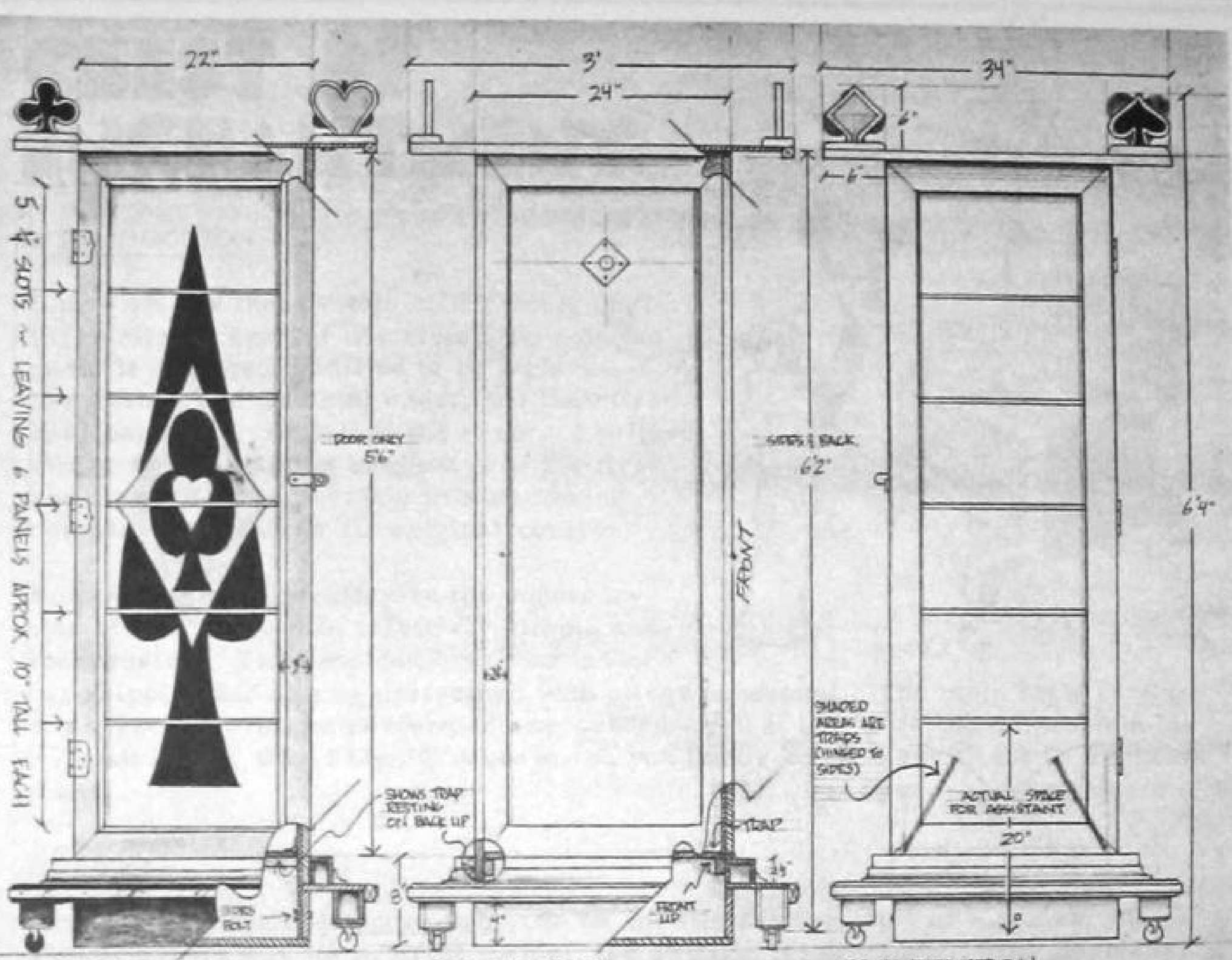
The roof is made from 1/4" ply with 1" x 1" trim. The top cut-outs are made from 1" thick stock.

Into the sides drill a 1" hole, approximately 10" down from the top and add a decorative square of sheet metal.

The collar is made simply from a 1" sheet metal strap with a pin-hinge pop-riveted in back and a latch pop-riveted in front. To the sides, attach two rings for the ribbons. Cover the entire collar in a soft velveteen. Obviously, to "escape" from the collar, she just pulls the pin-hinge out and heads south.

The cards are cut from 1/8" tempered masonite and painted accordingly.

In our presentation, we insert the first card in the middle, then one up, one below, one in the top slot and finally, one in the bottom slot. And, of course, the finale candy boxes are stashed in the base.

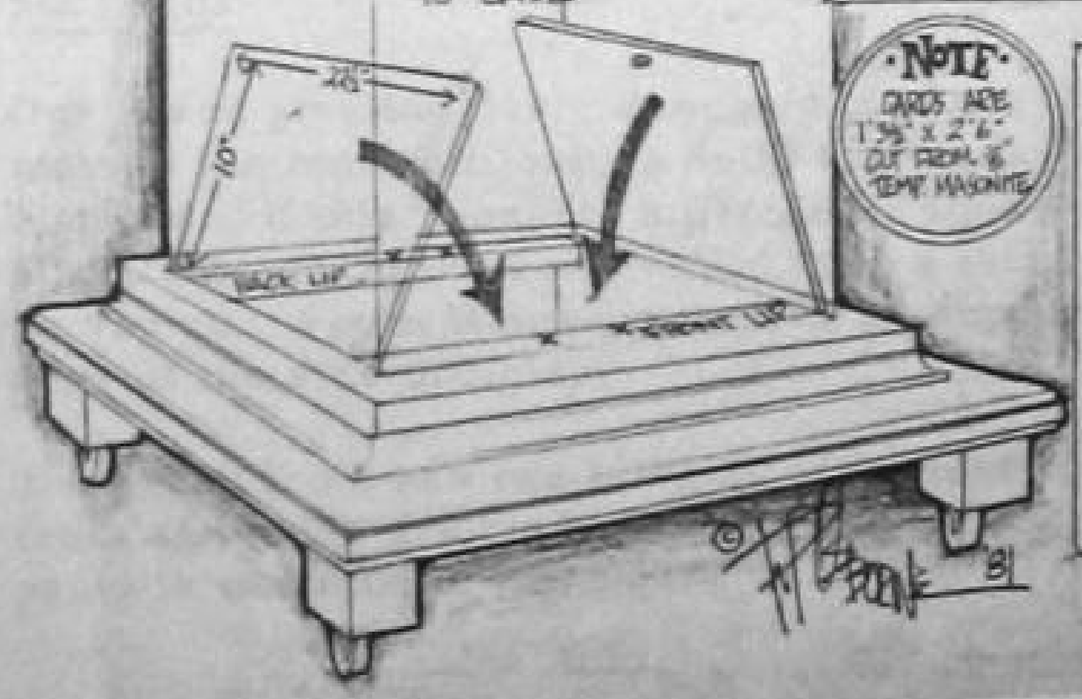


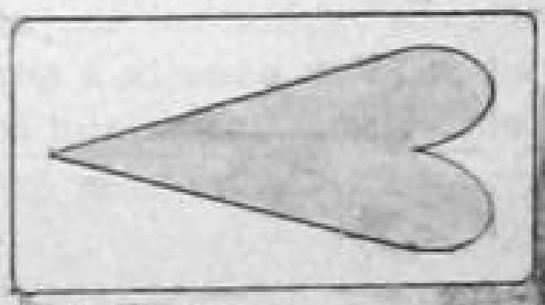

# ... THE QUEEN'S CUT ...

DESIGN © PAUL OSBORNE

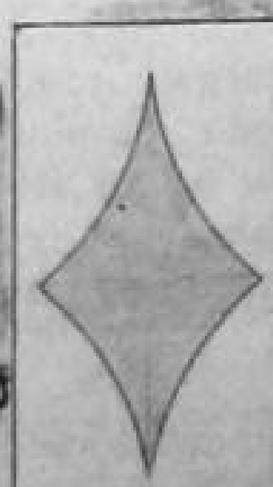
SCALE 3/4"-1'0" = 1'0"

