



VARIETY

...”One of the most exciting talents I have seen in Years.
Not just a magician, but a World Class Entertainer”...

Canadian Magician of the Year



DIMMARE™

Bio...

JAMES DIMMARE'S approach to Magic is not unlike his approach to life: totally involved, all consuming, and dedicated to perfection. Despite the ever-changing nature of popular entertainment, he has remained focused on achieving what some might consider impossible. Entertainment that stands the test of time!

That such a sophisticated and mature outlook comes from a young man who spent his childhood in Western Canada might seem surprising, but James Dimmare is a master of surprises. His devotion to magic was the result of the usual influences: television and such; but who could have predicted that he would be performing in nightclubs while underage (14 years old!) and then have his own full-evening show at age 16! In light of the considerable critical and popular success of this show James could have toured Canada for years... instead he decided to leave the relative comfort and isolation of Canada for... Hollywood!

Realizing that the key to television and international success is based on personality, James Dimmare started on creating an intimate magical experience... the ultimate nightclub/cabaret act. Incredible illusions with doves and parakeets, but with a significant difference... all designed around a strong persona, a brilliantly original style, and incorporating music that has inspired audiences and artists alike! The results were extraordinary; James had captured the feel and flavor of Fred Astaire without losing himself in the process. His contributions to the craft resulted in an international reputation and included such top honors as Stage Magician of the Year; presented by Hollywood's famed Magic Castle, several European trophies, and in Las Vegas: the only two time recipient of the Siegfried and Roy "Lion Head" award!

"The Act" as James has sometimes called it, has taken him literally around the world. TV, theaters, and repeated tours of Europe; including a command performance for Prince Rainier of Monaco, are but a few of the results of James Dimmare's tireless efforts. His time spent in Europe, working with the top names in Society as well as entertainment, has given him a virtual "Masters Degree in Show Biz". When you add the soul of an artist to the talents of an entertainer, you create a potent theatrical force... James Dimmare!

James Dimmare was now ready to re-examine, re-vive, and re-create his long held dream: a theatrical project incorporating the best elements of his now classic "dove act" and adding jazz, pop, and swing elements that broaden it's appeal. James offered this, " It's more than "Grand Illusion", it's dance, dreams with humor and excitement... a theatrical event that challenges the audiences and critics to see that what worked for Sinatra or Buddy Rich... remaining true to yourself, works equally well for Magic".

In a variety of settings: Las Vegas, Jazz Clubs, and Concert Halls, James has proven that his entertainment is truly timeless. He has created a vehicle that allows for infinite flexibility. The nature of the show allows him to expand or contract both the length and size of the program while maintaining a moving experience! Whether it's a large-scale performance with orchestra (like the Cincinnati Pops) or an Off- Broadway theatre, James applies his years of onstage experiences to create a memorable and powerful event!

James Dimmare sees the bigger picture. Drawing on classic, iconic images from Fashion, Theatre, and Film... he was recently asked by the prestigious Wilhelmina Modeling Agency (in association with a London Vogue Photographer) to appear in an extensive series of photographs that will be used in an exclusive worldwide fashion campaign. Clearly, these trendsetters from the world of fashion and advertising recognize a very special quality in James Dimmare... the ability to captivate an audience!



"My Father would have loved you" - Nancy Sinatra



"So Cool" - David Copperfield



"You are now my Favorite" - Prince Rainier III of Monaco



"You got that Boom Boom Boom...& Swagger" - Fergie (Singer)



"You're still the best" - Neil Patrick Harris (actor)



"Simply Marvelous" - Tippy Hedren (actress The Birds)



"Really, Really Amazing" - Josh Duhamel (actor)

"Your talent is an inspiration to all" - Siegfried & Roy



DIMMARE™

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TELEVISION

LAS VEGAS, NBC TV USA. Magic Guest.
WORLDS GREATSEST MAGIC, NBC, USA.
Magic & Beyond, 60 countries.
Le Grande Artiste du Cabaret, Paris, France
Noite Magica, Oporto, Portugal.
Chan-Ta-Tachan, Tele Madrid TV, Spain.
Flitter Abend, Siegen, Germany
Tele Mike, Tele 5, Milan, Italy.
Vancouver Show, CKJU. 4 appearances.
Magic Palace, USA.
FISM Magic Show, NHK TV, Japan.

Best of Magic, Thames TV, London, England.
Magics Greatest Illusions, Pax. USA
SECRETS, BBC, London, England.
Attention Magie, TV 3, Paris, France
Aixo es Massa, TV 3, Barcelona, Spain. Two appearances
World Magic Awards, FOX, USA.
The Alan Thicke Show, BCTV, Canada. Two appearances.
Porque Hoy es Sabado, Santiago, Chile.
Dick Van Dyke Comedy & Magic Hour, National syndication, USA
World Super Magic Show, Fuji TV, Japan.
Magic Olympics Las Vegas, Fuji TV, Japan

