

## Summary

*Reality as an Art* is a book about creating something so close to magic that calling it anything else is splitting hairs. It outlines a practical toolset and mindset that becomes so natural that the performer or practitioner can create his or her own miracles at a moment's notice. This is possible in part because of the way that each of us builds perceptual realities and conceptual realities, and the invisible ways that the process can be shifted to create something miraculous.

The book is made up of chapters that lay out the tools, the mechanics and the dynamics that allow our realities to be shifted. This includes a description the nature of perception that allows these effects to happen, the social variables that are in play during each interaction, and the internal variables such as the mindset and expectations of the performer/practitioner. Each concept is broken into principles that are then illustrated by practical demonstrations.

## Chapter Summaries

- **A Note on the New Edition**     0
  - A brief introduction to the changes in the book and the important threads within the original, looking back after years.
- **Foreword**     v
  - A psychology researcher considers some of the important lessons and exciting possibilities within the text.
- **Preface**     ix
  - Framing in contextualizing the book and an important note on curses.
- **INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION**     1
  - This is a strange book where we blur the lines between real and imaginary, natural and supernatural, and so forth, so we must set proper definitions and expectations right at the start. We define magic that can be experienced as real, and is best seen as both an idea and a relationship. The idea of magic and the relationship of magic are discussed.
  - There are many ways of bending reality. Each has its benefits but also its baggage. In this book we are invited to set down our preconceptions and constructs to explore the idea that maybe there is a fun, easy, and natural way to create magical realities.
  - As well, everything in this book should pass the type following test: 1) it looks and feels like magic from the inside and outside, whether you know how it works or not. 2) It is honest, collaborative/non-oppositional, and the effects are consistent with the methods, 3) it invokes that sense of mystery and wonder that magic does for those performing AND experiencing it, while avoiding tropes and stereotypes that could make it less impactful. The introduction goes on to explain why this is possible and exactly how it will be done.
- **PART 1: MAGIC IN A GALAXY NEAR YOU**     14
  - This section will outline how we perceive the world, and how that lends to making magic out of it. Beginning with teeter-totters and an exciting newspaper headline. It explores the idea of magic as we have defined it, and how it opens the door for creating genuine magical experiences.

- **Reality as an Art: Basic Principles and Practice** 17
  - An overview of—and re-introduction to—human perceptory superpowers, what they do, and the completely natural ways in which they shift all the time. Then it covers how they can shift intentionally, with tangible real world examples, and then an incredibly powerful demonstration to this end in the form of the Invisible Rope.
- ***The Invisible Rope*** 27
 

*The Invisible Rope is a demonstration that is very visual and very tactile at the same time, where the idea of a rope becomes real in an astonishing (and reliable) way. You take out an "invisible rope," which seems like a silly joke until you use it to tie someone up and pull them over.*
- **Playing Pygmalion: (re)Defining (Im)Possible** 53
  - A discussion of how western philosophy has dismissed and overlooked a huge portion of our psychological and interpersonal abilities when it comes to building and changing our worlds of experience. How it may be that the possibility of something that is magical and very real was pushed underground, and how it can be unearthed. And even if the idea of how it was buried to begin with is wrong, it is still there for us to uncover...
- **Pushed (2016)** 67
  - A deep discussion about how to use our tools to their maximum potential. It is framed around a demonstration from the first edition of the book (Push), and why that demonstration was the best/worst thing in the book (as well as not being best learned from a book). What that effect taught me, why I believe the book is better without it, and how the way it has been used shows how performers can create and destroy magical tools and experiences. How this history speaks to an even greater potential that is yet to be unleashed.
- **PART TWO: USING THE FORCE** 80
  - Now that we have defined something that is magical as well as real as well as experienced it for ourselves, what else can we do with it? Part two begins to explore some of the potential of these reality-bending effects.
- **Reality as an Applied Art: Principles in Practice** 82
  - Discusses the principles and mechanics involved in taking what we do from a small number of tightly structured demonstrations/effects to an unlimited and extensive set of experiences. This includes how to leverage expectation and beliefs as well as how to introduce and elicit building blocks of experience that become self-perpetuating. It further explores this idea through a demonstration where someone's strength is snapped out of their arm.
- ***Powerless*** 99
 

*Powerless is a demonstration wherein we really do something that magicians have long faked: sap away a strong person's strength on command. It is also an illustration of how this type of shifting of reality works and can be applied to anything.*
- **The Messiah's Uncle: Immaculate Deceptions** 113
  - How hard would it be for a messiah's uncle to become a billionaire? My developmental psychology professor could not answer 15 years ago, but now we can. This chapter introduces the role of deception in reality construction. This is further explored through the ghost touch demonstration.

- **Ghost Touch 116**  
*Powerless is a demonstration wherein we really do something that magicians have long faked: sap away a strong person's strength on command. It is also an illustration of how this type of shifting of reality works and can be applied to anything.*
- **Forcing the Hand of Fate: Some Tools of the Trade 126**
  - Now we introduce the idea of using physical tools and objects in a way that can catalyze or amplify an experience. The skull demonstrates how an ordinary object can suddenly become more than ordinary and more than an object.
- **The Skull 130**  
*The Skull is something that could be overlooked next to the drama of the others, but handled well it is one of the strongest and most versatile things that I have ever used. An object that carries a heavy idea can instantly become too heavy to even hold, touching people intellectually and emotionally, and somehow managing to be extremely subtle and extremely dramatic at the same time.*
- **Advanced Snowman Construction: Dynamic Miracles 142**
  - The previous demonstrations were fairly structured, and now we discuss how that structure is not needed when we understand and leverage the underlying principles. This means that we could move seamlessly in and out of structured performances, and are able to create an endless number of effects tailored to a given moment or performance. Paralyzed introduces a loosely structured demonstration in which we explore participants reactions to create an affect.
- **Paralyzed 150**  
*Paralyzed is a playful example of shifting perceptions with a dynamic approach and open-ended goals.*
- **Strategy and Potential 157**
  - In our demonstrations, we are leveraging invisible tools and principles of perception in order to create miracles. This chapter discusses some of the strategic considerations to this end, and how they can be employed when bending reality. Psychic surgery.
- **Psychic Surgery 167**  
*Psychic Surgery can be the strangest experience that someone has ever experienced \_or seen\_, but it can also be an unassuming but fascinating "children's game" to share.*
- **THE ART OF REALITY: SUMMARY AND FUTURE POTENTIAL 188**
  - A summary of the principles of the book, and a short discussion of the many potential's that may follow.
- **THE FALL: FINAL THOUGHTS IN 2019 197**
  - Some concluding thoughts on the various updates throughout the book, and on the potential of this type of magic in general. I can speak for nobody else, but this essay completely changed my ideas about what I do and why it matters.
- **Background and Acknowledgments (from 2014) 211**
  - Acknowledging those who supported the creation of the book, and some of the history of its creation.