SKETCH SHOWS TRAPS (ATTACHED TO SIDES) OPEN ~ WHEN CLOSED REST ON FRONT & BACK LIP. BACK LIP ATTACHED TO BACK SIDE FRONT LIP ATTACHED TO BASE

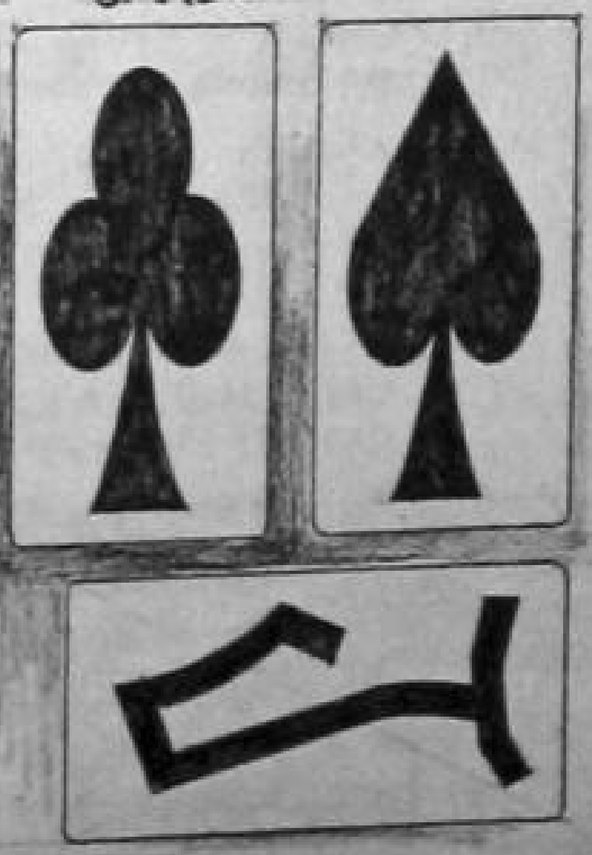


·NOTE·
CARDS ARE 1'3" X 2'6" CUT FROM ¼" TEMP MASONITE

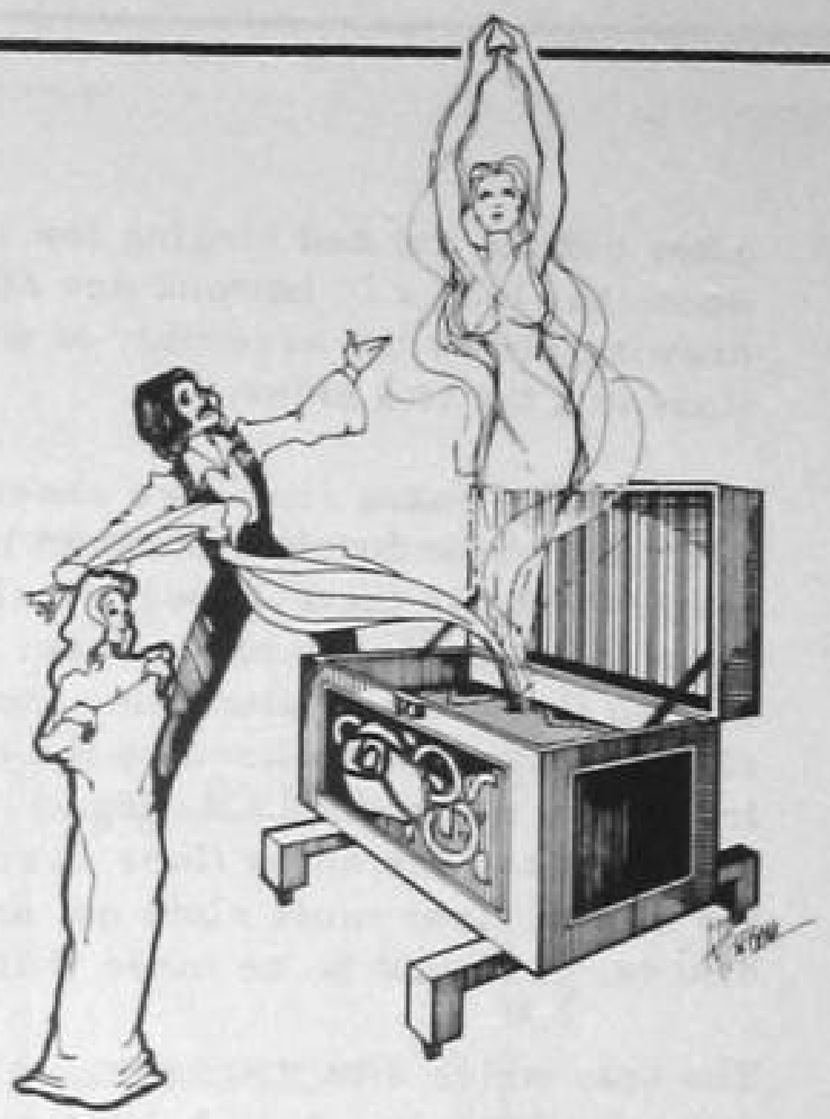


CARDS:



61.

# CHEST OF ENCHANTMENT



## INTRODUCTION

I have always thought this effect intriguing, primarily because of it's simplicity. In the past, it has been modified to be a glass-lined trunk and Oriental chest, but the effect has, basically, remained the same. I believe Percy Abbott was the originator of the first chest and, to this day, his manufacturing company still makes his original version.

For the beginning craftsman the construction of this illusion is relatively simple and inexpensive. The prop can break down flat for shipping and can be performed with minor rehearsal. The main draw back is, of course, it can't be performed surrounded. But if this presents no problem for your situation, then I highly recommend you tackle building the Chest Of Enchantment.

## EFFECT

Although this multi-purpose prop can be used as a production or a vanish, the sucker aspect was its original theme, and still the most entertaining. Basically, your assistant is placed in a cloth bag and, in turn, placed within the trunk. The top shelf of the trunk is placed above all and the tied end of the sack is brought up through a hole in the top shelf. The trunk is closed up and revolved as the magician explains he will cause the girl to dissappear. Dramatically lifting the top of the trunk, the magician pulls out the empty sack through the hole. "Gone!" "Next trick!" Which, of course, the audience doesn't buy. They want to see in the trunk and, after several bits of business, finally the chest is shown empty and she is, in fact, "Gone"!.

## METHOD

Our plans give the basic dimensions of the chest, beginning with the top, which may be the most difficult to build for the beginner. You can see that it is rounded. If this presents a problem, square it off, it won't impair the effect at all. To build the rounded lid, use a thin veneer, bending, gluing and nailing as you go. Form it around the 1" x 2" supports which are nailed around the top edge of the side uprights.

The trunk front has two 16" x 20 1/2" front doors latched in the middle. The front and sides are made from 3/8" ply, and all pin-hinge together. The back panel is made from two 36 1/2"x 25 1/2", 3/8" ply, glued and screwed together

after cutting out and hinging the interior door and the two back doors. Once done, the 1/2" x 1" battens are added to hide the back doors. The bottom right drawing shows the assembly of this back panel, which pin-hinges to the floor and the two sides.