Woman in Boxes, Showtime, Documentary Film



planet hollywood™
RESORT & CASINO • LAS VEGAS



AZAMARA
CLUB CRUISES™



...that's Entertainment!™



STAGE

MARTINI'S & MAGIC® LAS VEGAS, Tour of the USA, Magic Castle, Hollywood

Illusionarium, NCL "Grand Master of Magic" Starring Act

Flamingo Hilton, Las Vegas. Full show. Headliner

ILLUSIONISTS, Sydney Opera House, Marina Bay Sands Singapore. Starring Act

Zirkus Nemo, Denmark Tour 2013. Special Guest Star

Tiki Oasis, "The Magic of Tiki" San Diego, CA. USA, Headliner

Mondo Tiki Lounge III, Las Vegas, NV. Guest Act

Magic, Mutts and More. Las Vegas, NV. Featured Performer

Las Vegas Magic Tour, Bogota, Columbia. Guest Star

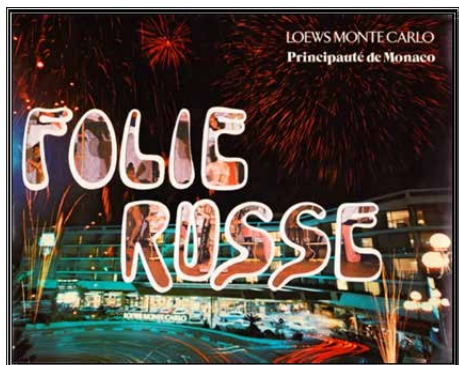
Las Vegas Magic, Shinagawa Prince Hotel, Tokyo Japan. Full Show..Headliner

Royal Theater on Dury Lane, London. Guest Star

World Festival of Magic. Australian and New Zealand Tour. Guest Star

WORLDS GREATEST MAGIC SHOW, Sahara Hotel, Las Vegas

All You Can Dance, Aladdin Hotel, Las Vegas (Featured)



LONDON
PALLADIUM



Flamingo
LAS VEGAS



LONDON PALLADIUM, London, England. (Headliner)
CAESARS MAGICAL EMPIRE, Las Vegas. (Complete show. Extended run)
Casino Magic, Biloxi, MS. (Headliner. Show built around his Magic)
WINTERGARTEN, Berlin, Germany. (Headliner)
GEORGE PALAST, Hanover Germany.
SCALA MELIA CASTILLA, Madrid, Spain, Star billing, (Show built around his Magic), 1990, '91, '92.
SCALA BARCELONA, Barcelona, Spain, Star attraction, (Show built around his Magic).

WIZARDZ Dinner Theater, Universal Studios, Hollywood, CA. (Headliner)
TIGER PALAST, Frankfurt, Germany.(Headliner)
MOULIN ROUGE, Paris, France.
LOEWS MONTE CARLO, Monte Carlo, Monaco
FISM, WORLD CONGRESS OF MAGIC, Star Attraction, Den Haag, Holland
AMERICANA HOTEL AND CASINO, Aruba.
AMERICANA HOTEL, Playboy Club, Great Gorge, NJ.
LUCAYAN BEACH, Resort and Casino, Freeport, Bahamas.
CAESARS, Lake Tahoe, *Masters of Magic* show.
SHOWBOAT HOTEL AND CASINO, Atlantic City, NJ.
THE MAGIC CASTLE, Hollywood, CA.(Headliner) 1983-2018



AWARDS

***CANADADIAN MAGICIAN of the YEAR- 2007 / 2008**

ENTERTAINER OF THE YEAR -2004 International Magicians Society

GOLD STAR Award: The “Highest Honor” from The Magic Circle of London’s “Inner Magic Circle”

SIEGRIED AND ROY GOLDEN LION HEAD AWARD, Las Vegas, NV. 1997

STAGE MAGICIAN OF THE YEAR, TWICE 1988-2002 Academy of Magical Arts, Hollywood, CA.

SIEGRIED AND ROY LION HEAD AWARD, Las Vegas, NV. 1987

OUTSTANDING SHOWMANSHIP AND PRESENTATION AWARD, Pacific Coast Association of Magicians.

FIRST PLACE STAGE AWARD, Pacific Coast Association of Magicians.

MAGIC OLYMPICS, Las Vegas, NV.

APPRECIATION AWARD, from Prince Rainier, Monaco.



CONSULTING

LAS VEGAS, NBC TV USA.

The Alan Thicke Show, BCTV, Canada.

Webster, Magic episode, NBC.

My Brother Jack, Feature film

World Magic Awards FOX.

