



## VIDEOS

### BILL WELLS

*In his announcement of the belated release of this three-volume set of videos, Meir Yedid relates that in 2004 he reached agreement with Bill Wisch to share the unique knowledge he had gained during four years of study with his mentor, the great master, Slydini. The result-*

*ing video project was shot and edited years ago in Florida by the late Jon LeClair. All the videos are high quality with excellent audio. The performances are shot before a small audience with solo explanations by Wisch. As Meir explains, "For various reasons, it has taken me this long to finalize the videos." Seventeen years—as they say, "Good things take time."*

### Bill Wisch's Slydini Style

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Beginning in 1979 with the publication of the renamed *The Best of Slydini ... and More* books, Bill Wisch began a two-year lecture tour to promote the two-volume set. This tour was authorized and sponsored by Slydini, and Bill was the only Slydini student to receive such permission from the Master. This was the beginning of a magic career that established Bill as a protégé of Slydini known not only for promoting the magic of Slydini during the last decade and a half of his life but also for keeping his teacher and mentor's magic alive after his death in 1991. The first video in the trio is devoted to the fundamentals of the Slydini approach to magic and, as the advertising states, is a masterclass in timing, rhythm, and direction. These are the three foundations of Slydini's magic.

"The Slydini Poker Deal": The video opens with what appears to be a poker-deal trick but is really a Slydini joke. A five-card hand is carefully and openly dealt to the spectator and the magician. However, the magician surprisingly ends up with half the deck in his hand. Knowing how serious Slydini was about his magic, many do not realize that he had a great sense of humor and would pull stunts like this on his students.

"Slydini Aces": This routine originally appeared in a 1956 issue of *Hugard's Magic Monthly* and can also be found on p.27 of *The Magical World of Slydini*. The four Aces are inserted into the deck, which is given to a spectator to shuffle. Yet when the spectator looks up, the four Aces are face up in front of the magician or can be instantly produced or revealed in whatever manner you prefer. Bill has combined the Slydini Clip Switch with the "Slydini Aces" to expand the basic routine and have the Aces apparently be randomly selected by the spectator from the shuffled deck. An impromptu performance of this routine gained Bill an important corporate booking.

Slydini's Seated Timing and Lapping Techniques: A discussion follows of Slydini's specific criteria for the basic starting position when sitting at the table as well as the

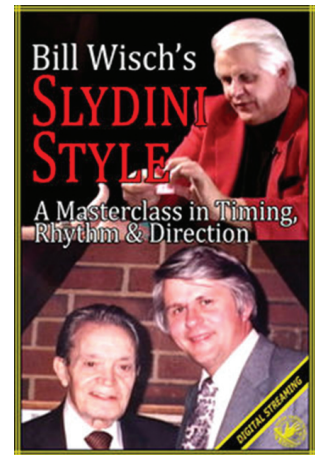
timing and movement techniques for lapping. Wisch refers to the pages where the discussion of these techniques is found in *The Best of Slydini ... and More*. These are exact sitting angles, distance from the table, hand positions, and postures. The way to lap using natural movements of the hands, arms, and body. As Bill calls it, the lean and hold concept. The incorporation of the beat system with these concepts is introduced. This is an extremely important segment of the video and is essential to understanding the fundamental theories of Slydini's magic. Wisch does a masterful job of demonstrating Slydini's exact movements and techniques.

"Slydini's Sugar Express": One of Slydini's signature effects, where a sugar packet is emptied onto the palm and the sugar vanishes only to reappear inside the packet, is fully explained. Bill has added the use of a paper napkin to catch stray sugar and to effect a vanish of the empty packet and napkin as a conclusion. This effect uses the simplest of objects. Such simplicity was a hallmark of Slydini's magic. He accomplished miracles with items like a single cigarette, a sugar packet, a couple of handkerchiefs, balled-up napkins, or a few coins. This routine introduces the Revolve Vanish, one of Slydini's fundamental close-up concepts, which is also used in the Napkin Ball Manipulations segment which follows and is explained later.