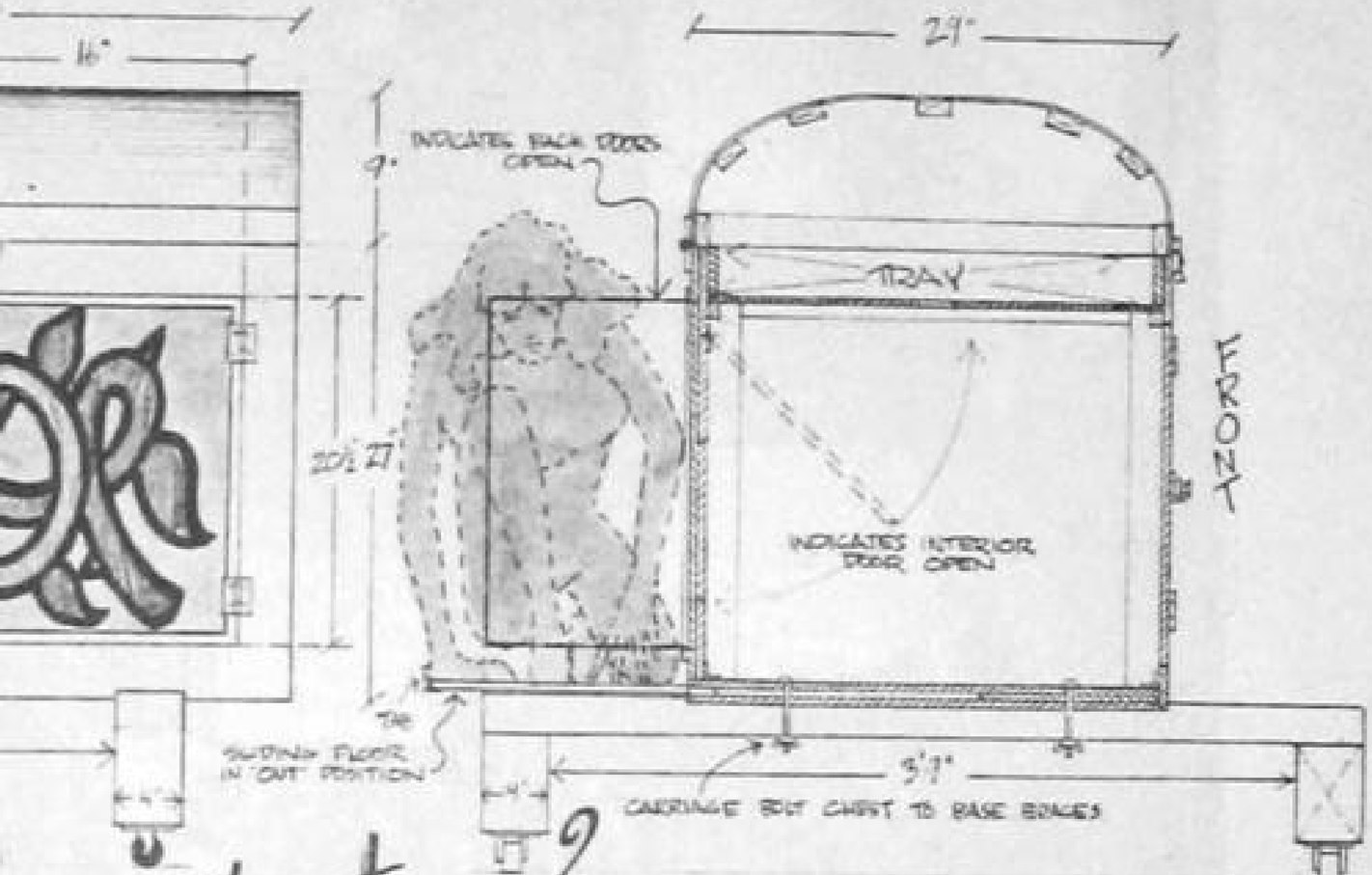
The floor is made from two sheets of 1/2" ply and one sheet of 3/4" ply. The 3/4" ply is sandwiched between the two 1/2" sheets. Cut from the center of the 3/4" ply is the 1' 5" x 1' 7" sliding floor. This should freely slide out from the floor assembly to form the back ledge for hiding. Attached to the sliding floor is a 1" aluminum tab to assist in pulling the floor out. This sliding floor is stabilized by the two base braces. These two braces are made from 2" x 4"s and 4" x 4" legs. The 2" x 4" s are slightly notched to receive the chest and the chest floor carriage-bolts to the base braces. Remember, the sliding floor must slide out on top of the 2" x 4"s so, when you notch these braces, it should be no more than 1/2".

The tray which sits down in the chest should be made from 3/8" ply with a masonite bottom. A 3" hole is cut dead center of the masonite to pull the bag through.

The interiors of the chest should be lined in a decorative material, and the exterior should be stained and varnished with a decorative pattern on the doors, in our case, a rose bud.

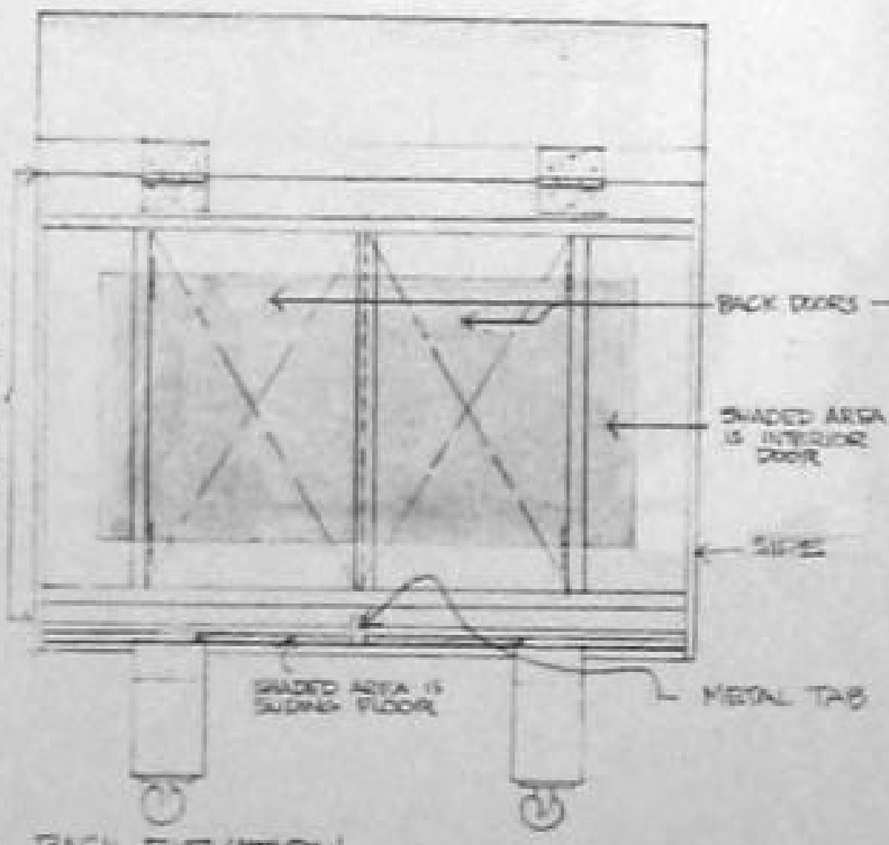
The sack can be made from any thin material. It should have a 4' 6" circumference and should be approximately 6' long. In the bottom is a Velcro closure which should simplify the girl's escape.

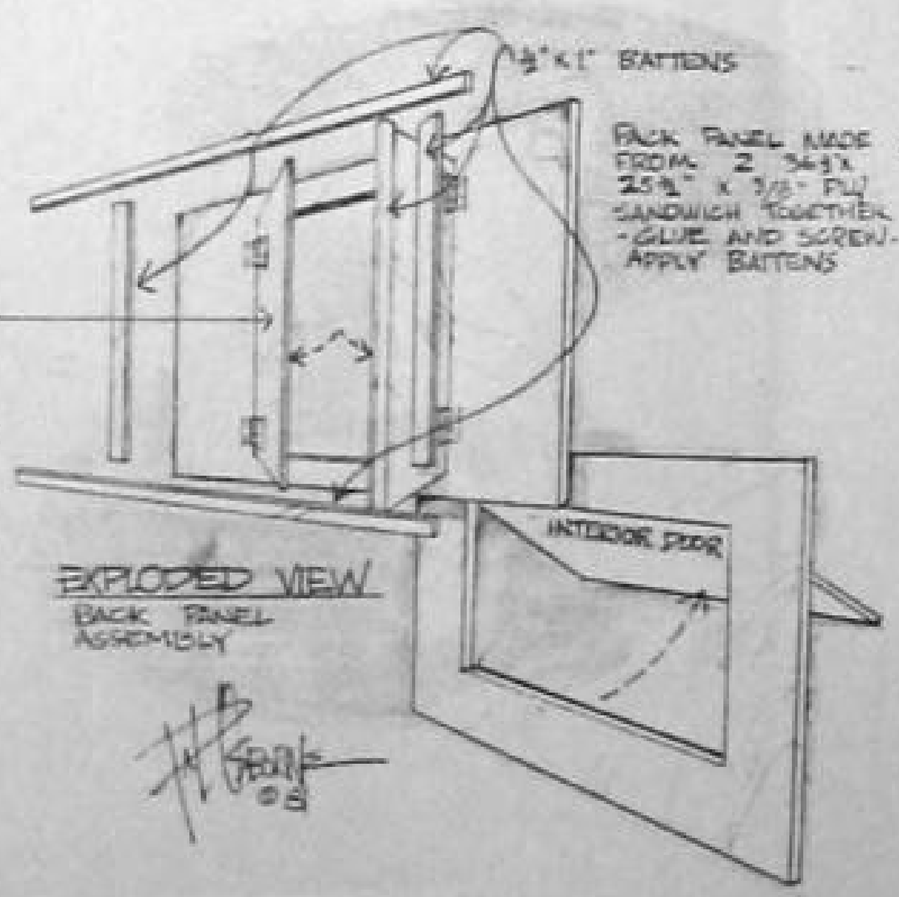
Obviously, the success of this effect depends greatly on the girl's ability to move from outside to inside quickly. Practice this aspect and add your own presentation style and you'll have a great effect!