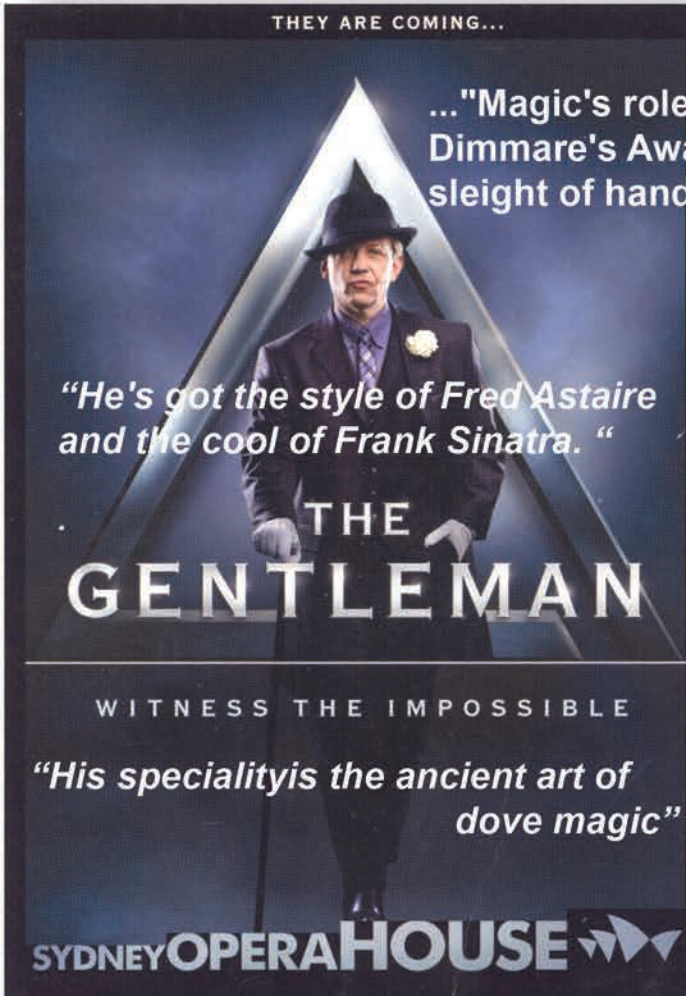
Donny and Marie Christmas Show, Majestic Theatre. Times Square. NY., NY



...”for example the classic magic game that Dimmare performed was perfect”...

- Portal Indonesia Kreati

THEY ARE COMING...



...”Magic’s role as entertainment reigns with Dimmare’s Award winning style and sophisticated sleight of hand, buoyed by the beats of Gershwin”...

“He’s got the style of Fred Astaire and the cool of Frank Sinatra.”

THE GENTLEMAN

WITNESS THE IMPOSSIBLE

“His speciality is the ancient art of dove magic”

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

“He’s referred to as Canada’s master manipulator and by the age of 16 was performing all over North America. His irrepressible style and enchanting magic captures the hearts and imaginations of audiences around the world”



THE GRAND ILLUSIONIST

THE ILLUSIONISTS

WITNESS THE IMPOSSIBLE

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

APN

- The Epoch Times

Tim Lawson, Simon Painter and BASE Entertainment present

THE ILLUSIONISTS

WITNESS THE IMPOSSIBLE

“and his solo shows are a beauty to behold.”



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THEATER, MARINA BAY SANDS



“Expect nothing less than world class entertainment with The Gentleman.”