Slydini's Napkin Ball Manipulation: A full discussion and demonstration of Slydini's concepts of performing close-up are covered using a balled-up paper napkin. The simple vanish of the paper ball is covered in minute detail. Included are Slydini's insistence of the proper arrangement of the table and chairs, "shoot" and relax positions, the Slydini Switch, and the importance of the rhythm or beat in the actual performance. The use of the Revolve Vanish and retrieval from the lap are discussed. The retrieval is actually the Imp Pass, the second of Slydini's fundamental lapping techniques, although Wisch does not name it as such and unfortunately does not teach the move. He does explain and teach the Revolve Vanish.

Slydini's Stand-Up Techniques: While the majority of this video is devoted to close-up performance, a short segment on Slydini's stand-up techniques covers how to stand and move on stage. Of particular importance is the position of the performer's feet in orientation of the body with respect to the audience.

The instructional portion of the video concludes with the discussion of the Beat System, which was devised by Bill and Slydini to aid in the learning and developing of rhythm and timing in the execution of a routine or move. Bill teaches the goals of the system and how it is used in Slydini's magic such as the "Paper Balls Over the Head."



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You are taught how to use the system in your own magic as the four beats in doing a classic palm. A special beat sheet is shown to use in developing the rhythm and beat sequence for other sleights. Each step in the beat sequence is explained in detail and, finally, Bill offers a beat-sheet challenge with three basic goals to use in developing the beat sequence with the sleights that you use. This approach exemplifies Slydini's careful analysis and application of detail to every move, word, and timing in his magic concepts.

The video ends with a bonus interview of Bill Wisch in which he tells of first meeting Slydini, how Herb Zarrow steered him in the right direction, and how he began as a student of Slydini for a study lasting for hundreds of hours over the next four years. A life-changing event that taught him the basic performing philosophy of the Master: "You got to have fun with the people."

### Bill Wisch's Close-Up Magic

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Building upon the foundation of Slydini-taught concepts and combining them with his own creativity, Bill Wisch has developed magic that is distinctively his own. As Karl Fulves wrote in the 1984 *Genii* featuring Bill, "To my knowledge, Bill Wisch is the only Slydini student to conceptualize and internalize Slydini's style of magic to fit his own style." [Editor's Note: This can actually be said of quite a few of Slydini's students.]

In this video you will learn a variety of close-up routines using common objects such as coins, cards, marbles, matches, rings, and sponge balls. These are audience-tested routines from Bill's working repertoire and most are suitable for seated formal performances as well as walk around. The video features:

"Bill's One Coin Routine": A beautiful routine that is almost jazz magic in action with a silent beginning and a comedy ending. A variety of techniques are taught, enabling one to develop their own routine. A single coin appears, vanishes, and transposes to numerous locations on your body. Techniques such as Slydini's Hand Flourish, Slydini tips on the thumb palm, back of hand vanish and toss reappearance, Fingertip Clip Vanish and Reappear, Ed Balducci Vanish, Tourniquet Vanish, vanishing and retrieving from the sleeve, Retention Vanish, and Slap Vanish are explained. The one coin routine can be impromptu and the sequence of sleights modified to fit the situation and/or the individual style of the performer.

"Bill's Copper/Silver Routine": This is a variation of "Presto Chango" from *New Modern Coin Magic* in which a copper and silver coin change to both silver, both copper, and then a single coin changes visibly. Both coins are offered for examination at the end. Sleights taught are the Bobo Switch, Mexi-coin Turnover (a very deceptive Mexican Turnover with coins) and the Tip Clip Change.

"Stick It in Your Ear": In a one-coin sequence, a dime vanishes, reappears, penetrates, and changes to a jumbo dime. Moves explained are a variation of the Frank Drobina Coin Vanish, the "Stick it in your Ear" placement, and "A Coin Through the Hand" from Hugard's *Coin Magic*.

