

MOFO GOES HOME

# MOFO KNOWS



MAR 15, 1995

ISSUE 15

## NO FEAR! NO LOATHING! VIVA LAS VEGAS!

As of Aug 1, 1994, Penn & Teller are proud residents of the silver state, and the fastest growing city in America! (Don't think this is civic pride or any thing - it's also the Magic Capitol of the world these days.)

The move has brought some personnel changes: T. Bramlett has come on board as the new Director of Covert Activities, and his lovely and talented wife Burt is the new Stage Manager. Krasher came along to Vegas, but just kept heading west, and was last seen in San Francisco. It is with great pleasure that I introduce myself, Lisa Liberati, as the new Director of Internal Affairs, and editor-in-chief of MOFO KNOWS.

So, now it's a gamble how often you'll see this newsletter, but we hope to make it as regular as the flow of planes into McCarren.

Be sure to check out the new return address and send your letters there.

We look forward to hearing from you.



**MOFO KNOWS**  
**SUITE 377**  
**4132 S. RAINBOW BLVD.**  
**LAS VEGAS, NV. 89103**

CHANGE OF ADDRESS REQUESTED

"We used to be happy if the show sold out. Now we're just happy if we both survive the evening."  
— Teller



edited by Lisa Liberati • written by Penn & Teller,  
Mofo, Krasher, and James Randi  
logos by Sealboy • graphics and design by Danny Hamelin



# THE FIRST TIME...

by Penn

WE started our self-defense and gun safety classes last night and also worked, in secret, on the Bullet Catch. We learned over and over that every gun is loaded and to never point a gun at *ANYTHING* you weren't willing to destroy. Then we took turns pointing the gun at people we love.

When I was twenty and we were going to do dangerous stuff I really dug it. Now, I'm double that and I hate it. I really think the worst part of my job was being in the room when the gun was pointed at Wiley for the first time and the trigger pulled. It was like the first time the truck ran over Robbie. There's nothing I like about it - the second and third time - I just love it. But the first time... All I do is run over and over again thinking about the safety checks and trying to think what we've done wrong; what could make it dangerous. Then I watch and all I can think is, "If something goes wrong the rest of my life, every moment, will be living this minute over and over again - why didn't I think? It would have been so easy to do it right". The rest of my life, every second I will think, "and we did it to be *FUNNY?*, to be entertaining? *WHAT?*

What the hell is wrong with the Bear Joke, why did we have to play with guns?" And then it's over. And then it's okay. The safety curve changes, we didn't make a mistake that was 100% fatal. That's out of the way. And we have safety upon safety, but the first time man, the first time. I wouldn't have pointed the gun the first time. I mean, I guess I would have, but I didn't want to. I hope that the feelings we're getting, get transferred to the audience. It's so goddamn powerful to see a real gun in a real place pointed at someone. I hope TV and and movies haven't taken away the fear of fantasy violence, but I don't think they have. I think in a theatre it'll be pretty strong. It's really loud. We took our "ears" off for a shot and it was really loud. Man, it's loud.

We're pointing a gun at each other, and we're taking a course that says that that's the one thing you should never do.



# MOFO SEES...

**MARCH 23** - MACKY AUDITORIUM  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO  
BOULDER, CO

**MARCH 24** - DENVER CENTER FOR  
THE PERFORMING ARTS  
DENVER, CO

**APRIL 1** - (WHEN ELSE?) PENN &  
TELLER'S SMOKE & MIRRORS  
SEGA CD-ROM HITS THE STORES!  
(MPC, PC, & 3DO COMING SOON)

**APRIL 28-30** - TRUMP PLAZA  
ATLANTIC CITY, NJ

**MAY 27-JUNE 7** - BALLY'S CASINO  
LAS VEGAS, NV

## IT'S ALL OVER BUT THE SHOUTING, 'CAUSE THE FAT LADY SANG!

Uri Geller, the former psychic superstar, has capitulated 100% after having brought some seven lawsuits against me and persons and organizations connected with me. He lost them all, as did a "parapsychologist" pal of his who sued me for \$13,000,000 last year. In the process, which lasted for several years, none of the defendants paid out a nickel to Mr. Geller, though the costs of defense were of course very high.



Geller is presently ordered to pay \$149,000 to one defendant. In referring to an appeal Geller made to them concerning that payment, the U.S. Court of Appeals referred to Geller's "litigious nature" and said in their decision that I have been

...exposing various Geller feats as the fraudulent tricks of a confidence man.