-Sydney Opera House

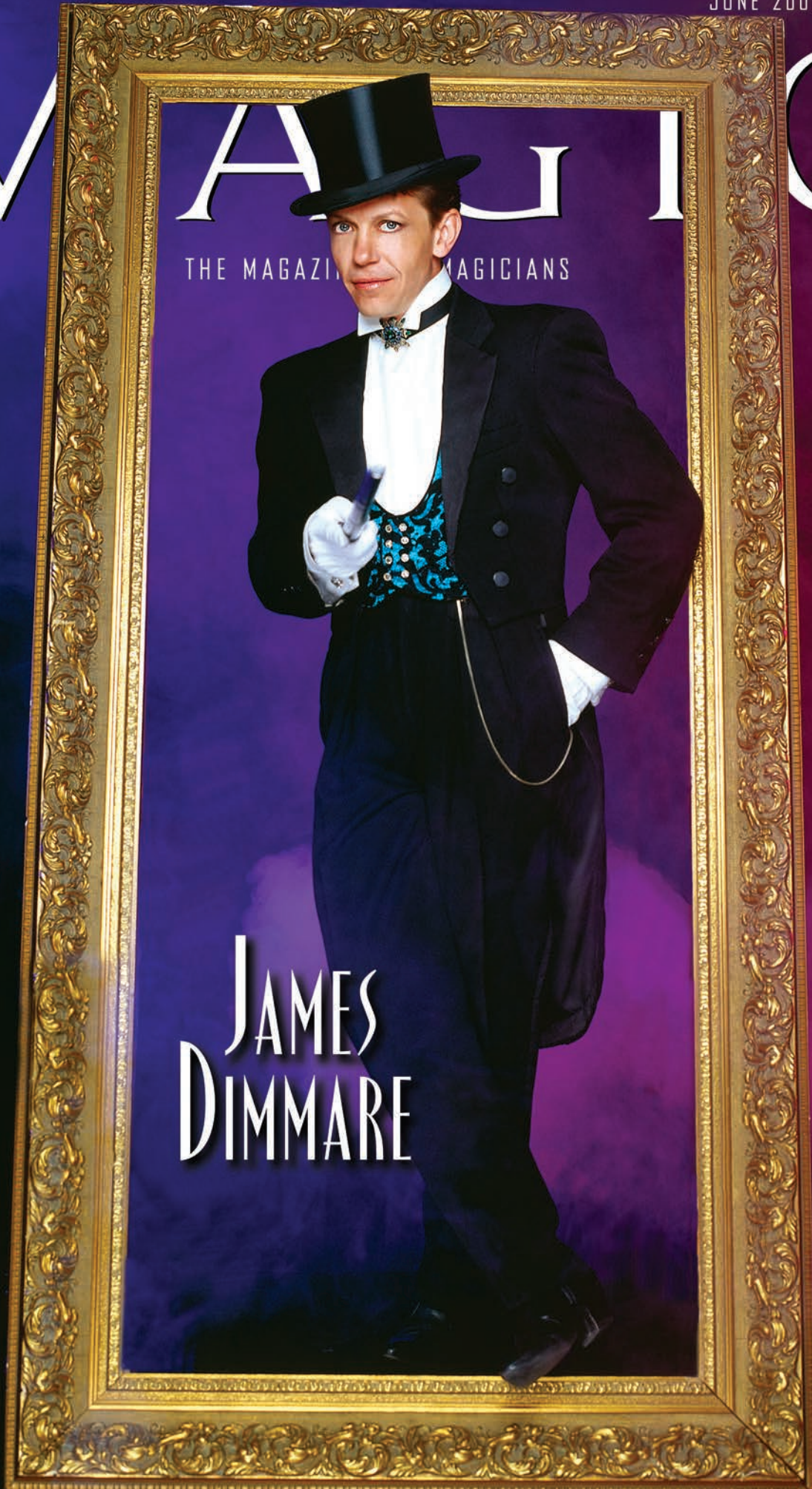
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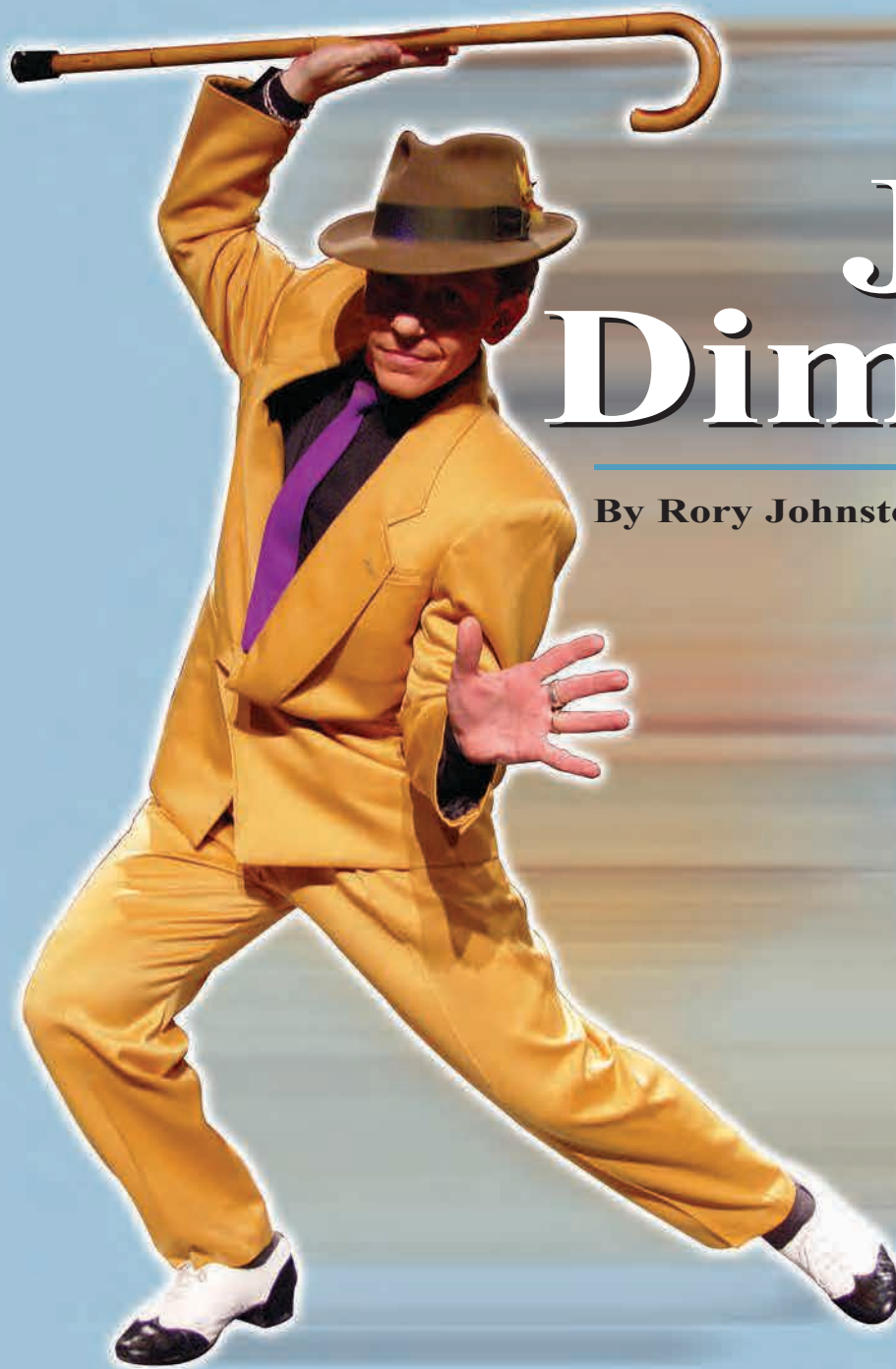
JUNE 2004 U.S. \$5

MAGIC

THE MAGAZINE FOR MAGICIANS



JAMES
DIMMARE



James Dimmare

By Rory Johnston

Let's do a bit of word association. Austin Powers. Tiki Lounge. Frank Sinatra. Doug Henning. Illusions. Rock and roll.

