

Joshua SETH

IT'S A WHOLE NEW SPIN ON STAGE HYPNOSIS

The corporate entertainment market loves live novelty. Hypnosis is one of corporate America's favorite treats and Joshua Seth delivers a show that is both professional and amazingly captivating. Self trained well before he was a teenager in magic and other novelty performance arts, it didn't hurt that he had parents who truly understood the clinical and therapeutic uses of hypnosis. But Joshua yearned to be an entertainer.



STORY BY IAN KIRBY

Joshua Seth has performed his entire life. He was into magic as a kid and had not one, but two psychologists for parents. "My dad was also a hypnotherapist, so I was always exposed to those sorts of practices and thinking."

As a child that was interested in magic, Joshua had a trick he began doing for friends and family. "I would tell people a playing card they chose without them physically picking one, but by simply thinking of it. At the time, I was so young that I didn't realize this wasn't just a magic trick. Other people had to tell me that this was pretty weird." Joshua was doing magic, but apparently didn't know any sleight of hand at eight years old. This started making a buzz.

Coincidentally, Joshua also started attending school around this time. What? Eight years old, just starting school? That is a little late isn't it? Not if your "school" is a center for higher education. That's right, college. At eight years old. "I started by taking some psych classes and other things related to the skills I was developing. People there gave me input and helped with ESP testing and other related exercises."

Joshua wants the point made straight away that he is not someone who gives much merit to psychics and spiritualists. "I don't call myself a psychic and don't really believe in true clairvoyants, but I do believe in the power of intuition and the ability to read people's body language. This enables me to predict certain outcomes in people's behavior, if I can read that type of person well and communicate with them non verbally."

Joshua continued his development of these skills, as well as becoming adept in hypnosis. Now a certified hypnotherapist and a well practiced performer, Joshua has taken all of these elements of psychology, thought reading, predicting future behavior and hypnosis to combine them into one incredible act the likes of which the special events market has never seen. Joshua's show includes the mentalism



and mind reading experiments he did as a kid, as well as genuine hypnotic phenomena.

Many will wonder what strange turn of events could have led Joshua to attend college at the tender young age of eight. "I didn't apply or anything (laughs). I wasn't really aware that what I was doing was unusual at all. I was in an experimental teaching program. My dad was involved in some sort of post Ph.D. work at the university there and was able to help get me in this program." Joshua attended a normal elementary school like everyone else during his mornings, then in the afternoon he took all college classes. "My parents wanted to make sure that I didn't miss out on having a normal educational experience with kids my own age, hence the split. They thought I might be negatively affected developmentally if I had gone straight into college full time at such a young age."

Joshua continued this course of social and intellectual development all through high school and ended up with a few degrees to show for it. "It is funny," he says, "because after all of that intense study and work from such a young age, I ended up going to a sort of hippy college after I graduated high school." This "hippy college" was Hampshire College in Amherst, Massachusetts. "I went there because they were the only college that didn't ask about that kind of stuff. I wanted to go to a college where I wouldn't have the shadow of my past accomplishments following me around and pressuring me at a time when I wanted to be a college kid and have fun. I still followed academic courses and did my work, but it was much less strenuous than the regimen I had followed for the years before that. HC didn't grill me about all of my past transcripts, heck, they didn't even want SAT scores," he jokes.

Most planners reading this now are probably imagining the look on their parents faces as they went from an overachieving childhood education

to a college that is much less academically strenuous than they had previously seen. Joshua says for him, this was not an issue. "My parents are pretty progressive people, especially for the time I went to college. They didn't mind and encouraged me wherever I went. They understood that I had worked hard my entire life on my education and that I was way ahead of the curve at the time. I think they understood that I needed a little bit more relaxation and fun, some more time to be a young man."

Josh's parents were completely supportive, despite the mild surprise in his move. "I think my mom always thought I would be a lawyer, because they use a lot of the skills I developed when it comes to studying case files, interviewing witnesses and having a commanding presence in the courtroom. Reading people, predicting outcomes and even psychologically influencing juries are commonplace in today's courtrooms and there is no doubt in my mind I could have done well with it. It would have been a perfect fit, but it just wasn't the way I wanted to go. The real surprise came when I told everyone that I didn't want to go into a white collar 'profession', but that I wanted to continue doing shows for a living, instead of pursuing a more legitimate occupation (laughs).

