

12 Magic // Pop-Ups Later

by Geoff Kanick

12 magic // pop-up performances later

In the few days between Christmas and New Years, Cait and I schedule a meeting every year to reflect on ourselves and our relationship. We reflect on the previous year, think about what we want for the coming year, and think about five years in the future as well. We sit at a table and set timers and write and share and talk about what we wrote. A little over a year ago, I felt that I was losing touch with magic. I told Cait, "I want to bring magic back into my life and own being a magician." It was during our meeting that I set the goal of creating a new magic // pop-up performance every month of 2019, a total of 12 pop-ups. At the time, I had no idea what a magic pop-up was, what it would look like, where it would happen, or who would even come.

Now, I am proud to say that I have created and performed 12 magic // pop-up performances.

Here is a list of the titles:

*Dear Magic,
Love,
Geoff*

The Odds Are Against Us

The Lawn That Disappeared Into The Ocean

UnbrokenUnbrokenUnbroken

And Then They Begin To Dance

An Intermission

M is for Mind

Whoops

The Uncle Geoff Magic Show

The First Trick I Ever Learned

the moment.

An Elegant Solution.

In place of tickets people brought:

A loved item; a scratch ticket; an unsealed envelope; a blank piece of stationery; a childhood photo; a list of questions; a metal spoon; an object that has a mistake; a coin (borrowed from an adult); their imagination; and an elegant solution.

These pop-ups have explored:

How I fell in love with magic; the line between impossible and improbable; when things disappear, when do we know they're gone; how to restore a show, broken into three pieces; how the choreography of sleight-of-hand is a dance; how to be an honest magician; the myriad of things a mind can do; what happens when it all goes wrong; what it was like to watch magic as a kid; how magic is like a good ghost story; the relationship between magic and art; and the relationship between magic and science.

What I didn't expect, was how these pop-ups would also create a community. People who came to pop-up in May would say, didn't we meet at the pop-up in March? And they would bring new friends. A friend in London would send their friend visiting New York. A friend in Florida told their friend you have to check this out.

During one of the pop-ups, people wrote their addresses on envelopes and exchanged them so that they could re-appear in their life later, long after the pop-up was over. And I know for a fact that at least one of these envelopes has yet to be sent because he still has to collect something to include with a note. So even after we leave here tonight, part of these pop-ups will still continue.

Lastly, I would like to thank you for being a part of this. Thank you for responding to the invitations, for thoughtfully selecting your "tickets", and for sharing so many stories. I believe that the magician is only one part of the equation and that an audience is essential. Because magic does not happen in the sleights and choreography, rather it happens in the minds and hearts of those who view it.

This all started because I felt that I had lost touch with magic. The magic // pop-up performances became a place for me to share magic with the people around me, share writing and thoughts, and to give myself permission and freedom to wildly experiment. When I first started there was no grand plan, I just took it one month at a time. It is only now, as we conclude the 12th pop-up, that I can see it has all been an elegant solution.

--