Odds are, none of those images brought the name James Dimmare to mind. The images more commonly associated with Dimmare are, most likely, doves and Fred Astaire. His acclaimed bird act is known throughout the magic world as one of the best in the business, but there are many more facets to this versatile performer than most people realize.

Born in 1960, James grew up in Canada, the son of a postal worker. His relationship with his mother was practically nonexistent because she was often institutionalized with clinical depression. On the occasions she was at home, she spent most of her time in bed with bouts of severe obsessive compulsive disorder. Young James was somewhat of a baseball prodigy, batting a thousand and able to play any position. Unfortunately, he was struck down with a kidney disease at age eight and was hospitalized for about a year. When he returned, his baseball skills had weakened considerably, so he took an interest in playing the guitar and the martial arts. Those interests, however, were eclipsed when his dad showed him a few of magic tricks learned from a local magician. James begged to know how they were done, but his father wouldn't tell.

"He'd borrow a coin, mark it, hold it under a cloth, over a glass of water, hold a bowl underneath the table," James explained. "The person would drop the coin and hear it clink into the glass, then hear it go

through the table and my dad would catch it in the bowl. Then he would hang a thread from the ceiling with a button attached to the end. He'd light the thread with a lighter and the button would stay suspended. He would clap his hands underneath and the button would fall." Scouring his local library, James discovered some of the secrets in a book about Houdini. Now he was hooked!

His first shows were done around age 13, when another boy suggested they team up to perform an act. Unfortunately, egos got in the way and they found that working together was not in the cards. In fact, a challenge was proposed.

"There was a talent contest coming up, so I said, 'Okay, let's see who's better.' We both went to the preliminary audition, then I got a call — 'We've got good news and bad news. The bad news is there's not going to be a magic category. The good news is, you were the only one who was any good. So, if you'll perform at the intermission, we'll just give you the trophy.'"

Doug Henning was the big name in magic in those days, so James adopted the same look: overalls with stars, tennis shoes, little Chinese jackets, and long hair. He spent almost all his time practicing. "I once heard Goshman say, 'No matter where you are, carry a coin or ball in your pocket. Palm it, move it around, get used to it, throw it from hand to hand. On the bus. Anywhere.' That's what I did. Every chance I got, I did magic."

Although now dry for 34 years, James' father, Thomas Dimmare was, at the time, an alcoholic, so James was a very independent kid.

"I was lucky, dad was a happy alcoholic, so I was never an abused child. He'd get drunk and fall asleep. I'd lift a twenty, hitchhike or hop a bus to the magic shop, and buy a trick. I wasn't greedy — twenty a week. I figured I earned it."

By the time he was 14, James was performing in strip clubs.

"I grew up in that environment because it was the only place with a spotlight and a stage. It was a good place to be bad. I didn't care if I got paid. My dad never had to worry about me getting drunk, doing drugs, going out. I was too busy. I'd come home at three or four in the morning, get a couple hours of sleep, and go to school. To me, school was all about using the shop classes — metal, wood, and plastic — to build magic. I whizzed through everything else. I'd go straight home, take a bus or hitchhike to the strip club, and do three different shows."

At age 16 James presented a full illusion show at the Pacific National Exhibition, six shows a day. He was, of course, dying to meet his idol, Doug Henning, and finally, when the famous illusionist performed in Vancouver, he seized his opportunity.

"I figured, if I'm a superstar, where would I stay? Where would I eat? So I made a list of all the hotels and restaurants, then wrote 52 copies of the same letter and sent them to all those places. I got a phone call from his secretary. 'If you're coming to the show, we'd like to meet you. Stay in your seat, we'll come and get you afterwards. And by the way, there'll be two comp tickets waiting for you.' So when I met Doug, he said, 'Boy, you really wanted to meet me. How many letters did you send?' I said, 'Fifty-two.' He said, 'I got 40 of them.'"

Although he'd always had a bird or two in the show, in 1979 James decided to develop a full bird act. One day he saw a set of tails in an antique shop and tried them on. They fit him, both physically and emotionally.

After taking some promo shots he realized that his long hair didn't fit the image, so he cut it. Influenced by Johnny Thompson, he started out featuring comedy, but soon dropped it in favor of a more staid character. Soon the 19-year-old had stopped doing illusions altogether and was concentrating strictly on developing his bird act. From the beginning, he featured classical Gershwin music and the timeless look of top hat and tails. By the end of the year he was featured at the Cave, a nightclub in Vancouver, opening for shows such as *Elvis, Elvis, Elvis*; Bachman Turner Overdrive; and Guess Who.

In the early 1980s, James visited Southern California to attend a magic convention, then returned the following year to perform, winning first place in a stage magic contest, along with a special award for outstanding showmanship and presentation. Coming to the conclusion that... "*Californy was the place he oughta be, he packed up his stuff and moved to Beverly... Hills, that is.*" Well, close, anyway. His apartment was across the street from the Magic Castle, where he spent hours pouring through the books in the library by day and working, quite frequently, by night. By the mid '80s, his star was quickly rising with performances at Magic Island, the *It's Magic!* show, the Improvisation, the Body Shop (returning to his strip club roots), a three-month stint in Aruba, and a four-month contract at the Playboy Resort in Great Gorge, New Jersey. It was also during this period that he met his first



In 1976, the year Dimmare was performing à la Henning was the same year young James had the opportunity to meet Doug.



