A black and white photograph of a woman lying down, her hands raised in a gesture of surrender or contemplation. Her face is partially visible, looking upwards. The background is filled with a complex, geometric structure made of thin, interconnected lines, resembling a crystalline or molecular framework. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the contours of her hands and the intricate details of the background structure.

THE MECHANICS of
THE
ATTESTATION

by JEANETTE ANDREWS

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Cover art image courtesy of Ari Isenberg

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WHAT WILL THEY BELIEVE?

WHERE WILL THEIR SCRUTINY LIE?

WHERE WILL YOUR SCRUTINY LIE?

YOU ARE INVITED TO BELIEVE AND
DISBELIEVE THROUGH THEIR EYES.....



INTRODUCTION

An experiment in belief polarization and speculative belief.

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The magician shows their hands empty, subtly telegraphing to the audience that everything is what it seems. Then something impossible happens, something that would not have been possible under these 'normal' conditions...magic.

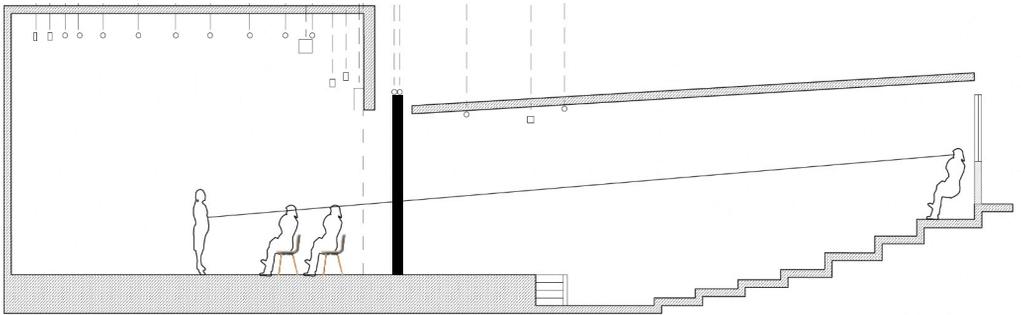
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The magician shows their hands empty. But what if that simple gesture, the very thing explicitly designed to make the magic seem impossible—known as a 'convincer'—instead, for some in the audience is the exact gesture that piques suspicion and prompts them to infer a complex causal web of explanations.

A Synopsis

Unbeknownst to them, the audience is divided into three groups...

Half of the audience is secretly sequestered to become an audience of 'Hidden Observers.' This first group is seated in the theater, hidden behind a wall of one-way mirror that covers the full proscenium of the stage, thus transforming the entire stage into a one-way, interrogation-style room.



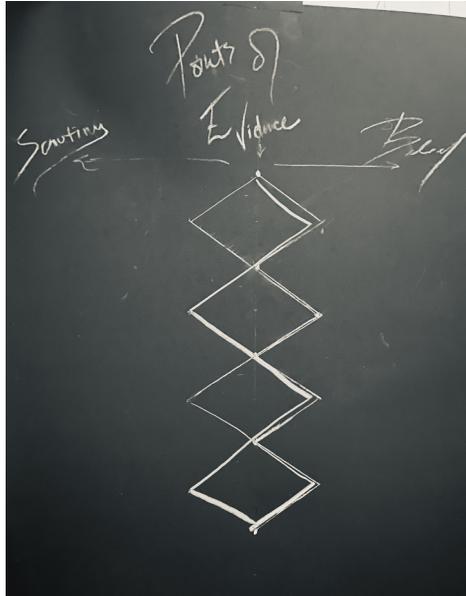
One-way mirror wall

The rest of the attendees are later seated onstage, completely unaware of the hidden audience observing them.

Prior to the performance, unbeknownst to them, this 'Onstage Audience' is subdivided into two groups. Those groups were made to have opposite interpretations of the actions of the magician. (And the magician showing their hands empty is not one of those moments, that was just for illustrative purposes...)

The exact moment of the performance that makes the magic seem totally impossible for some, is the exact moment that will pique suspicion for others. Each group will have their scrutiny manipulated and beliefs strengthened about different, divergent moments of the performance.

Prior to the performance, the groups walked through different installations that seemed totally unrelated to the performance they were about to see.



Each installation had them learn new, subtle structures of cause and effect that they mentally carry with them into the performance.