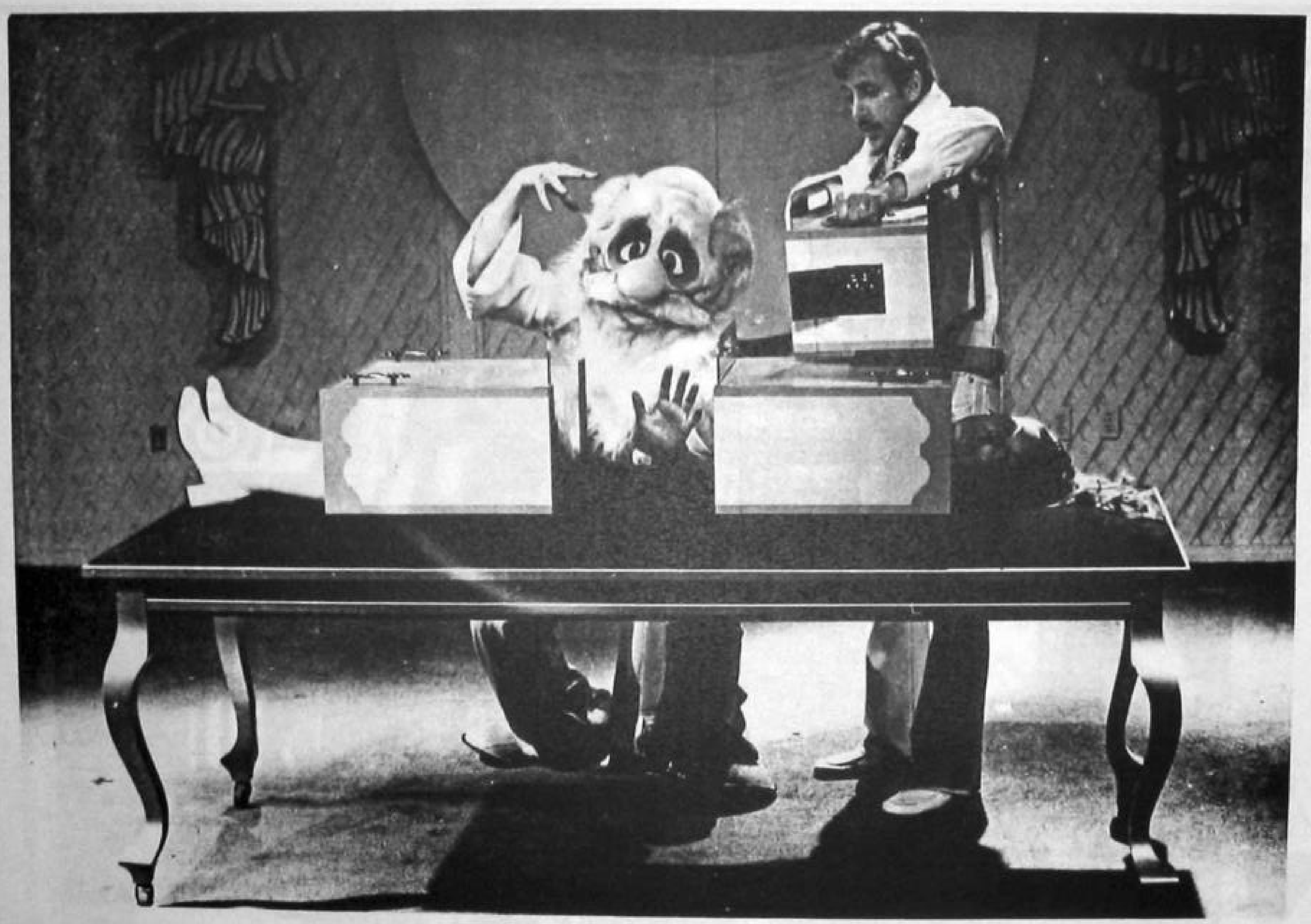




# Chest of Enchantment

DESIGN © PAUL OSBORNE '81 SCALE ¾"=1'0" -1'0"



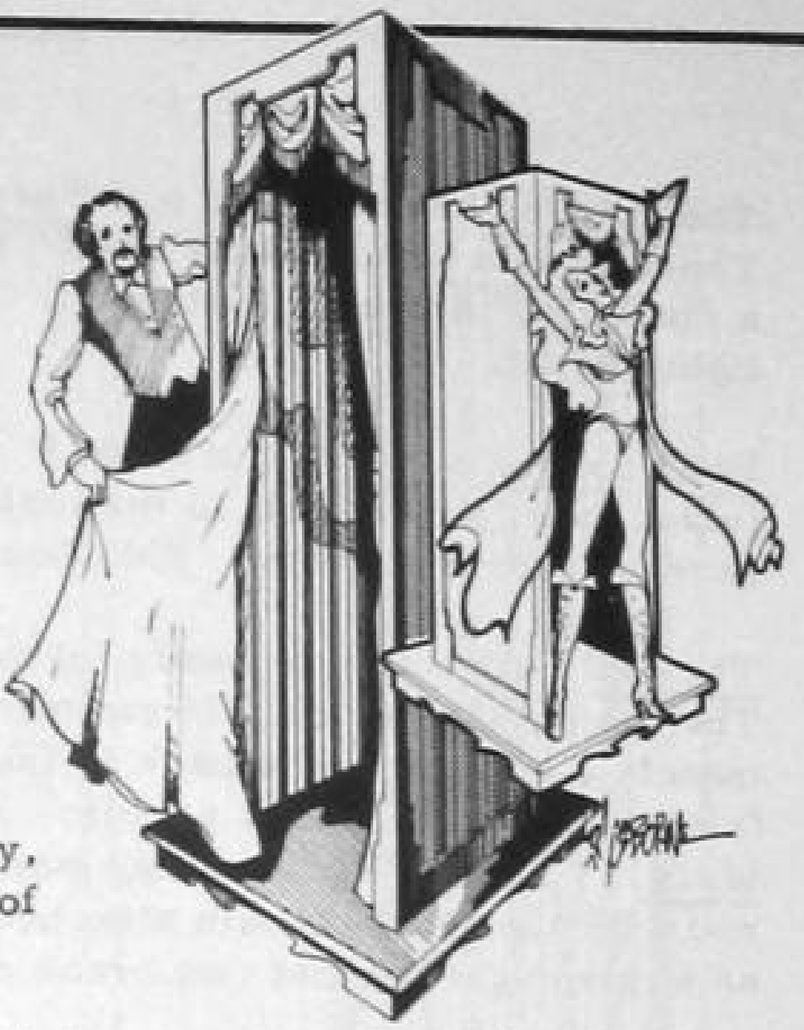





Marvelli's Marvelous Center Cutting illusion was designed by Paul Osborne and built by Alan Zagorsky. Its premiere presentation was at the Great Adventure amusement park in New Jersey.

