

Magic show: Now you see it, now you don't

By Kate Seckinger Columbia-Greene Media | Posted: Monday, February 16, 2015 12:30 am

CATSKILL — Sunday afternoon was magical at the Bridge Street Theatre Speakeasy in Catskill – literally.

At 2 p.m., professional magicians Dave Murillo, Steve Dane and Magick Balay performed a magic show for a full house. The show, MC'd by local magician Sean Doolan, was one of many types of performances put on at the local theater throughout the year.

Owners Steven Patterson and John Sowle opened the theater last April, and worked with Doolan to make the show, “Magick Balay and Friends”, happen.

“Doolan has a lot of friends in the magic world, and gave us a call one day,” Patterson said. “He asked if there was a time available when they could all do a show together. Sometimes we find things, and other times they come to us.”

While the theater has had other theatrical and musical performances, Patterson and Sowle said they were extremely excited for the magic show.

“It’s pretty amazing to get this many people out here when the weather is so cold and bad out,” Sowle said. “A lot of our business is walk-up, but they’re going to have to wait until showtime to see if there will be standing room available.”

Audience members came from all over Greene, Columbia, Albany and Ulster counties as well as from New York City to see Murillo, Dane, Doolan and Balay perform.

Dawne Reich came to the show with her son, 5-year-old Eddy, and his grandparents, Ilana Reich and Bob Agnes.



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Professional magician Magick Balay shows audience member and volunteer Nancy a secret box he asked her to put into her purse before performing a card trick. The card Nancy chose was eventually revealed to be inside the box in her purse. Photo by Kate Seckinger

“We’re very into magic,” Dawne Reich explained. “We have a next-door-neighbor who’s a professional magician who we’ve known for more than 20 years, and now my son has grown up with it and has been fascinated by it.”

Reich and Agnes are from Manhattan and have a weekend home in Coping Lake, New York that they visit most weekends.

“It’s a year-round vacation home, and as soon as we found out about this ‘up-close magic’ we knew it’d be a perfect thing for the family,” Dawne Reich said. “Magic has always been our thing.”

It’s great to watch it and think about creating new tricks,” Agnes said with a smile. “And, my wife said this is where we’re going, so that’s where we went.”

Ilana Reich said it was a great family event to end the weekend with.

“It’s a great event for Eddy and for us, too,” Ilana Reich said. “There’s something here for all of us to enjoy.”

Each magician entertained the crowd with several tricks including staple magic card and coin stunts, and signature tricks the professional illusionists are known for.

Doolan, made red squeaky toy balls divide and disappear before the audience’s eyes dressed as “Bravo, The Street Performer From Italy”.

“I fell in love with the art form of magic three years ago,” Doolan said. “It’s my goal to share that love of magic with a community that I love.”

Murillo, who often goes by the stage name “Dave Magic”, has been performing magic tricks since the age of 8.

Murillo impressed the crowd with a rope trick and a trick with brown paper bags, wooden blocks and a long sharp nail. He closed his part of the show by hiding an audience member’s \$50 bill inside a lemon.

“Growing up, I was really quiet and introverted,” Murillo said, “but magic really helped me become extroverted and gain so much confidence.”

The second performer, Steve Dane, made a wine bottle appear after popping a balloon, put a cell phone inside a balloon and made audience members laugh with a different pick-pocketing trick by taking credit cards, money and a passport out of a wallet without taking the wallet itself.

“This was my first time performing in the sticks,” Dane laughed, “but you’ve all been really great and I felt that you were with me. Magicians, we’re lucky, because we do something that we love.”

Finally, Balay performed a series of card, disappearing and mind reading tricks, including his famous levitation stunt, “Centrifugal”.

The four magicians ended the show by performing a final card trick together.

“There’s nothing better than doing what you love with your best friends,” Balay said with a smile. “I’ve never worked a day in my life because I get to do what I love, and there’s nothing better than doing what I love with people I love, and the looks of amazement and happiness on people’s faces.”

Sarah Schneider, of Hunter, brought her 6-year-old son, Will, who loves to perform magic tricks at home for his family.

“Will is an aspiring magician and puts on magic shows at our house all the time,” Schneider said. “His favorite tricks are a magical coloring book and a coin disappearing trick, and I thought this was a great way for him to watch and expand what he knows.”

Other young audience members said they enjoyed the show.

“The coin flying in the air was my favorite,” 6-year-old Maleah said of Balay’s trick “Centrifugal”, as she tried making pieces of cellophane disappear.

“I loved watching the cards,” 8-year-old Marisa added with a smile.

Of the show, 12-year-old Megan said, “What did I like best about it? Everything!”

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