"Slydini's Coins Through the Table": A variation of the famous six-coin routine with three coins in each hand and three penetrate the table to join the other three. The use of sound as misdirection to cover moves is taught. Bill's five-coin version is also explained plus a little joke of Slydini's with a stack of coins.

"Phantom Match": A match from a book of matches vanishes from hands that are shown empty and then magically reappears. This is a tiny, little miracle. Plus a little bonus knuckle-cracking at the end.

"Chain(R)ing": A finger ring off rope routine using a necklace chain instead of a cord. Ray Grismer's "Ring Off" is explained. The ring-on portion of this routine was published in *Apocalypse* in 1979. The use of a chain improves this effect.

"Grab a Card": A spectator-selected card is taken from a fan of the deck without looking. The Gravity Fan Technique is explained.

"Transit Spheres Plus": A marbles across routine with a kicker ending change of a marble to a crystal ball. Finger Clipping a marble and the Shuttle Pass are explained.

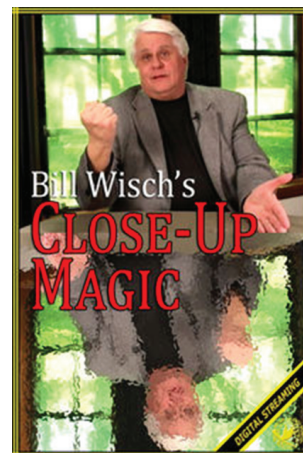
"Sponge Ball & Purse": A sponge ball taken from a zippered purse vanishes and reappears. The ball vanishes a second time and reappears inside the purse which is being held by a spectator. Tips on the handling of a thumbtip are shown.

Classic Palm Placement Practice: A teaching and/or practicing technique using a rubber band for identifying the sweet spot in one's hand for the classic palm.

"Torn & Restored Napkin": A paper napkin is torn into pieces and rolled into a ball which is then opened to show the napkin is restored. A series of Slydini Hand Flourishes and vanish of the paper ball concludes this segment. The technique explained is a Max Londono switch Bill calls the Up & Down Move but was titled the Change-Over in a 1980 *Apocalypse*.

"Slydini's Wand Card Wild Card": A version of "Wild Card" using seven black cards and two blank cards to create a layout of a black wand with white tips. This allows for the seldom seen use of a wand to do a card trick. At the conclusion all the cards are shown to be blank. Two options for revealing the cards as all blank are shown. The Francis Carlyle Turnover (published in *Phoenix* issue 48 as "Carlyle's Card"—a business card turnover using a modified Paddle Move) with a tip on doing it vertically and the Slydini Wild Card Move are explained.

Bonus Section: Bill talks about his before-magic life as a sly kid and his musical beginnings with numerous instruments before ending up with drums. He discusses life's four great motivations and what he was like as a kid and a



high school band member, his ill-fated university days, and finding his niche at the Berklee College of Music. About to be drafted, his abilities as a drummer gain him a spot in the Navy Band and the chance to see the world.

### Bill Wisch's Card Magic

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Armed with fundamentals developed from his studies with Slydini, Bill Wisch adds his own creativity and style to produce a series of magic with cards. The routines and techniques include:

"Card to Box" and "The St. Louis Rising Card": An introductory sequence with a pair of dice and numbers that magically switch places followed by a signed selected card rising from the deck. The card then vanishes and reappears folded inside the box that contained the dice and has remained on the table in full view. Optional handlings without the Kennedy "Mystery Box" are shown as well as optional sequences with the signed card. This one routine is like a short course in magic with the following techniques being taught: the third part of the Sack's dice routine, "Sack's Spotted Sorcery" which was published in issue 152 of the *Phoenix* in 1948 and the dice turnover move which Sack credited to Lou Tannen, Wisch's Pop Double Lift, which is a combination of the Nate Leipzig Double Lift and the Cliff Green Double Lift, the Ovette Master Move or Kelly Bottom Placement, and the Wisch Fold, an excellent substitute for the Mercury Card Fold.