When Cyrus Cosmo presented this illusion at Six Flags in 1976, Paul had no idea this prop's plan would ever be seen again. Now it's a top selling Series #2 blueprint - The Chef's Nightmare.

# NEW WAVE MODERN CABINET



## INTRODUCTION

I once had an old Thayer Modern Cabinet. It was a wonderful piece of equipment, well made and a tribute to the craftsman who made it. Unfortunately, I think it was made out of oak and didn't break down. Three men couldn't lift it and I'll bet it'll still be standing after Armageddon, but boy, did I love that prop. No telling how many legends of magic have used it and passed it on.

It is now the 80's and we dare not build props like that any more. Today's working magician really has to hustle. Props have to be as easy to move and as flexible as the performer himself. So, in honor of the man who predicted the exploding eighties, Alvin Toffler... the New Wave Modern Cabinet.

## EFFECT

Fast and flashy... The performer enters spinning a tall, upright cabinet. All sides are shown. The front curtain is pulled aside, and in steps the magician to prove the box empty. Out again, the curtain is pulled back... Bang! The curtain flys open and out steps a beautiful gal. Fifteen minutes after the show is over, from behind a small, unnoticed stage door, steps the magician and girl carrying the collapsed cabinet to their hatchback, fuel efficient car. Knowing that, although this show was worked in the round with the audience three feet away, they fooled 'em with this illusion.

Late that night, they arrive at their apartment, again carrying the folded down prop to its final resting place, behind their clothes, leaning against the wall, in the master closet. Sound familiar? Welcome to the 80's and the "New Wave" Modern Cabinet.

I wish I could fold back my clothes and find that old Thayer Modern Cabinet..... But I couldn't have even gotten it through the front door.

## METHOD

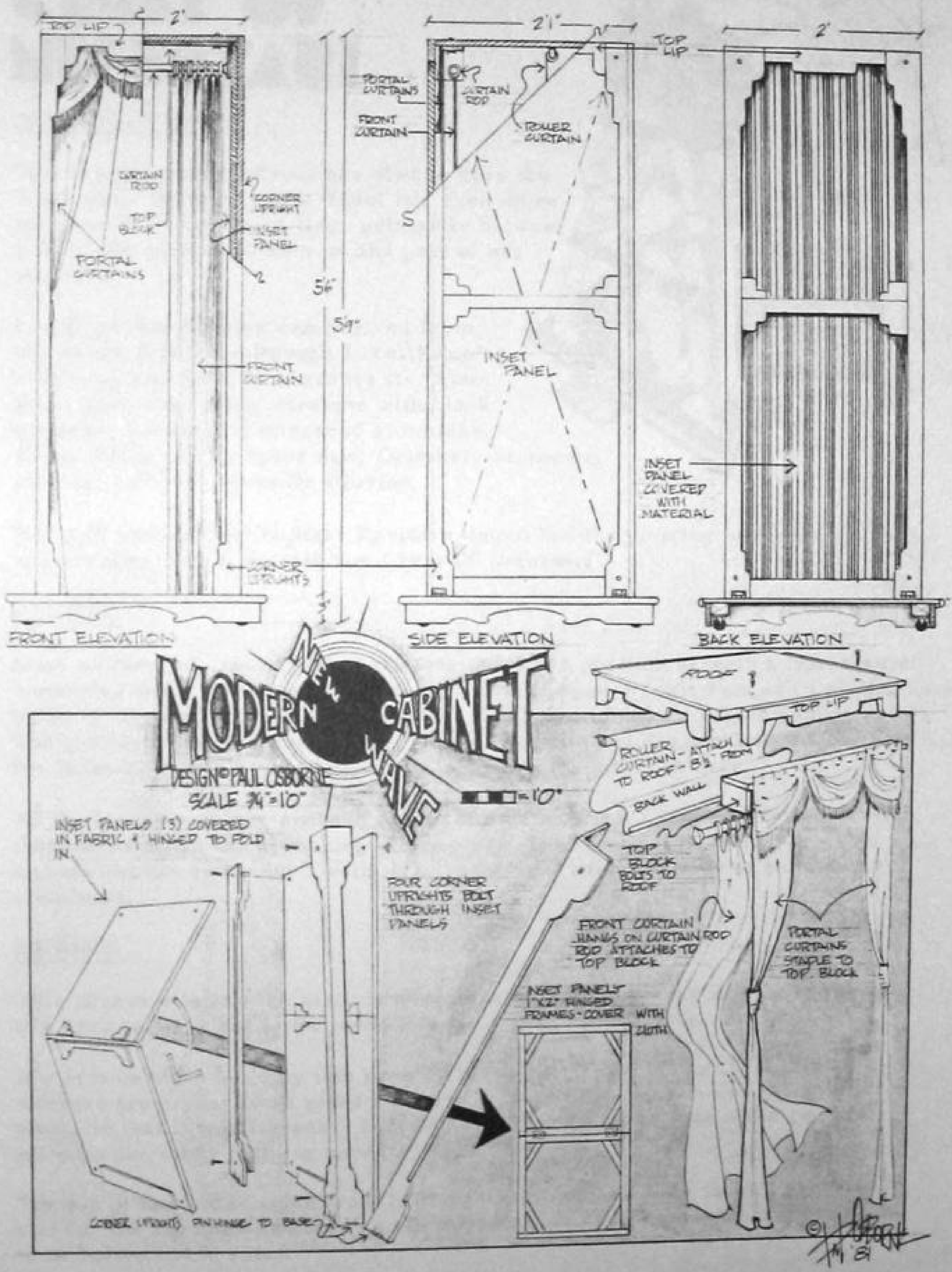
If you want to perform the Modern Cabinet and produce three, four, five assistants, the older version could be made to break down. But, if you want to produce one person quickly, and painlessly, this illusion is for you. Basically, it's a combination Modern Cabinet/ Flash Appearance with the girl hiding behind a roller shade. It's designed with break-down and storage as a foremost priority. It's easy to build, and you still get the same great effect.

The illusion breaks down to: Three approximately 5' 5 1/2" x 22" inset panels. These panels are actually 1" x 2" frames, hinged in the middle and covered with a confusing patterned material. These inset panels fold in half and are extremely light weight.

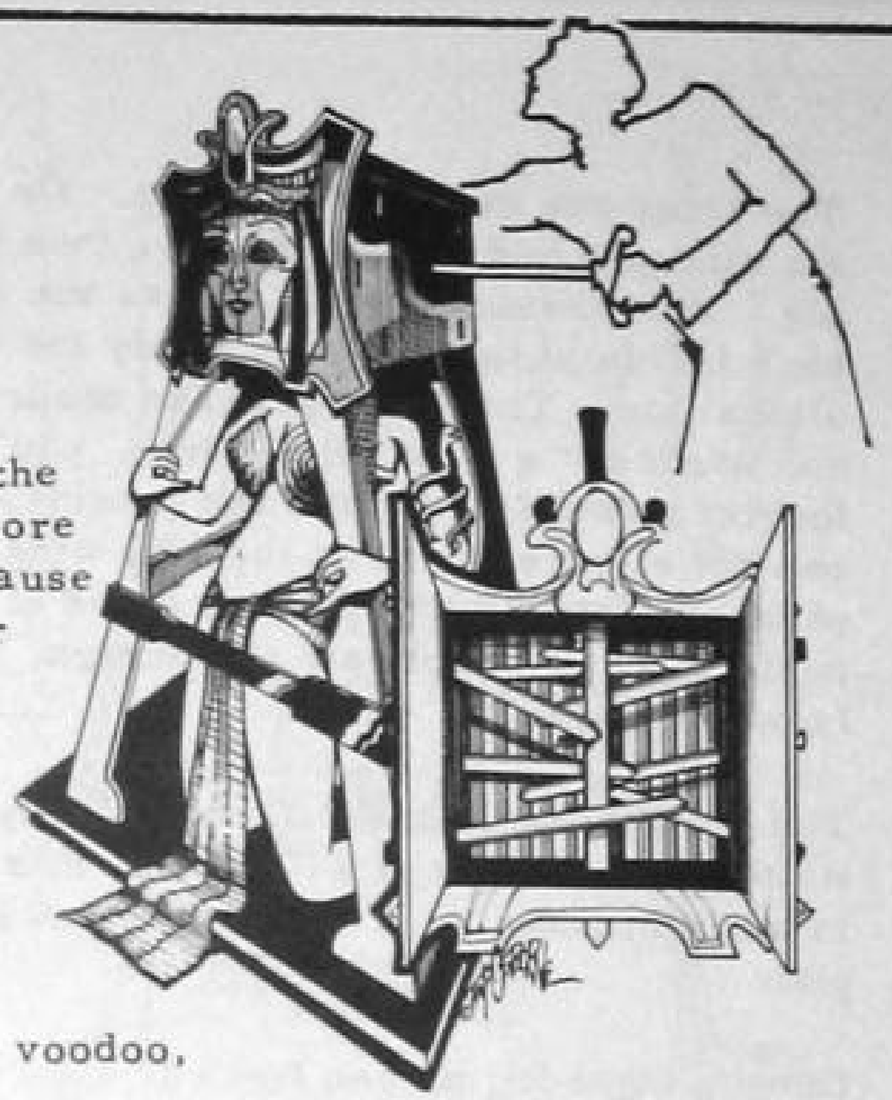
Four corner uprights cut from 1" x 4" white pine, 5'6" tall. When the three unfolded inset panels bolt to the insides of these right angled corner braces, you have just formed a box. This box pin hinges to the 3" tall 2'7" x 2'7" base.