These insidious cause and effect relationships help manipulate their scrutiny about different actions performed by the magician.

A performance of magic, incorporating these actions designed for polarized interpretations of heightened belief and skepticism.

An active questioning of the beliefs of the Onstage Audience.

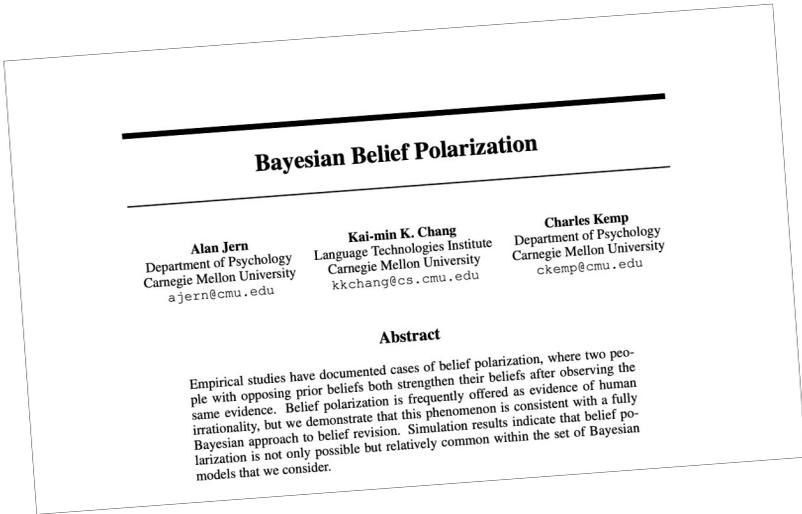
A reveal of the Hidden Observers.

A conversation on the metacognition of belief.

This is *The Attestation*.

BACKGROUND

The Attestation plays with belief polarization and contrary updating ("where two people with opposing prior beliefs both strengthen their [opposing] beliefs after observing the same evidence," Jern, Chang, Kemp).



Due to the cultural framing of magic performances, audiences expect to encounter something that will be largely or totally unexplainable. This framing situates viewers to preemptively seek causes for an unexplainable event that has not yet happened, and has them looking for any sort of anomalous features.

In magic, there is something known as a 'convincer' that is exactly what it sounds like...an action, object or language that communicates to viewers that the conditions at hand are normal, or, make it far more impossible for something to occur.

Convincers display to an audience that the conditions at hand meet their expectations and are congruent with the natural world. Thus, when an impossible event occurs, people are convinced it occurred under these normal everyday circumstances, thereby heightening the magical effect. Convincers are designed to be subtle, almost subliminal, and fly under the radar.

For this performance, convincers act as cognitive ‘attack surfaces’ (per the vernacular of data visualization) for heightened belief or scrutiny and as the points of ‘same evidence’ to create belief polarization. While watching the exact same magic tricks, viewers will have opposite interpretations of the things that are supposed to build their trust. A specific action performed by the magician cements the normativity of the conditions that give rise to the experience of magic for most of the group. Yet, for the other group, that exact same action raises their suspicions and will signal a type of causation (albeit nebulous and, ultimately false), thus subverting the experience of magic for only those viewers. Therefore, the work creates a complex web of polarized causal inference occurring only in the minds of the viewers, to showcase the delicacy and directionality of belief.

‘CONVINCCERS’ & THEIR USES

Convincer:	Showing one's hands empty	Rolling up one's sleeves	Pulling or tapping and object to show it's solid (such as pulling on a rope at the beginning and end of the magic effect to prove it's solid)	Having an object signed	Objects moved out of reach
What It Communicates:	Nothing hidden in the magician's hands	Nothing hidden up the magician's sleeves	There are not adhesives or magnets holding together, that it is a single rope, that it's not an optical illusion	That the object is not duplicated / that is is the same object	<p>With increased distance, the level of ability for the object to be manipulated by the magician / have a secret process enacted on it, is typically perceived as less likely, thus making the affiliated magic effect seem more impossible. An object held in the magician's hand may be easily manipulated.</p> <p>And object held further from the body is harder to manipulate and also more visible.</p> <p>An object set within reach is typically perceived as harder to manipulate than if it were directly held, yet is still in close proximity to the magician.</p> <p>An object set out of reach of the performer is typically perceived as harder to manipulate than if it were directly held, or in close proximity to the magician.</p>
Typically Deployed In:	Appearances and vanishes	Appearances, vanishes, transportations and transformations	Cut and restored / Destroyed and made whole	Transportations, transpositions and location discovery effects	Vanishes, transportations, transformations, levitations, sympathetic reactions, mental control / telekinesis, and predictions