Who says a long-haired teenage magician can't work carnivals, Playboy resorts, and then open for Bachman Turner Overdrive concerts?

wife. Just before entering a “Magic Entertainer of the Year” competition, his props were stolen. Shimada, hearing of the problem, offered to lend the young magician his doves. Coincidentally, Shimada was the first magician to truly impress 13-year-old James, who had seen him on television. In fact, it was Shimada’s professionalism that he held as his own personal goal. It was through this turn of events that James met Shimada’s daughter, Lisa, who became his partner, both on stage and off. Oh, yeah, James not only won the girl, he won the competition.

Dimmare is often compared to the late great Fred Astaire. It’s quite a compliment, but in the early days he didn’t see it that way.

“The image was thrust upon me unwillingly. Being short in stature and having natural grace, I started getting compared to him instead of other magicians. I’m grate-

ful for that now, but at the time it upset me not to be compared to Cardini, Channing Pollock, or Shimada. I figured must be doing something wrong. Channing told me, ‘If you become a Fred Astaire impersonator, you’ll never be you. It’s nice that you remind people of him, but the minute you try to imitate him, you’ve lost yourself.’ So I fought the image. Eventually, though, I came to terms with it. Then I met a man, Jim Huntley, who danced in three of Astaire’s television specials. His wife said, ‘I danced with Fred, I ate dinner with Fred, and your body language and gestures are pure Astaire. You can’t get away from it, don’t even try.’ When I let go and went with it, everything came together. In Spain, I did a whole Broadway musical number as Fred, so I’m comfortable with it now. Besides, I guess getting compared to a movie

star is a little better than getting compared to a magician. So I can’t complain.”

In 1986 the Dimmares went to the Bahamas for an 18-month contract at a beach resort and casino. One of the traits James has most in common with Astaire is he is a perfectionist. Consequently, he found much of the experience extremely frustrating, although it did bring some changes for the good.

“I didn’t feel I was getting better. I was depressed that every night the lighting and sound guy was different. It was the Bahamas — ‘Ain’t no problem, mon, my brother, he do the act tonight.’ I asked, ‘Does he know it?’ He answered, ‘No mon, but he pick it up, no problem.’ So half the time I’d be doing the act in the dark or with no music. I’d walk off stage frustrated. I hit the walls a lot with my fists. I couldn’t get

across to the people that they weren't giving me a fair chance. Sometimes, even on stage, it was clear that I was upset.

"Finally, my wife said, 'You'll never know who's out there. You've got to pretend it's not happening. The audience isn't picking up on the problems, they're enjoying the show. Don't let them know there's something wrong.' I started to change my attitude. I stopped getting mad on stage. I stopped hitting walls, because one night it was cement. I never hit a person. I was just frustrated and wanted everything to be perfect. Luckily, people have said, 'Your bad show is better than most performer's good show. Get over it!' So I did."

So does that mean James is now stress free? Hardly.

"I would say, honestly, some people perceive that perhaps I'm stressful. If something happens, I like to get it out of my system, deal with it, and then I don't have to re-live it. I can still be upset about it, but it won't eat away at me. If you always assume something could go wrong on stage or in a contract or deal, that somebody's gonna screw you, then you're prepared for it. I always assume worst-case scenario. That way I'm not disappointed. Life is disappointing enough."

James sites good preparation as the best stress reliever. "I get to shows early so I

know everything is fine. Really early. I'm anal. If I have to work at 6 p.m., I want to be there at 8 or 9 a.m. Get it all out, make sure nothing's broken from the plane flight, make sure the birds are acclimated, get everything ready to go. I don't like rushing. If you rush setting up, then you rush on stage. Before the curtain rises I take a couple of deep breaths. I focus all my energy to my hands. I tell myself the audience is gonna see real magic."

After they left the island, James and Lisa were invited to perform at the IBM Convention. The reaction from the crowd showed what a change of attitude, meticulous preparation, and three months of continuous performing could do. "We got three or four curtain calls, a standing ovation from a half-magicians, half-laymen audience. At that point I realized that somehow, in the Bahamas, I got good. It was worth all that bull, pain, and anxiety. It was a huge turning point."

In 1988, James took his first trip to Europe. It had been suggested by Ger Copper that he compete at FISM, but James thought that since Lance Burton had won the previous competition the politics would not be in his favor. Turning down the invitation to compete, Dimmare was hired to work the show instead. "I got paid beaucoup bucks and all expenses. That's the year Johnny Ace

Palmer won, but I got a lot of the work, due to the many European agents that attended. So it was like winning."

One of the resulting bookings was at the prestigious Lowe's Hotel in Monte Carlo in the *Follie Russe*. James spent six months there, filling in the rest of the year with television appearances in Japan, Chili, France, and Italy. In 1987, he won the Siegfried & Roy Golden Lion Head Award and in '89 was awarded "Stage Magician of the Year" by the Academy of Magical Arts. Within the next 15 years he would be awarded each one of them a second time.