In a 1992 book published in the UK, author Stuart Sutherland wrote, speaking of Margery Crandon and Uri Geller:

...such frauds have usually been detected not by physicists, nor by psychologists, but by magicians...

Now there's a statement that could not possibly have gotten by Geller, yet he didn't sue. Why? Because I believe that he was only after me and my colleagues. That's rather a compliment, in a way, but an expensive one. In any case, it didn't work. Not for a moment did I give up my attacks on Geller's claims, nor will I.

You can bet I'll be doing a book on this episode, and it will make use of GREAT material that was developed as a result of the investigations of Geller in relation to these legal matters. He really opened Pandora's Box when he took me on via the courts.

The UK papers have been calling me about the capitulation of Geller, the BBC is talking about doing a program (similar to the NOVA show I did) on me and my work, and I have an offer for my own radio show, similar to the one I did on WOR-Radio many years ago. So, late in 1995, I'll be getting back on my feet.

There is simply no way that I can begin to thank my many, many friends out there who stood by me during this battle. Your support was essential, and I would have gone into bankruptcy had it not been for the many financial contributions that came in. I still have the James Randi Fund going (c/o Suite L. 3555 West Reno Street, Las Vegas, NV 89118) to clear up the expenses, and once that account is settled, I can go about my business once more.

If 1995 can be as good to you as it will be to me, the happiness quotient of the whole world will go up a point or two. Yes the good guys win sometimes, and the fight is worth it all, whatever the price. Boy, do I sleep well!

James Randi

## ATLANTIC MONTHLY

Will be featuring an article by Teller in their April issue.

Don't miss it!

## "I AM A CULINARY GENIUS"

I have discovered a truly low-fat and fun desert.

You take a big bowl of Cocoa Krispies, then pour Hershey's chocolate syrup all over them. Finally, put skim milk over the whole thing.

Good Eatin'!

-- Penn

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

GROWING up I always wanted a nickname. All of my invisible friends had nicknames. I never had one, well my sister called me something I don't want to talk about, but that was different. Penn told me when I interviewed with them on the phone in Chicago, that my name would have to go. I was very happy. Whenever we got to a theatre they would look at Stewart and ask if he was Krasher, then Robbie, then Andre, then they'd get the joke.

-- Krasher



## The Bullet Catch

On December 28, 1994, at the Palace Theater in Stamford, Conn., Penn & Teller debuted a new trick (well, it was new to them, magicians have been doing it for hundreds of years, and twelve of those magicians have *DIED*...): the Bullet Catch. We won't spoil the suspense for any of you who haven't caught it yet, but part of the gag is that an audience member flips a coin to see who fires and who catches the bullet. Here is the tally, as kept by Burt, of all of the bullet catch performances to date:

Gig	Shooter
Stamford 12/28/94	Penn
Stamford 12/29/94	Teller
Stamford 12/30/94	Teller
Stamford 12/30/94	Penn
Stamford 12/31/94	Teller
Stamford 12/31/94	Teller
Stamford 12/31/94	Teller
Stamford 12/31/94	Teller
Stamford 1/1/95	Penn
Bally's 1/6/95	Penn
Bally's 1/7/95	Teller
Bally's 1/8/95	Penn
Bally's 1/9/95	Teller
Bally's 1/10/95	Teller
Bally's 1/11/95	Teller
Bally's 1/12/95	Teller
Bally's 1/13/95	Teller
Bally's 1/14/95	Penn
Bally's 1/15/95	Penn
Bally's 1/16/95	Teller
Bally's 1/17/95	Penn
Bally's 1/18/95	Teller
Bally's 1/19/95	Penn
Bally's 1/20/95	Penn
Bally's 1/21/95	Penn
Bally's 1/22/95	Penn
Cerritos 1/27/95	Penn
Cerritos 1/28/95	Penn

### Total

Penn	14
Teller	13



**SURFIN' THE NET?**  
CHECK OUT THE NEWSGROUP  
**ALT.FAN.PENN-N-TELLER**  
THE ADDRESS ON THE WORLDWIDE WEB IS:  
**HTTP://AI.EECS.UMICH.EDU/PEOPLE/NIELSON/PENN-N-TELLER.HTML**

## SMOKE AND MIRRORS UNLEASHED!



☞ **What's your sign?** have a friend interact with Penn & Teller and their patented Personometer™ device, and watch the guys accurately deduce your friends' zodiac sign.