The top sets into this newly formed box, resting on the tops of the inset panels. The top pin-hinges on. Permanently attached to the inside of the top, approximately 8 1/2" from the back is installed a roller shade curtain to match the fabric used on the inset panels. Bolting to the inside front of the top is the top block. To it are strapped the portal curtains, and within it is mounted a curtain rod with the front curtain attached by curtain rings. And that's about as simple as any upright cabinet can break down.

Remember, to choose a confusing, contrasty type material for the inset panels and roller curtain. And also, in practicing with your assistant, you will find that you can utilize that split second from when you close the front curtain to immediately re-opening the front curtain, for her to release the roller curtain and step forward. It's almost as amazing as my old oak Thayer Modern Cabinet. . . . No, nothing could be as amazing as my old oak Thayer Modern Cabinet.


2'
TOP LIP
CURTAIN ROD
TOP BLOCK
PORTAL CURTAINS
CORNER UPRIGHT
INSET PANEL
FRONT CURTAIN
54"
59"
FRONT ELEVATION
2'
TOP LIP
PORTAL CURTAINS
CURTAIN ROD
FRONT CURTAIN
ROLLER CURTAIN
S
INSET PANEL
CORNER UPRIGHTS
SIDE ELEVATION
2'
TOP LIP
INSET PANEL COVERED WITH MATERIAL
BACK ELEVATION
NEW WAVE MODERN CABINET
DESIGN BY PAUL OSBORNE
SCALE 3/4" = 10"
= 10"
INSET PANELS (5) COVERED IN FABRIC & HINGED TO FOLD IN
FOUR CORNER UPRIGHTS BOLT THROUGH INSET PANELS
CORNER UPRIGHTS ON HINGE TO BASE
ROOF
TOP LIP
ROLLER CURTAIN - ATTACH TO ROOF - 8½ FROM BACK WALL
TOP BLOCK BOLTS TO ROOF
FRONT CURTAIN HANGS ON CURTAIN ROD ROD ATTACHES TO TOP BLOCK
PORTAL CURTAINS STAPLE TO TOP BLOCK
INSET PANELS "X2" HINGED FRAMES - COVER WITH CLOTH
©

# CHEST OF NEFERTARI



## INTRODUCTION

One of my favorite effects has always been the Head Box. In many ways, I feel it's even more effective than the Sword Box, primarily because part of the girl stays with us and part of her vanishes.

I suppose this illusion was derived from the Sword Cabinet, although I really don't know who was first to introduce it. Also, there have been many versions with black art bags, panels and mirrored gimmicks. Its themeing can be space age, Oriental, or voodoo, making it a most versatile illusion.

We have selected the popular Egyptian theme and the pivoting mirrored panels for our version, which we call The Chest Of Nefertari.

## EFFECT

Once introduced, your lovely assistant takes her position beneath a frame work supported box. Her face is visible through the opened front door and a sliding back panel is inserted to keep her in place. Next, you introduce fifteen shining knives and quickly close the front doors. Begin inserting the daggers into the box with the fifteenth sword plunged down the middle of the small cabinet.

As the front doors are opened, the mystery continues...the head is gone! All that remains are the glistening sword tips. The front doors are quickly shut and all swords removed...voila (!)....the head returns and your gal emerges unharmed.

## METHOD

This illusionette has the distinct advantage of being a Sunday afternoon special. It's easy to build and lends itself to a lot of stage production.

It's best to begin building this prop by ordering the two 1/4" x 10" x 11 1/2" mirrors from your local glass company. Many magicians prefer to use mirror plexi, in that it won't break. But, in any event, get this done while you are planning the other building aspects.

The top of the box is made from 1/4" masonite and has slots for mirror pegs, a slot for the top knife and four small holes, one in each corner which enables it to be bolted to the sides.

The sides are cut from 1/4" ply. On the insides, lay out the position of the mirrors and on either side, face the ply with two other sheets of 1/2" ply. This forms the 1/2" recess the mirror panels fit in. Also, on the back inside of these sides, apply the wood channels that the back panel slides into. This back panel is made from 1/4" masonite with a slotted and sanded 1" x 1" handle. Next, you can route out the slot for the fourteen swords. On the top outside of these sides, apply a 1" x 1" with two dowel screws. The top will wing-nut to these. Next, cut out the front panel, doors and all, from a piece of good 3/8" ply. This panel pin-hinges to the box. To duplicate the design, copy the grid supplied with the plan's front elevation.

The box bottom is made from 1/2" ply boxed in at the bottom with 1" thick white pine. The legs will bolt to this. In the 1/2" bottom, cut out the space to accommodate your assistant's neck, as indicated on the top view of our plan.

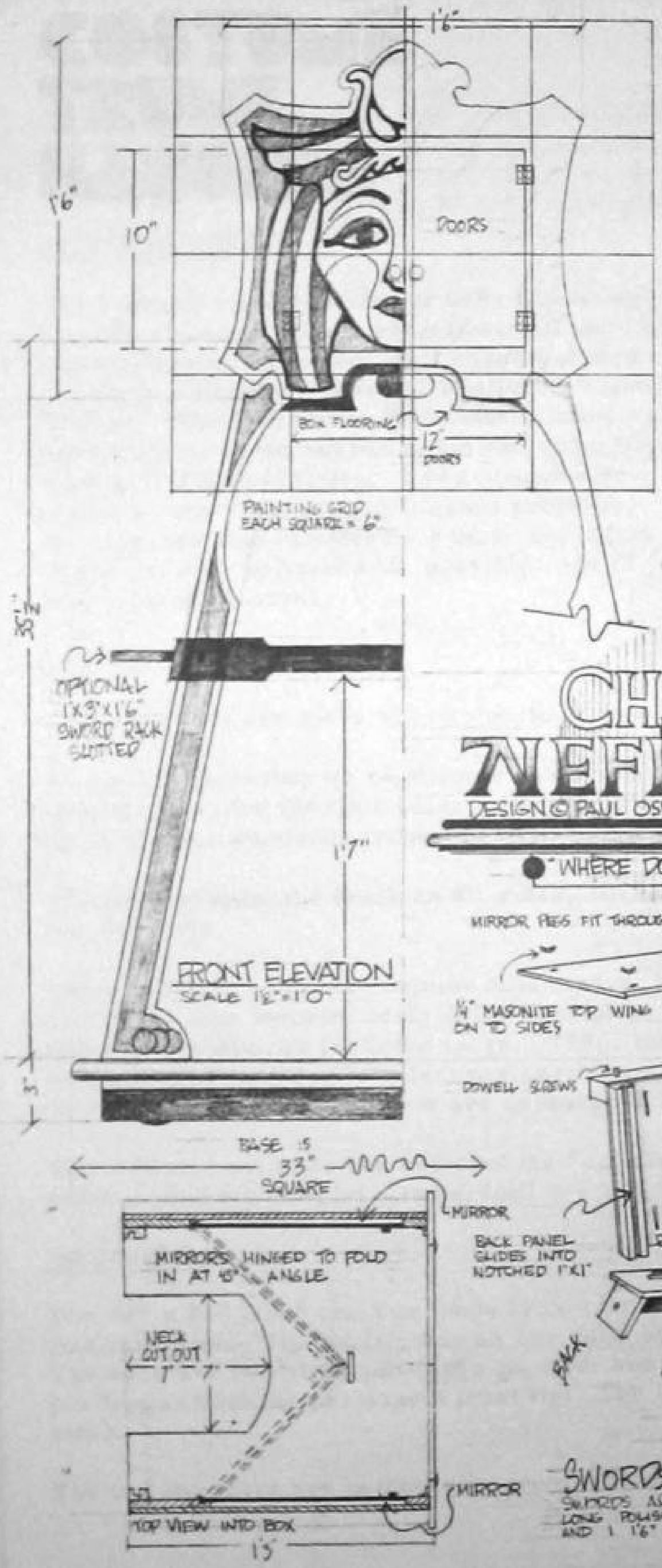
Cut the eight leg pieces from 1" x 6" pine and glue and nail them at right angles to form the four upright legs. These legs carriage-bolt to the box flooring at each corner.

