

According to Braun, magic is a type of performance art, but it is much different than other performance arts.

"Magic doesn't exist when I perform it, it exists when you experience it. That's the difference between magic and most performance art. As a performer, you can do Shakespeare in an empty theater, and Shakespeare still exists. I can't do a magic trick in an empty theater, which means I get to give people a very special gift that they can't get anywhere else, or can get very few places," said Braun.

When doing magic, one can create everything that comes to mind. Braun said it is amazing that people can come up with things that did not exist yesterday.

"We can make anything happen. We can create anything. It's weird to think that we live in a world where yesterday, there were things that didn't exist, and

then somebody thought them and made them real. That's like a super-power, right? When you think about that, you can create a solution to a problem that didn't exist yesterday, that tomorrow, there's inventions that we haven't even thought of that are going to make our lives easier than ever the next day," said Braun.

Coming up with magic tricks may seem intimidating and challenging to a beginner magician. However, with enough time, patience, and paper to write on, Braun's "brain mapping" method can help anyone come up with a magic trick.

"When we talk about all the ways that we could make a trick happen, we talk about every idea, no matter how stupid it is. The creative space has to be a safe space," said Braun.

Younger magicians, like junior Josh Breeden, suggest something similar.

"Don't look for shortcuts. Some tricks and flourishes take months to perfect, so don't get discouraged," said Breeden.

This is not just a practice method for magic. It can be applied to any skill one wants to improve at.

"That is how you become good at magic or music or art or theatre or poetry or anything is because the first thing you write as a poet is not going to be good. Write another three hundred thousand words, write a million words and then all of a sudden you've started to maybe understand," said Braun.

For Breeden, what started out as a hobby in seventh grade soon turned into a way to meet new people.

"It's a good way to meet people, if I'm doing magic and it's a crowd then I'll do tricks to people I've never talked to and right then and there, they were no longer strangers," said Breeden.

Like any person who is starting out in a new art or hobby, Breeden did not start creating his own tricks, but by learning from those who are more experienced.

"I watched some David Blaine video and I caught on to how he did it. Then from there, I debunked the trick and started getting more into it. I make some [tricks], and at first it was a lot of recreating other tricks. Then I started using the methods I learned and then I just try to make something no one has seen before. My process

About J&B Magic Shop

Street Address: 129 East Spring Street, New Albany, IN 47150

Shop Hours: Noon to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday; 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday

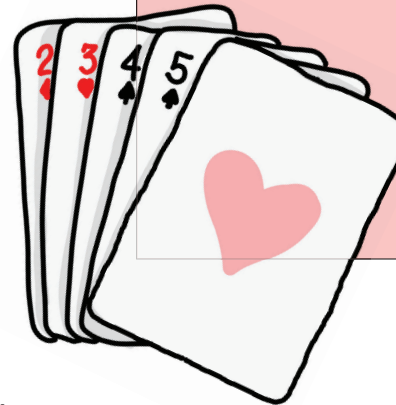
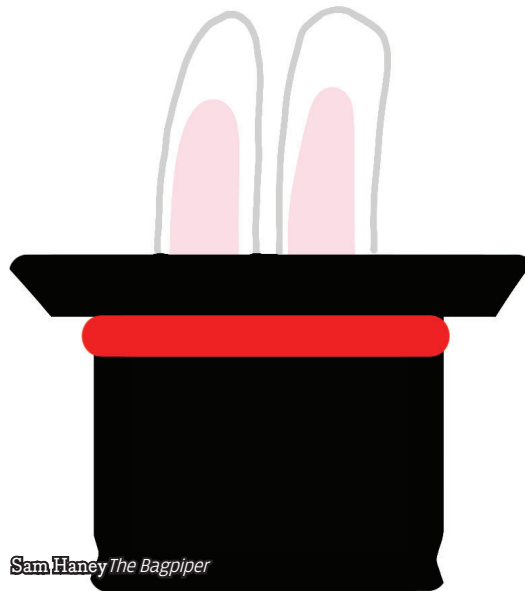
Phone Number: 502-592-2530

Email Address: brentbraunmagic@gmail.com

What They Sell: J&B Magic Shop and Theater sells various magic tricks for all ages and experience levels in magic. All magic tricks sold there come with free lessons on how to do the trick and fool your audience.