"Two Card Transpo": Two selected, signed cards are placed one on top and one beneath a glass. The cards instantly change places. This is the "Larry Jennings Transposition" which is a no-duplicate variation of the "Scarne Transposition" made famous by Scarne performing it in a beer commercial.

"Charismatic Cards": Three spectators are given a prediction card, which is placed face down in front of them on the table. Each then freely selects a card which is placed face up on their prediction card. When the selected cards are turned over they match the prediction cards. The third variation of Derek Dingle's NoLap Switch from *The Complete Works of Derek Dingle* is taught including two modifications.

"Vernon's Trick That Fooled Houdini": A selected card placed second from the top of the deck keeps jumping to the top. A way to get rid of the gaffed card is taught.

"Bill's Card to Wallet Routine": A selected card is lost in the deck. The card's identity is revealed by reading the spectator's mind and the card is shown to be on the bottom of the deck. The card is now signed. The deck is fanned and the card is pushed into the center. Your wallet is removed from your jacket pocket and fanned with the cards. The wallet is opened and the signed card is removed. A regular nongaffed wallet is used. The Kelly Bottom Placement and Wisch's Palm Change #2 are taught. The initial divination of the selected card is not explained.

"Card Under Coin": The spectator selects a card and loses it in the deck. The spectator is offered a chance to win a coin. The spectator then places any card beneath the coin and is told they win the coin if this card is not the selection.

When the card is shown, it is not the selection, but the magician gets the last laugh and keeps the coin when it is turned over to reveal a miniature of the selected card glued to back of the coin. The Riffle-Break Force from *Royal Road to Card Magic* is used to teach the Psy-Classic Force, which is a no fail version of the Classic Force.

The following moves are explained:

Phan-Pass: A variation of the Fan Pass which is easier to do by eliminating the actual Pass and the bad angles while accomplishing the same result.

Card Palm Change: A variation of Irv Weiner's "Simplicity Jog Variation #1. Weiner's move is used to leave a card on top when apparently placing it into the center of the pack. Using the same apparent action, Bill's Card Palm Change switches one card for another and uses the Slydini Wrist Palm as part of the move either to leave the card on top or palm it out.

Slydini's Optical Cut Variation: Bill teaches the Slydini False Cut and his vertical variation.

"Optical Cut Aces": The Card Palm Change or Simplicity Jog Variation #1 is used apparently to lose the four Aces in the pack, which is then shuffled. The Optical Cut Variation is then used to cut to the four Aces.

"Good, Better, Best Poker":

While standing, the magician shows that he has four Kings and a Ten for a good poker hand. Then the cards change to four Aces and a Ten for a better poker hand and finally to a royal flush for the best poker hand. Bill teaches his Tip Count, which allows you to do the Elmsley Count vertically while standing instead of horizontally. This count can be substituted for the Jordan Count and opens possibilities for many packet effects using false counts. Greater visibility for larger audiences is also obtained using this count.

Bonus Section: Bill discusses early magic experiences ranging from being taken by a Monte game in Malta to a lecture that inspired a life's experience.

The true value represented by this set of three videos is perhaps best summed up by a 1984 quote by Karl Fulves—"In a field where egoists insist on our undivided attention, modest magicians tend to be overlooked. Bill Wisch is a quiet fellow who has mastered the most important concepts of fooling the mind. He will baffle you with some of the best manipulative magic you are likely to see. Egoists may provide the flash and noise, but magicians like Bill Wisch lend dignity to the art."

Finally, to those who say Slydini is old-school magic, I say Slydini is the school for any magician who actually thinks about his magic.

Each video approx 70 minutes. • \$20 each or as a set for \$45 • Download only • Meir Yedid Magic • [www.mymagic.com](http://www.mymagic.com)

