

Just Alan interview with Ava
about the forthcoming book
JUST ALAN—*Not Just Magic*.



Ava: What inspired your return to the magic community after so many years away?

Alan: While I may not be on the traditional ‘magic circuit’, I don’t feel I’ve ever left. I am always thinking about magic and always working on new routines or projects. I spend time with magicians, I see shows and I consult. At my age, that has felt like plenty!

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Ava: If people are curious what the core idea of this new book is, what would you say?

Alan: I would say: *read the book!*

Ava: [Laughs] I think we have to offer a little bit more than that. How about: the core idea is that magic is always within us. We *are* the real magic. The task is to figure out how to infuse our unique perspectives into the effects we want to share. This book is a guide on how (and why!) to do that.

Alan: Okay, I like that!

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Ava: Would you say the book is more focused on performance, theory, personal journey, or something else?

Alan: I think we have a good mix of all these elements!

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Ava: Are there any effects or routines in the book that you've kept secret until now?

Alan: The book contains a great many secrets. In some ways I'm giving away the keys to the kingdom, but why not? I've made it this far in life, it feels like it's time to share my ideas and ways of doing things. The reader will get insights into my personal creative process which I feel has the most value. But, yes, they will also get a peek behind the scenes of certain tricks which is the added bonus!

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Ava: Who do you envision benefiting most from this book?

Alan: In some ways I think anyone looking to transcend their technique could use this book. However, I think it will be of most interest to working magicians as well as students of magic and collectors because the book and artwork in it is going to be very beautiful.

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Ava: What excites (or concerns) you about the current state of the magic community?

Alan: As I always said to you kids: Don't worry, wonder!

Ava: And that's such good advice! But if you had to pin something specific down is there anything that comes to mind?

Alan: I see a lot of young people always looking down on their phones. They want high quality videos that give them all the answers and they want responses to things immediately. I think that developing your own style, your own perspective, your own creative voice - it takes time and it takes patience. I think that young people and young magicians need to continue to develop their patience. Sometimes it's good to just be quiet and sit and think with no distractions. Our world is saying that being distracted and doing things all the time is good, but I'm not so sure about that. Answers will come to you while you wait and pace and think. They won't come to you while you're staring at your phone.

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Ava: What do you hope your legacy in magic will be, especially with this new release?

Alan: If I could be remembered for anything, I guess it would be that I helped show both magicians and audiences that magic is about more than any trick. Magic is just a vehicle for self-expression. Watching a magic show can awaken you to the real magic in

your everyday life. I want people to remember that and understand that when they see my magic and read this book

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Ava: How do you define “real magic,” and has that definition changed for you over time?

Alan: I think when I was very young, in my teens and early twenties and just starting out I thought the more bang for the buck, the more magical it was. So, I guess I thought real magic had to be big or feature very difficult sleight of hand. As I’ve gotten older and lived my life with so many varied experiences, I feel I have learned that ‘real magic’ is constant. It is all around us. The work of our lives is to pay attention to that. This is one of the most important lessons I have learned and learn anew each day. And I hope it’s a lesson I have passed on to you and your sister.

Ava: You really have. I think about you saying this to me often and I feel both you and Mom have taught us to be vigilant in noticing the day to day gifts and magic and to be in a constant practice of gratitude.

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Ava: What’s one lesson or insight you wish someone had given you when you were starting out?

Alan: Well, as a young man I was very lost. I wasn’t interested in school (it bored me!) and I didn’t have much direction in my life. I have to say that my Dad actually gave me the exact thing I needed. When I told him that I wanted to leave high school to pursue magic, I was terrified. But he saw me just as I was. He signed me out of school knowing that I wasn’t cut out for a traditional life and he encouraged me to follow my passions and to dedicate myself to doing well at them. That was everything to me. His belief in me and the trust he had that I would figure it out, without a roadmap was his way of showing his love. If young people reading this book don’t have that from a father figure, they can get in touch with me and I will encourage them as my father did for me.

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Ava: Was there a moment during the writing of this book that reminded you why you fell in love with magic?

Alan: Writing a book is very hard, but what stands out to me is not a single moment but the way that reflecting on my life and digging up so many memories and thinking about how to phrase certain ideas - it has helped me see the journey of my life. I can see more clearly the puzzle pieces and how they all fit together. There are many moments that I haven’t thought about in a long time and they have made their way into the book. It was a really wonderful thing to get to revisit so many moments in my life!

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Ava: What's the most difficult or emotional part of sharing this book?

Alan: Once you say it in a book, it's set in stone. Putting out into the world so many details of your life and art and practice, you can only hope that people hear and experience it the way you intended. It's just out there in the world and not much you can do about it. It's much like children. You try to put into them what ideas you can, you raise them with love and good intention but when they leave your home - it's out of your control what happens.

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Ava: What kind of dialogue are you hoping to start with this book—what questions should readers walk away with?

Alan: I hope that readers feel inspired to connect more deeply with their own stories and unique perspectives. I want them to trust that they can find their own magical voice.

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Ava: Will this return to magic involve more than the book—lectures, performances, online content?

Alan: Only time will tell...

Ava: But readers can look forward to many of these elements which will be included in the book, right?

Alan: Absolutely! There will be some online content and special souvenirs!

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Ava: Do you think mystery and secrecy still have the same value in magic today as they once did?

Alan: I certainly hope so! While, yes, I am giving away a lot in this book to hopefully create a teaching tool, but I believe strongly in the idea that secrecy is part of magic. Mystery is an important ingredient in our lives, it's what catalyzes passion. If we already knew the answers to everything, how boring would that be? Magic and the experience of magic can remind us how special mystery is. That's one of the functions of magic, to keep us humble to the great mysteries in our lives!

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Ava: How do you approach creativity in magic after all these years—what fuels it now?

Alan: I'm more patient now than I once was and I trust my creative impulses more. I find creativity and beauty and inspiration all around me, everyday. In terms of how I approach magic, it's much the same and I hope the book will illuminate this in great detail for all those who are curious!

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Ava: And, finally, where can people find out more about the forthcoming book?

Alan: You can register your interest in the book at: <https://jayfortune.co.uk/just-alan/>.