From 1" x 4" stock, cut the three cross braces that wing-bolt to the front and two sides. An optional idea is to apply two 1" x 3" x 1'6" sword holders, slotted to hold fifteen swords, to the two side cross braces.

The base is 33" square with half-round trim and 1/4" skirting to hide the four casters. The base flooring is made from 3/4" ply. The legs pin-hinge to the base.

The swords are made as explained in the Boxes, Legs, Swords and Blades chapter.

One great element of this illusion is the ability to change the theme by merely changing the front panel. . . maybe next season, you'll have an Oriental Head Chest.


1'6"
1'6"
10"
DOORS
BOX FLOORING
12"
DOORS
PAINTING GRID
EACH SQUARE = 6"
35"-1¼
OPTIONAL
1"x3"x1'6"
SWORD RACK
SLOTTED
1'7"
FRONT ELEVATION
SCALE 1½"=1'0"
BACK PANEL SLIDES INTO
BOX
12¾"
3"
CUT A WAY SHOWING
LEGS BOLTING TO BOX
BOTTOM
SIDE ELEVATION
SCALE 1½"=1'0"
CROSS
BRACES
WING BOLT
ON
CHEST OF NEFERTARI
DESIGN © PAUL OSBORNE
SCALES: 1½"=1'0"
"WHERE DOES THE HEAD GO"
MIRROR PEGS FIT THROUGH SLOTS
¼" MASONITE TOP WING BOLTS
ON TO SIDES
FRONT PANEL
PIN HINGES ON
DOWEL SCREWS
BACK PANEL
GLIDES INTO
NOTCHED 1"x1"
FRONT
BACK
LEGS BOLT TO BOX FLOORING
EXPLODED VIEW
BASE IS
33"
SQUARE
MIRROR
MIRRORS HINGED TO FOLD
IN AT 45° ANGLE
NECK
CUT OUT
1"
MIRROR
TOP VIEW INTO BOX
15"
SWORDS
SWORDS ARE 14½" LONG ~ BLADE IS 1"
LONG POLISHED ALUMINUM MAKE 19
AND 1 1'6" LONG CENTER SWORD

75.

# COSTUME TRUNK ILLUSION

## INTRODUCTION

The costume trunk has always been one of my favorite illusions. Its presentation can be varied from a fast paced, well choreographed effect, to a spoken, close up, audience involved illusion. The look of the effect offers many opportunities to the beginning builder in styling, wood selection and finish. Even inexpensive plywood, when stained and finished properly, can look like fine furniture. I think you'll find this piece easy to build and, possibly, one of your best looking illusions.

## EFFECT

Although there are many ways to perform this illusion, we involve the audience.

We inform them that we need some assistance in selecting a costume for our next illusion. So, for the time being we'll stop the magic show and take a small survey, but first, our wardrobe trunk...

We casually show the trunk on all sides, lift the lid, open the front and remove the two top trays.

Drawing attention to the costume filled trays, four large cards are displayed that depict our four favorite designs for costumes. Putting down the cards, we display these four costumes from the trays. Then, taking the four cards into the audience, we invite one member to select any card from the face down fan. As this is being done in the crowd, assistants are re-assembling trays and closing the trunk.

The audience member has selected the "cowgirl". Quickly, the trunk is revolved and out pops the cowgirl - in person!

## METHOD

The 40" x 24" x 26" trunk is made from 1/2" plywood, stained and Varathaned like fine furniture. The lid is made as one solid unit that pin-hinges onto the back side. The back and two sides pin-hinge together and bolt to the bottom tray. The front pin-hinges onto the permanent front lip. The inside of the trunk is all painted flat black.

The two top trays are removeable from within the trunk and made to break down by

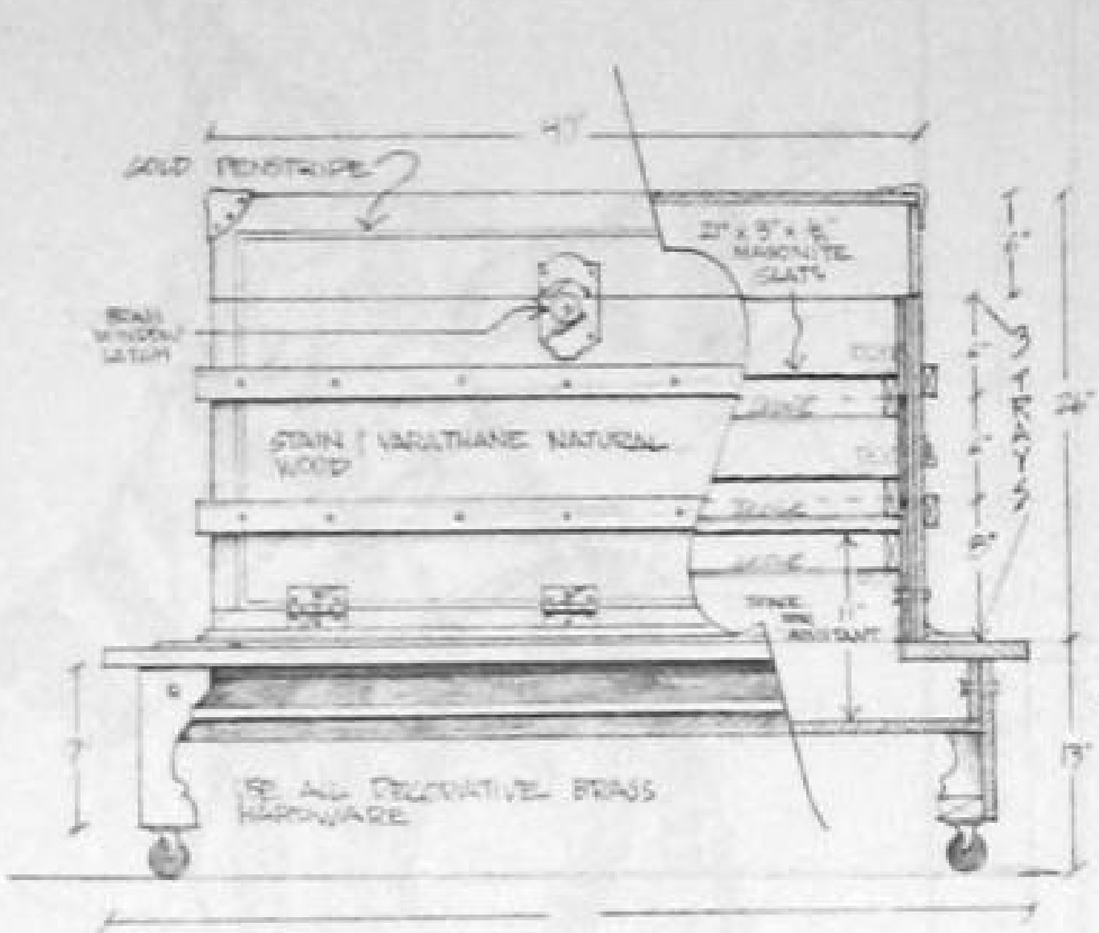
detaching the four angle-iron braces located one per corner. The floors of each tray are the real secrets to this illusion. Approximately 4 1/2" down from the top (of the first two trays) is a 1" x 2" ledge. This ledge also acts to nest the trays together because it projects down 1" from the bottom of the tray. On the top of this ledge is laid sixteen 18" x 21" x 3" masonite slats, one overlapping the other. This forms a "solid floor"; well, solid enough to hold costumes, anyway. The interior of all trays and masonite slats is painted black.