HIDDEN OBSERVERS

An Actively Speculative Viewing

Half of the attendees will serve as the audience of Hidden Observers, seated behind the one-way mirror to watch the audience who will be seated onstage. This group of Hidden Observers, while at first glance seems all-seeing and omniscient, are in fact, only given pieces of the puzzle. They know that the audience before them is divided, but they do not know how, or about what. Thus, they watch the performance actively speculating about how many groups there are, and what the moments in the performance are that are divergently bolstering or shattering the Onstage Audience's beliefs.

The Hidden Observers, who will be seated in the theater seats, are first sequestered to a small, offstage room and shown a short film, "The Attestation: A Viewer's Guide," which contextualizes the performance that they are about to see and their role within it.

The script of the film closely mirrors the introduction section of this text.

The Hidden Observers now take their places in the theater seats, hidden behind the one-way mirror. Now viewing the interrogation-style space onstage, they are instructed to silently observe for the duration of the work.

They lie in wait for the Onstage Audience to enter and the Hidden Observers begin their voyeuristic, meta viewing of the performance.



View “The Attestation: A Viewer’s Guide”

jeanetteandrewsstudio.com/the-attestation

CREATING AN INSIDIOUS CAUSAL LINK

All members of the Onstage Audience group are still totally unaware that the attendees who arrived prior to them were siphoned off to form the completely different audience of Hidden Observers. The Onstage Audience has had no knowledge of/contact with the Hidden Audience.

Unbeknownst to them, those in the Onstage Audience have been further divided. They are now subdivided into two groups in order to expose them to different sets of stimuli to manipulate their scrutiny towards different moments of the performance.

En route to being seated, ushers view attendees' tickets and inform them that they, in fact, had a VIP ticket that grants them access to a short pre-performance reception. In reality, all attendees are told they have a VIP ticket, and this is intentionally set up for them to be split into further groups without it being apparent.

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Half of the Onstage Audience is brought to one faux pre-performance reception.

The other half of the Onstage Audience is brought to a different faux pre-performance reception.

(All Onstage Audience members do not know that they have been divided into groups. Everyone thinks that they were part of a select few that simply got access to a pre-performance reception where they were welcomed to have snacks, take selfies, etc.)

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Each installation is designed so that members of that subgroup of the Onstage Audience will learn new, subtle structures of cause and effect that will make them pique their suspicion when they see the gesture of the convincer employed during the performance. They will not have a concrete idea of the effect that the gesture caused, however, they have learned that this specific gesture always activates something else to happen. Thus, within the specific context of the magic performance, given the explanation seeking that occurs, even if viewers do

not pinpoint a specific effect of a causal action immediately, they are likely to have scrutiny piqued at gestures that they perceive to be causing hidden effects.

However, when those viewers see the other convincer employed, for which they have not learned new structures of cause and effect, they will assume the default communicative stance (insofar as that it will bolster the conditions at hand to make the magic seem more impossible). (E.g. that there is nothing hidden up the magician's sleeves, and that objects moved out of reach of the magician are harder for them to manipulate).

Each of the two groups will learn different cause and effect structures via the different installations that they are sequestered to. This way, they have heightened skepticism about different convincers.

The dressing room installations are similar to a hospitality suite (such as those found at conferences, backstage at large speaking engagements, etc.) Such spaces allow attendees to find respite, entertainment, and often provide small items for their comfort, such as complimentary snacks and toiletries. While these spaces do provide that, they also have a more surreal tone.

The installations were designed to have attendees observe and interact with numerous stimuli that will have them learn specific causal links. These stimuli are things that they either have to interact with, thereby performing the motion themselves, are portrayed via film, or are physical still life vignettes in stages that show the cause and effect in various stages of completion.