☞ **Desert Bus** P&T's answer to those who criticize the violence in video games. It's the most realistic simulator you'll ever play! An actual 8-hour bus drive from Tucson, Arizona to Las Vegas, Nevada! This is what life is "really" like!

P&T's S & M contains over an hour of newly-shot video footage. The boys show you how each of the game segments work and help to set up scams and misdirected intended victims. Special guest stars include Debbie Harry and Steven Banks. A future issue of "Mofo Knows" will take you behind the scenes of the game's development.

APRIL 1st takes on a whole new meaning this year when Penn & Teller's *Smoke and Mirrors*, the boys' first video game is released. P & T's S & M (those abbreviations are just a coincidence. Really.) debuts April Fool's Day on the Sega CD system and is the culmination of a year long collaboration with game publisher Absolute Entertainment (you heard it here first in a previous issue of *Mofo Knows*).

The jam-packed 2 CD set contains six independent segments, which include two interactive magic tricks, two practical jokes, a bus simulator, and an adventure game starring P&T themselves.

Here's what you get:

☞ **Mofo the Psychic Gorilla** this newsletter's eponymous mind-reading simian will have your audience gaping in awe when he guesses which card your friend selected.

☞ **Buzz Bombers** two-player action you'll want to play again and again, cause you'll never lose! Why? Because you can cheat!

☞ **Sun-Scorcher** an exciting outer-space shoot-em-up that features Thermo-Graphic™, the revolutionary image technology that makes your TV screen dangerous to touch!

☞ **Smoke & Mirrors** when a pair of flashy Las Vegas magicians named Stinkbomb & Rot claim that magic really exists, it's up to our boys to expose the hoax once and for all. Control P&T and their stunt doubles as they make their way from New York to Las Vegas, meeting a wild assortment of live action characters.

## SHUTTLE BUTTIN'

by Penn

SINCE we had an extra day at NASA because of the launch being pushed back a day, we got a cool VIP tour of NASA today. Mr. Bob Merless showed the step brother of a Congressman, his wife, Debbie and me around. We had to get up a little early because they wanted to get us to the pad before they closed it down (once they start fueling up, you can't get near it). We still had to swear we didn't have matches on us. It looked amazing. There it was on the pad and there we were, really close. If all goes well, we'll see it go up tonight. They no longer paint the fuel tank to save paint, time and weight so the shuttle is starting to look a little punk. I like that. We got into the VAB, which I've always wanted to do. It's big, and we, of course, saw the crawler and launch control. Launch control is so old fashion (1963) and that's wacky, but it still gets them up there. It was a great tour.

Then we met up with Tim and his family (they couldn't get on the super VIP tour because they aren't on TV and don't have a congressman for a step-brother) and had lunch (NASA is not on a health food kick), and then we saw "The Dream is Alive" - Oh Sally, Sally Sally--Pinky, Ox, Sally. It brought tears to my eyes, but not like tonight. Boom.

Well, we saw the shuttle go boom. It was a perfect night launch. My first night launch. It was perfectly clear, you felt like you could see them all the way into space. It's dark and when that puppy goes, it becomes almost daylight. It hurts your eyes to look at the rocket. It's a gorgeous thing. Tim actually had time to say, "Hmmm, you'd think there would be some noise." The noise may be the best part. It shakes the ground, it rocks your guts, it makes your coat flap in the breeze. Just the sound is enough and the visual beauty is astounding. And it was right on time (well 24 hours late, big deal) and it's over so quick. It's just a perfect experience.

We went back to the hotel and ate soup with some Russian cosmonauts. Tim was talking about space psychosis that the guys on Mir get. They turn off the radios and won't talk to earth. It was killing me. Everyone should see a launch.



## Cerritos Pre-Show

We had to do the fire juggling for the Fire Marshall in Cerritos, California I did it, dropped the torches, like I'm supposed to, and one of the torches rolled into the curtain. Wiley ran on stage and kicked it out of the way. The Fire Marshall said to Burt, "That's the first time that's ever happened, isn't it?" and gave us the permit. Wow. Sometimes people are really cool and reasonable.

-- Penn



## HIGH HONORS

Penn & Teller are "Visiting Scholars" at MIT. It's the highest honor they give (they don't give honorary doctorates). It's higher than Winston Churchill got (he got "Visiting Lecturer")

It means they can use the pool.