The bottom tray is pin-hinged to the base itself and bolted to the trunk sides and back. This tray, too, has a ledge, but it is placed much higher to allow your assistant enough room within the base and bottom tray. Unlike the two top 6" deep trays, the bottom tray is 8" deep. Remember when painting these trays to paint the black border down only 6" on the bottom tray because the 2" front lip masks the bottom 2" of the tray - so the bottom tray should only look to be 6" deep as well.

The base is standard, made from 1" plywood with four bolt-on legs and half-round trim. On the 1" x 7" top is attached 1/2" x 3" ply and decorative cove molding to fit around the trunk.

As an extra bonus, I am including artwork on the cards we use. Take this art-work to a "reproduction house", (they print blueprints, photostats, negatives, etc.) and tell them you want this art enlarged (photostated) so that each card is approximately 8 1/2" x 11" and mounted on cardboard. This cost will be nominal and you can color the enlarged art in yourself with Marx-A-Lots. Remember to have five cowgirl (or whatever costume you select) cards made. Because, once you have shown the four different costumes, you will switch these cards for the four forcing (cowgirl) cards. We switch them behind the trunk through the curtain.

One final thought on the costumes. We fill the trays with costumes. Many are just old clothes with sequins added, etc.. But we always have within the trays the costumes depicted on the cards. Generally these are just slapped together display models, with no thought to tailoring. They just have to look good when briefly held up.



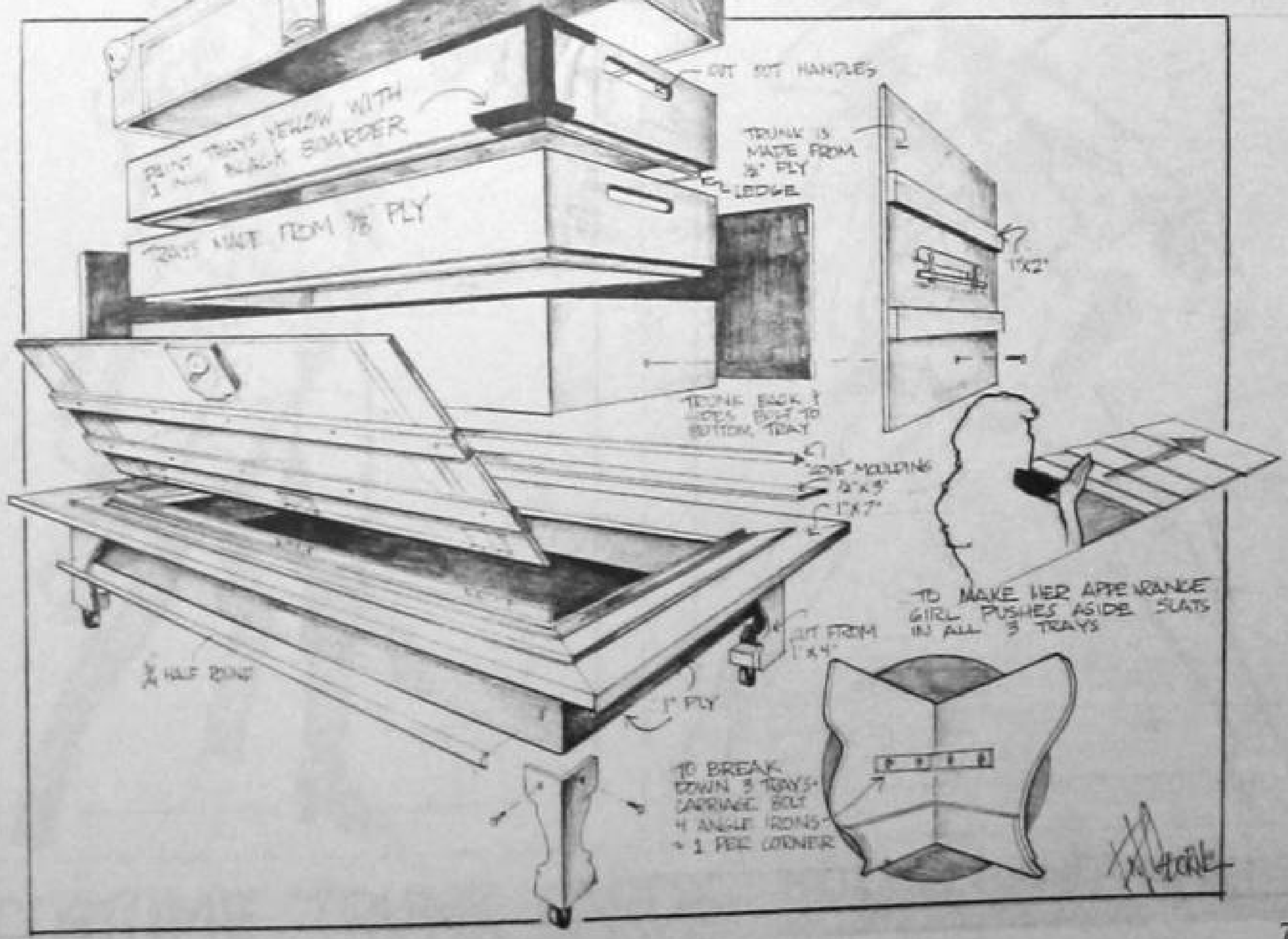

FRONT ELEVATION
WITH CUTAWAY

SIDE ELEVATION
WITH CUTAWAY

# COSTUME TRUNK
## ILLUSION

EXPLODED VIEW

DESIGN © PAUL OSBORNE '81
SCALE ¾"=1'0" =1'0"







# COSTUME TRUNK CARDS

PHOTOSTAT & ENLARGE TO 8"X10½" ~ MAKE 5 COWGIRLS

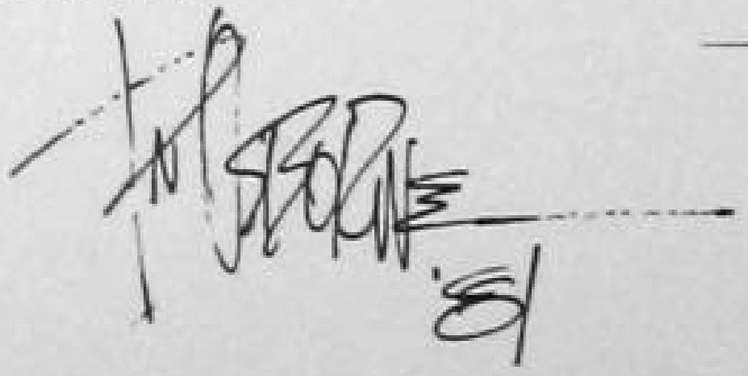
# THANKS

Sometimes we humans get so busy with all our activities we find little time for reflection. As a conclusion to this, our first book, I would like to take a moment to thank the many customers of Illusion Systems. Your letters, calls, comments and suggestions keep me going. Your reaction to my efforts has been nothing but positive and you have motivated me to do better.

A special thanks to Mark Wilson for the very first magic kit...and for taking all the risks so that we could follow.

I was so honored when Bill and Irene Larsen began publishing my plans in Genii. They have brought so much taste and class to our ancient art. I am proud to be a part of their world.

And finally, a special thanks to my wife, Michelle, the best business partner a man could have!




PAUL GEBORNE'S
ILLUSION
SYSTEMS