In the '90s, James was featured at the Scala in Barcelona for a year, then the Tiger Palace in Frankfurt, Germany. Working solely as a bird act, he had left the world of grand illusion far behind, but fate was about to take another turn.

"I was in Spain, at the Scala, having a meeting with the owners and they mentioned a Floating Piano someone had sold to them. This was an old-school prop, sewer pipe through the curtain rig with a huge motor. They were planning on putting it into the show and, on top of that, using a version of *Rhapsody in Blue*. They wanted to know if I would help them. I said, 'No!' My wife kicked me under the table. Hard. 'Okay, yeah, maybe I can.' After the meeting I asked her, 'What'd you do that for?' She



Winning the Siegfried & Roy Gold Lion Head Award in Las Vegas in 1987. In the early 1980s [top right], with two of the world's best dove workers, Shimada and Channing Pollock. Floating a piano at the Scala in Barcelona.

said, 'Do you want some other dancer in the show doing bad magic to your music?'

"So one thing led to another. The piano became a feature of the show, and the owners proposed building an entire show for me. We negotiated for months and finally the deal was done. Then I panicked. What do I do now? For three hours, I sweated because I got everything I wanted. They were gonna buy the props and let me do whatever I wanted to do, cart-blanche. I was the most frightened I've ever been in my life."

The show was a hit and ran for three years. Even without the bird act.

"I try not to combine the two. I feel that I have enough strong material and, fortunately, don't need the bird act in the full-evening show. It's nice to get away and get a fresh approach. Being an illusionist made me a better manipulator, and close-up worker and being a manipulator made me a better illusionist because you have different perspectives. Illusions, you can set them the night before; manip act, you have to get set just before the show. Performing illusions gave me an understanding of audience, angles, attitudes, and aptitudes. I understood how to approach the manipulation act on a larger scale."

When asked more about the techniques used to play a larger stage, James explains, "I speed up on areas that aren't necessary to play big, and I slow down the movements that are, drawing more focus to

them. It doesn't matter if the people in the back can't see anything, the first five or six rows let them know what's going on. So you light a cigarette, take your time and make sure they see the match flair. That follows with a puff of smoke. They might not be able to see the cigarette, but they follow what's going on. You've got to understand what reads from a distance. If your facial expression isn't going to read, then your body language better. So, if at the end of the Dove on Cane they're not applauding, I make the pose bigger, more grandiose. Make my body vibrate more, more energetic. They'll applaud for the pose and the end of the music. For the style, presence, and execution."

Following that very successful run at Scala, James returned to the Tiger Palace, then did a stint at the Wintergarten in Berlin. But after so much time in Europe he longed to get back to the United States. In 1994, just about the time he and his wife went separate ways, he left Europe.

Eager to break away from his reputation as simply a bird act, he presented a rock-and-roll magic show in Biloxi, Mississippi. He took it to Caesars Magical Empire, a brand new magic attraction that opened in Las Vegas in 1996. His initial contract was short, but it was extended several times.

"They wanted to keep me, but only if I completely changed everything. So I brought back the whole Fred Astaire style

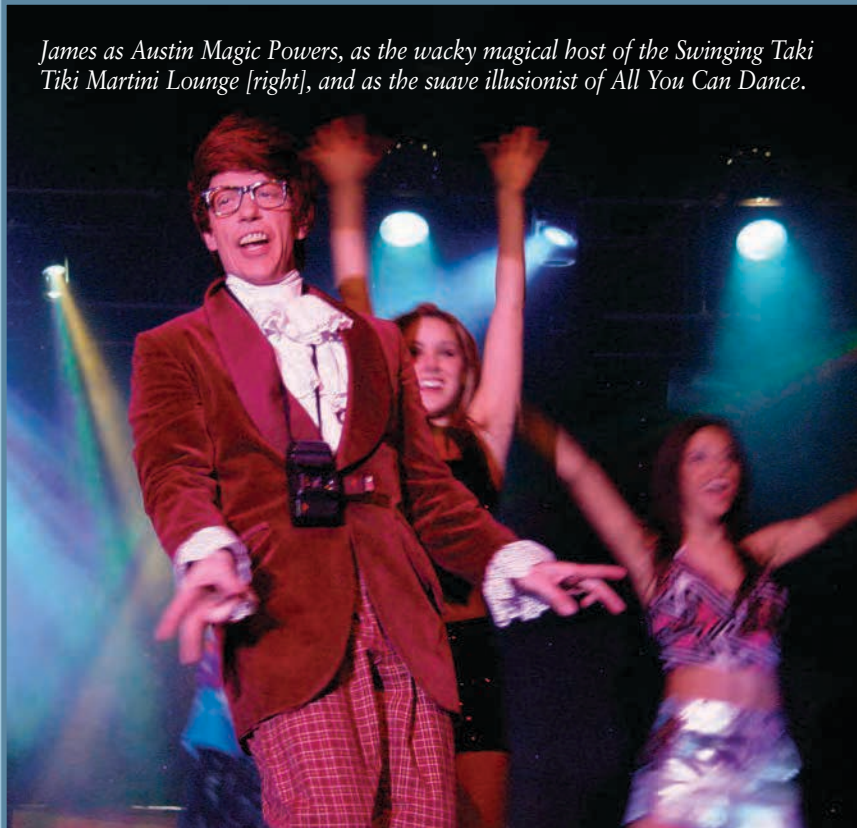
set. I was able to be versatile and didn't get stuck in a rut."

