

Spectral

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A FEW YEARS BACK, my friend John Carey sparked an idea with his effect "Impossible Conclusion," where a card was shuffled into a packet, then found by spelling to it. With "Spectral," I set out to make the card vanish, then make a mysterious reappearance, all done in the hands of the spectator. It is one of my favorite impromptu card effects.

Effect: A freely selected card vanishes from a packet, and then mysteriously reappears in between two cards named by the spectator.

Method: The principles at work are Gene Finnell's Free Cut Principle and Charles Nyquist's Ribbonspread Hideout.

To begin, invite a spectator to shuffle the deck. You'll need three packets of five cards. Rather than overtly asking

the spectator to count three packets of five cards, simply ask her to "deal three poker hands." This takes the math out of it, while adding a relatable hook (photo 1).

Ask the spectator to pick up any packet and further mix it. Instruct her to cut off any amount of cards from her packet and to remember the card at the face of the cut-off portion (photo 2). Ask her to drop the cut portion onto



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either of the remaining two tabled packets (photo 3), then further bury it by placing the other tabled packet onto it. Finally, have her drop the cards she is holding onto the tabled packet. As random as it appears, this application of Finnell's Free Cut Principle will always position the selection tenth from the top.



To add further smoke and mirrors, guide your spectator through the actions of the Jay Ose false table cut. Briefly, have her cut a third of the cards to the table, another third to the right of that, and the remaining cards to her far right. Have her reassemble the packets from left to right, placing the far left packet onto the center packet, then this combined packet onto the remaining packet. Since this is a false cut, the order of the cards is undisturbed and the selection remains in the tenth position.

You will now cause the "thought-of" card to vanish. Pick up the packet and mime plucking out an invisible card and placing it on the table. You will now prove that the card is gone by displaying all the cards a few at a time.

The left hand holds the packet in dealing position. Flip the top three cards face up, spread them, and ask the spectator to verify that the selection is not among them (photo 4). Once this is done, place the three cards face



up underneath the packet (photo 5). Repeat this with three more cards. For the next three cards, flip them face up as before, but take this opportunity to secure a break below the next face-down card. This is the tenth card—the selection. Display the three face-up cards in a small fan as you align the selection under the three-card fan (photo 6). Once the spectator verifies that the selection is not among



them, pick up the three cards with the hidden selection (photo 7), and place them under the packet. This secretly



positions the selection reversed on the bottom. Spread off the remaining five cards, flip them face up onto the packet, and again ask if their card is among them (photo 8). The selection has convincingly vanished from the packet!



You will now glimpse the selection. Hold the packet in Biddle Grip and tilt your right hand forward as you point to the invisible selection on the table. This allows you to get a clear look at the reversed selection under the packet (photo 9). Mime picking up the invisible card with your left hand and name the glimpsed card aloud as if you can actually see it.



You will use Charles Nyquist's Ribbonspread Hideout to make the imaginary card reappear. Slowly begin dealing cards face up in an overlapping row on the table from left to right. Ask the spectator to call out stop at any point she likes (photo 10). Have her pretend to place her imaginary card face down onto the tabled spread at this point. Call attention to the card on the face of the tabled row (Ace of Diamonds in this case).



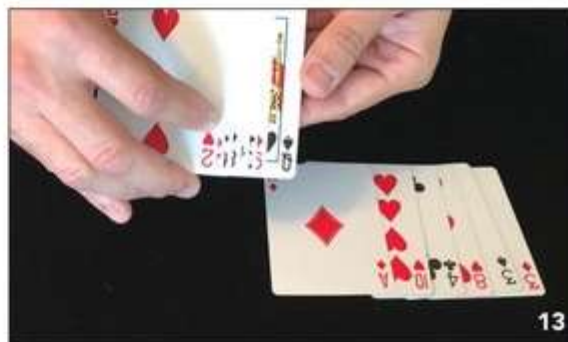
Spread the remaining cards slightly and hold them in Biddle Grip (photo 11). Use your left fingertips to right-



jog the bottom selection about an inch (photo 12). Draw attention to what appears to be the bottom card of your



held packet (Queen of Spades in this case). You can use the left hand to draw it leftward so it can clearly be seen (photo 13).



Carefully lay the spread cards onto the tabled row to create one combined spread. You can adjust the spread to create more space between the cards. Thanks to the Ribbonspread Hideout, the selection remains completely hidden, yet is actually between the two named cards (photo 14).



You will not touch the cards from this point. Invite your spectator to square the packet herself. To ensure that the selection is not inadvertently seen during these actions, instruct her to place each hand on the outer ends of the tabled spread. Gesture with your own hands to make this



clear by placing your hands on the table, palms facing each other (photo 15). Guide the spectator to slowly bring her hands together until the packet is squared (photo 16).



After some magical gesture, have the spectator respread the cards herself to discover that a face-down card has materialized (photo 17). This is a very powerful moment! Also point out that the card is directly between the two face-up cards that she determined. Have her turn over the face-down card to complete the mystery (photo 18). •