Events: J&B hosts weekly Thursday-night magic hangouts for free where they teach visitors magic tricks. These events run from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. J&B has magic shows on Saturday afternoons from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. Tickets are between 10 dollars and 12.50 dollars, and they are available for purchase online at www.newalbanymagic.com.

Source:
www.newalbanymagic.com
and magician
Brent Braun



is just to keep trying things out and try to copy a trick that has already been made," said Breeden.

Above all, the one thing Braun wants people to know about magic is that magic

is open to anyone, both to experience and to learn. The magic industry, he said, is diversifying more than it ever has before.

Braun said, "Magic is an art form that is open to anyone. Male, female, black, white, old, young, we have magicians that come in here who are three years old, we have magicians at 97 years old. Across all boards. The shop is open to help anyone with that."

New Albany magic shop amazes visitors



MAGICIAN BRENT BRAUN demonstrates a rope trick in J&B Magic Shop and Theater on Thursday, Feb. 27.

Annalise Bassett

Features Editor

Cara Akin

News Reporter

Viewed from East Spring Street in downtown New Albany, J&B Magic Shop and Theater may look like just another locally-owned storefront, but as soon as a customer walks up the red carpeted staircase, he or she enters a whole new world full of magic and grandeur.

At the cashier's counter inside, magician Brent Braun pulls out different tricks for a little girl and her father, who just came into the shop to purchase some tricks. He amazes them with a coloring book that's pages lose and gain color with just the

tap of his magic wand.

J&B Magic Shop and Theater is a small, locally-owned magic shop in downtown New Albany. In the theater part of J&B, there is a small seating area that fits 30 people in front of a large red curtain and space for a magician to perform. This is where the magic happens, literally. Braun stated that the theater only has 30 seats to make the performances as personal and unique as possible.

"Every show you see in this space will be unique and different based on the spectators that are in the space, based on who came to that show that day. You can see the same show three times, and it would never feel like the same show, because

it's based on who those people are and how they interact and engage. We purposely built this theater with only 30 seats so that it's personal, so that you are part of the show," said Braun.

J&B Magic Shop and Theater is owned by Braun, who is highly passionate about the art of magic, because he loves to solve problems.

"Magic gave me the ability to solve problems in an impossible way, which is then how I became a magic creator and a consultant, because I started solving problems for other people," said Braun.

"That's really what I enjoy about the job. It's being able to take a problem and then come up with a solution. The solution is sort of like a board game, in that I have to create a solution that no one else sees coming, because if it's easy to understand how the trick works, if it's easy to figure out, then by definition, that doesn't create the magic moment that we're trying to create."

Braun's journey to becoming a magician started 23 years ago, but he did not start off on a stage in front of hundreds of people. He started in his parents' basement.

"I created it in my parents' basement when I was 20 years old. One of the very first tricks I ever created and sold to other magicians. Now it's sold at magic shops around the country, around the world, really. Like you can go into magic shops in Japan, and in Germany and Italy, and there's my trick sitting on their shelf," said Braun. "You

front of 10 million people."

At the time, because of his divorce, Braun recalled being depressed when he walked into a little magic shop and discovered the world of magic.

"I walk out [of the shop] and for the next week, all I thought about was 'How the hell did that happen?' I didn't think about anything else for the next week, that just occupied my life," said Braun. "When I thought about it, I wasn't thinking about the divorce, I wasn't thinking about the pain in my life, I was thinking about how there's things out there I'll never understand, and I experienced one of those things. That led me on the journey to be like, 'I want to give people that feeling.'"

After that, Braun taught himself magic. Day by day, he slowly got better. Eventually, he started his own magic shop in Clarksville. His advice to people who want to learn anything, especially magic, is, "Do it as much as you can, and suck at it."

"The truth is, the only way to get good at anything is to not be good at it for a long time and confidently continue doing it," said Braun. "I think the big struggle is that there are a lot of people out there who will study but then not put in the hours. We have a lot of people,

in magic but in any form of art, who will read the books and study the things but never put in the hours."

Magic doesn't exist when I perform it, it exists when you experience it. That's the difference between magic and most performance art.

Brent Braun
magician

don't expect a thing that you created when you were 20 years old in your parents' basement to ever be seen on television in

To view photos inside the shop, go to fchsbagpiper.wordpress.com.