In each space, viewers are presented with a myriad of types of possible (typically invisible or remote) forces that would enact an effect:

Gravity

Magnets

Motion activation

Women's Dressing Room Installation

“Learn to be skeptical of objects moving towards the center of a space”

This space is designed for attendees in this group to learn that moving an object to the center of a round surface always invisibly activates something else. This is intended to pique suspicion about when objects are pushed out of the magician's reach on round tables during the subsequent performance. (The default function of this convincer is that objects moved out of reach of the magician are harder to manipulate. Thus, this installation seeks to subvert that interpretation and have people form an opposite interpretation.)

Objects that are moved to the center of round surfaces are typically circular or cylindrical, to build shape bias and help activate the cause and effect relationship response when viewers in this group see the apple and water glass moved to the center of round tables during performance.

This space includes:

Ticket scanner

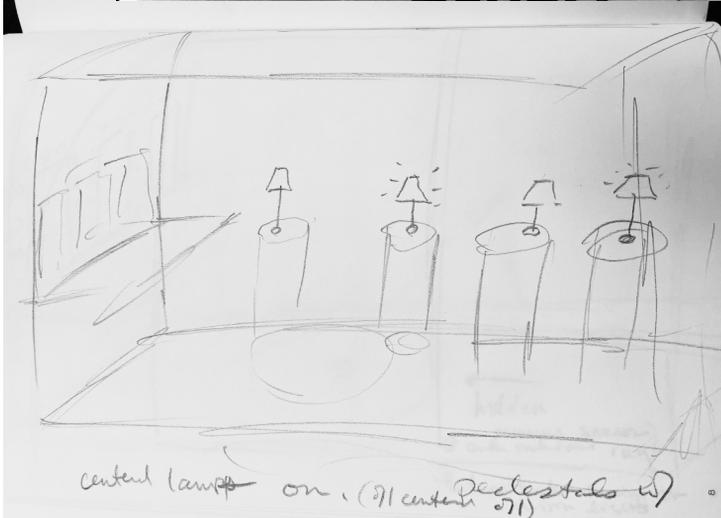
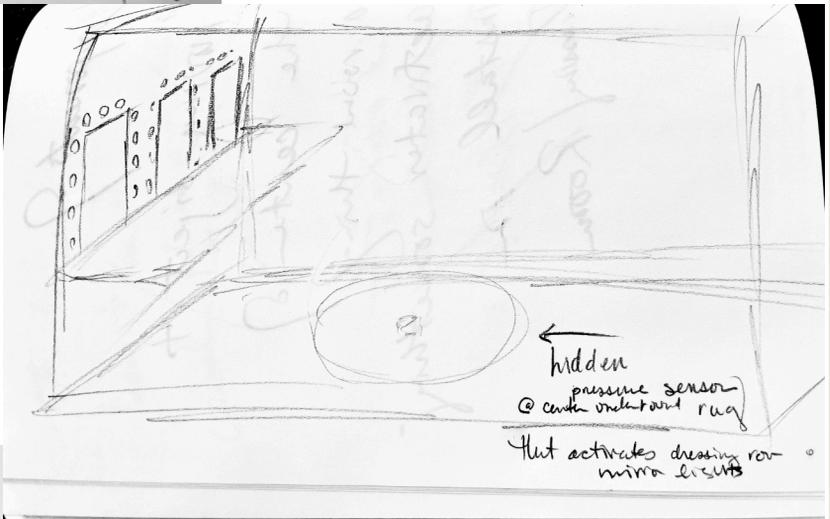
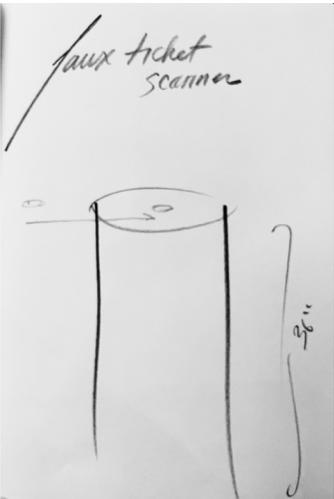
When attendees move their circular event ticket to the exact center of the round pedestal, it activates a light in the pedestal, giving the appearance that their ticket has been scanned in. (This "scanner" was fabricated for this installation, and does not functionally scan tickets.)

Side tables with lamps

There are four small tables placed throughout the dressing room, each set with a small table lamp.

Two of the tables have lamps positioned in the center of the table. Those lamps are on.

The other two tables' lamps are off center, and are thus off.