## TELLER TELLS HER OFF!

Jan. 5, 1995

Mrs. Lee Lipman  
Armonk, NY

I recently attended a performance of Penn & Teller at the Stamford Palace Theatre. I was appalled at the remarks made by Penn regarding the rabbit used in their act. They were totally inappropriate and insensitive and should be deleted from an otherwise enjoyable show which was attended by many children. This particular part of the trick should be omitted from the show, as it was violent, bloody, and very offensive. It only sets an example that cruelty, insensitivity, and disregard for animals is acceptable behavior.

Lee Lipman

January 17, 1995

Editor  
Stamford Advocate  
75 Tresser Blvd.  
Stamford CT. 06901

To the Editor:

Mrs. Lee Lipman wrote to your newspaper to complain about the way my partner Penn jokes about the fate of the rabbit that appears in our show.

No animals are hurt or made even slightly uncomfortable during the course of our show. WE DO TRICKS. That's why people call us magicians and laugh at the horrid-looking things we do. This is exactly the point Penn makes in the show: the American public is the best-educated, most savvy audience in the history of the world--it is insulting that certain people think the rest of the public is so stupid that it needs to be protected from *FICTION* by censorship, disclaimers and warnings.

Obviously, many of the things Penn & Teller do look scary and wicked. That's part of the function of art: to show you things that cannot or must not be done in real life--unrealities that make you laugh, think, or shiver.

It does worry me, though, that Mrs. Lipman frets over make-believe danger to an animal, and yet has no problem with apparent danger to PEOPLE. She evidently found it "enjoyable" to watch Penn juggle sharp glass with his bare hands; to see me swallow a hundred steel sewing needles; to contemplate us catching bullets in our teeth. Yet when we "vanish" a rodent she suddenly becomes uneasy. Ah the humane 1990's!

To be on the safe side, I recommend Mrs. Lipman stay away from theatre altogether; she's likely to encounter other shows that trouble her. "Arsenic and Old Lace" offers unhealthy cocktail recipes. "Cinderella" presents unrealistic strategies for dealing with sibling rivalry. "Opdipus the King" features poor family planning and worse eye care. Plays are not blueprints for living. If instruction in etiquette is what Mrs. Lipman wants in a show, I recommend she stick with Barney.

Penn and I postulate a little more brain-power in our audience. And I'm pleased to report that the grown-ups and kids who have come and laughed for the last twenty years confirm our belief that intelligent families relish the occasional glimse of Hell.

Respectfully,

Teller

## DINING BY CHANCE

by Mojo  
and Penn

PENN realized that we spent way too much time deciding between Hamada (okay Japanese) and California Pizza Kitchen (snack food, but a clean place). Last night we went to the Garlic Cafe. It was a small deviation but we liked it. If we liked a little, we'll love alot.

Serial dining wouldn't work here. Peppermill is great, but we eat there more often than were eating at Hojo's. I had ideas about a log scale, or something else a little harder to get a feel for.

There are fifty columns of alphabetical listings of places we can dine. We threw out the three of clubs (that rules Penn's life enough) and the Jack of Hearts (the Desert Inn has heart, but Vegas as a whole...). Here in Vegas we are Dining by Chance. It is a game rigged in the house's favor (this "is" Vegas), and if the joint is closed etc. we go to the Peppermill. Tonight, a Mexican Place.

Lindo Michoacan - 2-6-95- Mojo, Penn, LL, Joe Paradiso.

This was the maiden voyage of "Dining by Chance," the only way to eat in Vegas. LL prepared the phone book listings. Mojo offered me a choice of cards and I picked the 5 of clubs. The first restaurant in the 5 of clubs column was Lindo Michoacan. LL called to make sure they were open and we wouldn't need reservations. Man, what a great first time out on this great adventure, a little Mexican place in a strip mall. You would neverthink of going here -- unless you were really living Vegas life. There was live music and GREAT food. The music was one Mexican guy with a guitar, a sequencer, a keyboard, a pedal board and a mic. He stood up and played lots of songs in Spanish and then went into the coolest, slow, sincere version of "Bad Moon on the Rise." It was just the perfect volume. You could listen and you can talk over it. The salsa and chips were great and, although I had to look hard for low fat, I found a great skewer shrimp in orange/chili sauce. It was great!

Good service, good food, great atmosphere, great music and we would have never found it without DBC!

MN > Serial Diners > Dining By Chance -- man, social interaction is great.

To everyone who visits us in Vegas, when we ask you where you what to eat, just say "DBC!" Let the cards decide!