One of Dimmare's favorite shows took place at the London Palladium. The occasion was the MacMillan's International Magic Convention in 1996. A number of top magic acts from around the world had already performed when James was introduced. Then everything went askew.

"It was a sold-out audience of both magicians and laymen. I judge the audience by the double-dove production, and by the time I got to it I felt I was dead. Done. Cooked. They were not reacting. So I guess the universe had decided 'Let's wake these people up' or 'Let's see how good you are,' one or the other. All of a sudden out of the corner of my eye I see the trolley with the birds rolling down the 17-degree rake toward the orchestra pit. My assistant had accidentally moved it off the blocks. I race after it, like I'm sliding into home plate, grab it, save it. The music stops. We had just had the floods and earthquakes in Los Angeles, so as I moved it back I said, 'Okay birds, you're not in California any more.' It got a laugh. And then I said, 'Well, here's something Channing Pollock or Michael Crawford has never done — stopped the show at the London Palladium. And I thank you.' Boom! I had them back. I did a little more stand-up to make sure everything was okay, then said, 'I guess you're wondering what that's for.' I picked up the Shrinking Cage. I got an

PHOTOS: KARI HENDLER

James as Austin Magic Powers, as the wacky magical host of the Swinging Tiki Tiki Martini Lounge [right], and as the suave illusionist of All You Can Dance.





Dimmare doing what he does best, the elegant Fred Astaire of Magic act, this time assisted by wife, Monique, during his extended run in the World's Greatest Magic Show.



ovation that I wouldn't have if it hadn't happened, so sometimes the hand of fate steps in and saves the day."

Another new magical dinner theater, Wizardz, had opened at Universal Studios in Los Angeles. James loved the casual atmosphere of the family-theme venue and the friendly, non-magician audience felt completely different than the Magic Castle.

"Wizardz was sort of the Chuck E. Cheese of magic. Both kids and adults were there to see magic, but didn't care who they saw. It was a package deal with dinner, a real party atmosphere, and you could take a little bit of a risk. Nobody was going to be disappointed. As a professional I wasn't going to be *bad* bad, but I could go out and take risks. I could experiment. It allowed me to catch up on my speaking voice as an illusionist after doing a silent manipulation act for 15 years. I broke in routines, developed rhythm and timing." James worked Wizardz on a regular basis until it closed in November of 2002.

Although the dove act was still going strong and was featured on *The World's Greatest Magic V* on NBC, James was ready to break out with something new once again. He made an unprecedented deal with the Magic Castle to appear in the Palace of Mystery as the sole performer for a two-week run. Wanting to do something new

and different, he turned the room into the "Swinging Tiki Tiki Martini Lounge."

A collector of Tiki mugs and other Polynesian paraphernalia, James loves the feel that being surrounded by those things brings.

"Basically, the Tiki Tiki Martini Lounge show encompassed everything of pop culture that I like. I'm drawn to the late 1930s, '40s, '50s, and early '60s. I believe we collect stuff or surround ourselves with stuff we feel comfortable with, which must be from a past life. I love fedoras. I smoke cigars . . . I love the Rat Pack. I love tuxedos and dressing up. We transformed the showroom, giving it a completely different feel. I stayed up all night and built facades around the side stairs to make them look like tiki huts with electric torches. The bar featured a special drink menu. I liked the concept that when people came to the door they got something, so I had girls dressed in sarongs giving out leis."

James also presented his newest character. As he introduced his tribute to "the man who influenced my life in the 1960s," magicians automatically assumed it would be Doug Henning, Channing Pollock, Shimada, or Johnny Thompson. When James reappeared from behind a set of dressing screens, however, he was dressed as Austin Magic Powers. Complete with velvet coat, lace shirt, crooked teeth, and English accent, James presented a mystery date routine as

the film character. Very few people seeing this act and the dove act separately would ever guess that they were both being done by the same performer. The contrast is startling.

James has become known for finding the most private place he can to set up his act. This habit of staying alone in some out of the way corner backstage causes some to think he is anti-social. He doesn't see it that way.

"I just like to keep to myself. I don't hang out, I don't talk to people, and that could be misconstrued as snotty or egotistical. I keep my stuff to myself so if something happens, there's no pointing of fingers. I don't want to get mad at anybody for touching my stuff, for peeking. It's natural curiosity, we're magicians, we thrive on secrets, but we shouldn't need to know everybody else's secrets. I have literally had my act stolen. If someone takes my stuff I will throw them up against a wall! My stuff will not be taken because I work hard for it."

James Dimmare has, without a doubt, worked hard for it. His has been a long, varied, and successful career. He now appears regularly in Las Vegas and is enjoying life more than ever with his wife, Monique. You can catch him performing the bird act in *The World's Greatest Magic Show*, which has just relocated to the Greek Isles Hotel, or as Austin Magic Powers in *All You Can Dance* at the Aladdin. ♦

