

# Why Did You Do That, Mr. Giobbi?

BY ROBERTO GIOBBI (HIMSELF)

**THE UNESCO DEFINES** a book as “a non-periodical printed publication of at least 49 pages excluding covers.” When you are reading this, my latest book *Sharing Secrets—The 52 Most Important and Practical Strategies in Magic* will have been published.

My first book was called *CardPerfect*, a hardback book that appeared in 1987, only in the German language, and in a limited edition of 500 copies. Meanwhile, I have written and published my 19th book, and if you include their translations, it brings the count to over eighty. After the first few, I started to ask myself, “Why should I write this book?” In a time where we see the publication of a book or DVD download almost every day, this question has gained in relevance. Admittedly, it isn’t so easy to answer, as a book serves various needs and speaks to different audiences, but the question has to be asked. Eventually, the proof of the pudding is in its sales, for if it sells, it serves a need of some sort, whatever this might be.

So, why did I think a book like *Sharing Secrets* is necessary and practical?

I find it useful to look at a performance piece on three construction levels: the technical, the dramatic, and the psychological. The first two levels are those that are most often considered in books and lectures, actually in any type of teaching: they first explain how the trick is built from a mechanical point of view, what sleights and other operational principle to use to make the trick work. And then they typically give an idea of the plot and its presentation, in various degrees of detail and quality.

The third level, that of the psychological construction, however, which looks at how to prevent the intelligent mind from penetrating the secret of the trick and thus lead it into Wonderland to experience the emotion of astonishment, well, this is mostly neglected. But that is the *essence of magic*, at least from its function as the performing

art of wonder. One reason why this aspect is often ignored lies in the fact that although we have terms for most of our operational and presentational tools, there are only few to class (taxonomy) and name (terminology) all those concepts that take care of how the audience constructs their false reality, which first causes deception and then leads to wonderment.

In *Sharing Secrets*, I have walked through the timeline of all kinds of tricks, from the prologue to the epilogue, and have tried to identify, define, and class all those principles, concepts, and strategies that are part of what I call the psychological construction. The challenge has been to present the strategy on one single page, with a practical example of its application in a trick or a technique on the opposite page. I have identified 52 such strategies—in my opinion the most important—and presented them on a double page. These strategies are supplemented by various short essays that will help you instill them as a skill so that you can use them in all your magic. I hope that you’ll find it to be a necessary and useful book. On the next two pages you’ll see an example of how it works.

*Sharing Secrets* is available in the U.S.A. through [www.penguinmagic.com](http://www.penguinmagic.com) or your favorite dealer. Signed copies can be obtained upon request directly from me at [www.robertogiobbi.com](http://www.robertogiobbi.com), but you must mention this on the order form. •

