

Mentalist helps unlock powers of the mind

Arts Scene

by Heather Solomon

Jonathan Garson Levey is ready to open your mind to its own powers. He arrives with his doctor's bag but won't take out any saws or potions. Rather, he has the tools of a mentalist: a steel blindfold, a padlocked cylinder, notepads, keys and seven years of preparation leading up to his newest show, *Jonathan's Mysteries of the Mind*.

"Many of the effects that I perform are mystifying to my audiences and even to me at times," he says.

For any doubters, their skepticism quickly dissipates when Levey has a subject select any word from a 300-page book of their choosing.

Not only can he read the word from their mind but, if it's a noun, he and the subject will both draw it and then match the images before an astonished audience.

Another of his feats is to have a participant intuit which key of several will unlock a metal cylinder containing a certifi-

cate pronouncing them "telepathic as a communicator."

Those attending private parties, corporate awards ceremonies or any of the gatherings where he is in demand, particularly enjoy how Levey dons a stainless steel blindfold before successfully identifying a random object that one holds between the parameter of his outstretched hands.

Both cylinder and blindfold have been crafted by engineer Hank Van der Aa. To doubly ensure he can't see a thing, Levey has his eye orbits taped shut.

"I still have my eyebrows, but it takes some courage," he says.

Shows range from an hour to two or even three, the longer ones including a stunt whereby four assistants from the audience harness the power of their minds to raise a person over their chair seat with minimal physical effort.

Levey is also an accomplished magician who for 25 years has been partnering with his wife, Monique, as Max and Maxine in a silent comedy magic act.

"My magic comedy show is different from the mind reading. With Max and Maxine it's very physical comedy, sight gags. But the mind reading gives me a chance to talk and get to know people,

experience how they are and what they bring to it," says the entertainer.

At parties with cocktails first, he opens with magic then segues into the mind-reading show over dinner.

Levey points out that the mind reading is neither spooky nor serious although as an eight-year-old, newly moved from Manhattan across the George Washington Bridge to an old Tudor house in Teaneck, N.J., his imagination ran away with him.

In the creaky attic, he found the inspiration for his doctor's bag, one belonging to his Uncle Garson after whom he was named. He was fascinated by its contents including a stethoscope, the twin of which he uses in his act today.

Levey's evening and weekend work as a mentalist is his relaxation from his day job at Federation CJA's Agence Ometz as an employment specialist.

"I help people search for work in what are now challenging times. But I like to think of myself more as a coach than a placement person," he says.

The rest of his working hours are spent at trade shows across Canada and the States tying his magic and mentalist abilities to corporate promotion as an "infotainer".

"Once people are having fun around a



Mentalist Jonathan G. Levey astonishes audiences with his mind reading and memory at large and small parties.

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booth or in a seminar or a sales and product launch, they are more apt to remember the message. I'm developing a workshop now that has to do with the power of the mind for health-care professionals," says Levey who has also trained himself to have a phenomenal memory, nailing the names of up to 50 audience members.

"I'd like you to feel that you've witnessed something you'll never forget." For more information, go to www.mindreadershow.com; www.maxmagician.com or call 514-944-5525. ■