They were and are always supportive of me and it has been a tremendous help in making my dreams come true."

Not all that surprisingly, Joshua only spent two years at Hampshire College and had to move on. The reason is the surprising part. "They wouldn't graduate me. I finished the degree I was working on in two years instead of four and they wouldn't graduate me. For whatever reason, they said I had not attended their school long enough to receive my degree, despite completing the course objectives." Joshua decided he had to either move forward or sit still and wait. He chose the former.

Joshua immediately transferred to New York University to further his learning even more. Amazingly, he completed another entire four year program, with another double major, in two years, without transferring any credits. With a double in film and philosophy, this was no small task. While Joshua is justifiably extremely proud of what he has done, he does retain his humility and prefers not to boast his accomplishments. "I don't like to brag about that stuff but I think it is kind of interesting to look back on my life at this point and see how I have been able to use all of my past experiences in a non traditional way up on stage. It really gets people to laugh and have a crazy great



time, but also to think about the power of their own mind and the possibility of their potential."

Joshua says this brings in a message he tries to convey that is separate from the entertainment he presents. "Most people don't really consider their own potential and push themselves in life. We have to take chances and try to live our dreams. The really awesome part of the whole thing is that this is precisely what happens in my shows. People are literally getting a chance to live their dreams. Also, when people look back on my show, I want them to think 'Wow, maybe more is possible than I ever imagined.' That is my aim."

In 2005, Joshua gained international recognition after having won first place at The Academy of Magical Arts' (aka "The Magic Castle") Magic Olympics. This led to his own two hour prime-time television special in Japan. "It was an amazing experience," recalls Joshua. "We filmed for two weeks, hypnotizing ordinary people on the streets of Tokyo as well Japanese celebrities." In one sequence, Joshua hypnotized a five year old girl who had an intense fear of the dentist into having not one but two teeth drilled without the use of Novocain! In another, he caused the body temperature of three women to

rise despite their being locked in a cold storage room. "We hooked them up to a thermograph and you could actually see their body temperatures rising as I gave them hypnotic suggestions to combat the intense cold around them".

To date, Joshua's TV Special has been seen by millions of people throughout Asia and has created more international opportunities for Joshua's performances. "I've now had the chance to perform shows, with the use of a translator, in French, Spanish, Japanese, and Arabic. It always amazes me to see how people respond so positively to my show regardless of their culture or age or language. It's very humbling."

Joshua has been touring colleges and corporations on his own for years. While both are comfortable niches for him, he is very excited about increasing his following and profile in the corporate market specifically. Recently signing on with GP Entertainment, Joshua has now found solid representation for the corporate market and hopes to stay in this segment of the entertainment industry for a long time to come.

While Joshua has enjoyed his runaway success in the campus market, he contends that the corporate market has always been his bread and butter. He has

continually built up a steady stream of gigs over the years and has the experience to really deliver what event planners need. He explains why he thinks he is a perfect fit for our market. "After years of performing and honing my show in front of hundreds of live audiences I've developed the ability to almost intuitively read what an audience wants and I've learned how to give it to them. I never embarrass or humiliate anyone in any way. On the contrary, I make sure that my volunteers are the stars of the show and that everyone leaves feeling uplifted and inspired. I also love that every show is unique, every show is completely customized around the event planner's goals for the evening, and every show delivers high-energy fun that will be remembered for years to come. In fact, I love custom tailoring my shows for this market because that keeps every performance fresh and vibrant and alive with energy."

Joshua stands behind his performances 110%. "I always guarantee that if the event planner is not completely satisfied, if people don't think this is one of the most entertaining evenings they've ever experienced, then I'll gladly refund 110% of my performance fee. Of course, no one has ever taken me up on that offer, but I like to make it all the same. I pride myself on providing event planners with peace of mind and an easy working relationship as well as a great show." With an attitude like that, Joshua's sure to stay a hot ticket with the corporate crowd for some time to come.

An experienced and professional performer with an ambitious young agency behind him is sure to go far in this market if they both really want it. Joshua and GP do. Throw in boat loads of talent and miles of experience and you have a high energy one of a kind show for the entire marketplace. Check him out on his website at www.joshuaseth.com.

BOOK IT! For more information on bringing the comedy hypnosis and mind reading of Joshua Seth for your event, Contact Tim or Rich at GP Entertainment at (866) 812-8248 or for a virtual link, go to our website, www.americanentertainmentmagazine.com

