

constructing
magic

Jeanette Andrews

today...

/ Performance

/ Quick What and Why

/ Workshop Effect

/ Process & Dissecting Why this Works...

/ Applications

/ Q&A

BLINDSPOTS
BLINDSPOTS

Magic uses unique methods of non-linear problem-solving and creative design thinking bring the impossible (or a simulated version) to life.

what is magic?

the foundation of a mental model

Philosopher Jason Leddington notes magic as presenting a moment that “is impossible, yet—as far as you can tell—it just happened anyway. [...] Magic is not simply about deceiving. It’s about creating an illusion, the illusion of impossibility”

the illusion of impossibility”

what is the form?

the foundation of a mental model

Jason Leddington notes:

“[Y]ou experience magic as real and unreal at the same time. It's a very, very odd form, compelling, uneasy, and rich in irony.... A romantic novel can make you cry. A horror movie can make you shiver. A symphony can carry you away on an emotional storm; it can go straight to the heart or the feet. But magic goes straight to the brain; its essence is intellectual. (Stromberg 2012) Magic does not fit neatly into our usual aesthetic categories—precisely why it so rewards reflection.”

https://www.jasonleddington.net/uploads/3/1/4/6/31463977/the_experience_of_magic_-_jaac_accepted_version.pdf

why am I teaching this magic effect...?

A magic theoretician (with yes, a secret identity) notes several types of magic that he feels comfortable revealing, including:

- / “Generic Tricks with Convolutedly Interesting Methods
- / Mediocre Tricks with Unique Methods
- / Concepts that People Already Know About”

Let's learn the effect!

construction of the magical

- What is the effect
- Start with a dream version and work backwards: How to simulate it in testing?
(Tommy Wonder)
- What are audience assumptions?
- Existing methods
- What can be stripped away to bolster the core effect and your narrative?

the effect

What is the essence of what the effect conveys?

Such as:

/ Appearance

/ Vanish

/ Transformation

/ Restoration

/ Identification

/ Prediction

/ Anti-gravity

the effect

What is the essence of what the effect conveys?

/ Superior ability

/ Identification

/ Impossible Movement

/ Sympathetic Reaction

the narrative

What is the intrinsic impossibility at the effect's core and your relationship to it?

How to combine the effect with a message?

audience assumptions

Anticipate...

- / Visual assumptions
- / Psychological assumptions
- / Preemptively negate explanations

visual & psychological assumptions

- / Object familiarity
- / Object Permanence
- / Gestalt Perception of Objects

psychological expectations

Dr. Amory H. Danek:

“What about False Insights? Deconstructing the Aha! Experience along Its Multiple Dimensions for Correct and Incorrect Solutions Separately”

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5247466/>

/ Process

/ Sleeves

/ Table

/ Materials...

designing for and around assumptions

- / Objecthood
- / Agent of the audience
- / Movements / Combine the movements that you already do with the movements you need to do...
- / Questions...
- / Language & Context
- / Materials
 - / Designs (images, messages, etc.)
 - / Alternate props
 - / Isolation of cards
- / Adjusting the technique to match the crafted narrative...

“There is the way of the potter & the way of the sculptor”

– Eugene Burger

thinking like a magician

thinking like a magician

Can the framework and process of designing magic with its unique style of problem-solving form a framework for new mental models?

form and foundation

What is the form?

What are the intrinsic strengths and aims of that form?

Foundation of a mental model...

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what is magical

The illusion of impossibility

Impossible vs improbable/unexpected

magic-inspired mental models

- Core effect
- Work backwards
- Existing assumptions
 - Anticipate and design for...
 - / Visual assumptions
 - / Psychological assumptions
 - / Materials
 - / Process
 - / Users
- Existing tools
- Reconfigure and re-choreograph processes, both for design and users

magic constructions

- What are assumptions that clients/users may have?
- What is at the core of your project and are there alternate effects/possibilities?
- Imagine other effects that your projects could have and how those could be achieved with new materials or tactics.
- Is there an unexpected form that can be employed to address the issue?
- How can the content or message be used to bolster that form?

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Maybe we just have to reverse the deck itself... ;)

Keep in touch!

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