A small blank, circular decal that is approximately the same size as the circular base of the lamps is positioned to denote the center of the pedestal. This is completely obscured by the lamps where the lamp is in the center of the table and turned on. These subtle decals are only partially visible on the tables where the lamps are off-center, insinuating the proximity to the center of the table has activated the lamp and/or insinuating that there is a wireless switch or charger at the center of the table.

Rug and mirror lights

A five-foot diameter round rug spans much of the walkable width of the dressing room. When attendees walk across the rug and during their stride step on the center of the rug, it activates a pressure switch hidden under the rug. This wireless pressure switch remotely turns on the dressing room mirror lights.

(An attendant in this space may also covertly guide attendees to walk across the center of the rug if they have not already triggered the light by chance.)

Round MagSafe iPhone Charging Pads

A set of three round, MagSafe, wireless contact chargers rest on the counter. If people place their iPhones to charge in the center of the charger, it activates their iPhones to charge.



Toiletries / Selfie Station Items

Near the mirror lights that are activated with the rug pressure switch, complimentary snacks and toiletry supplies such as cough drops, lip balm, tissues, etc. are on a rotating lazy susan.

Tea Station

An induction burner is present alongside a tea kettle. The kettle only boils when it is placed in the center of the round section of the induction burner.

Signage in the space notes the various comfort/hospitality stations that people can engage with, such as:

Slide ticket on scanner to enter.

Take a photo!

Charge your phone!

Complimentary! Take a snack!

Make some tea!

Men's Dressing Room Installation

“Learn to be skeptical of fabric being pushed up”

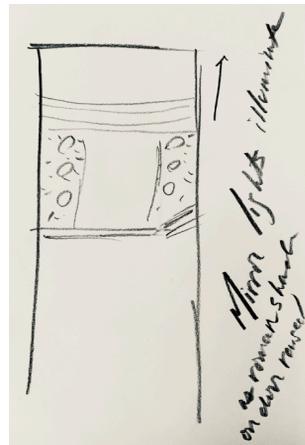
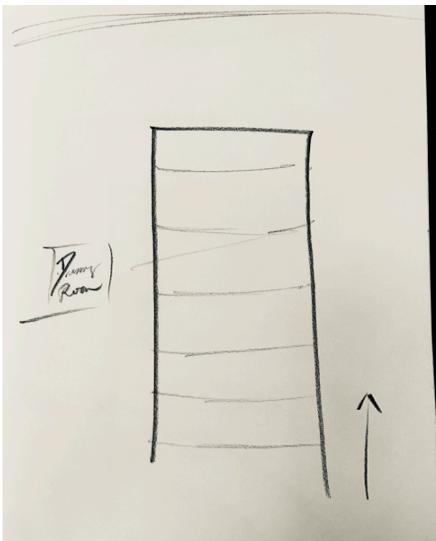
This space is designed for attendees in this group to learn that pushing fabric up is causal / always invisibly activates something else. It should thus pique suspicion about when the magician pushes up her sleeves during the subsequent performance. (The default function of this convincer is to show that the magician has nothing hidden up her sleeve. Thus, this installation seeks to subvert that interpretation and have people form an opposite interpretation.)

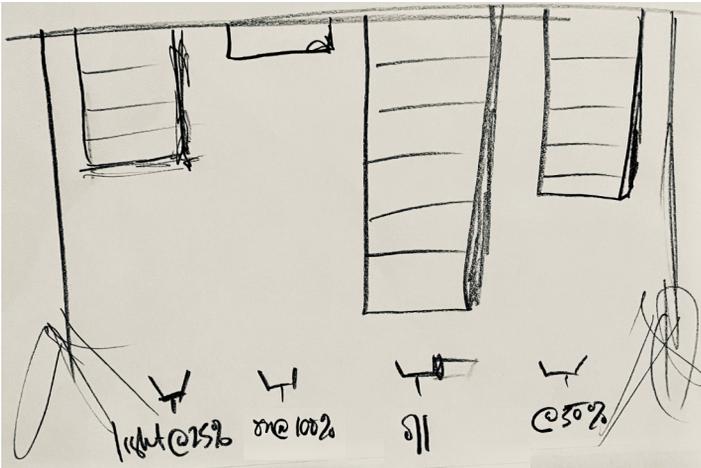
This space includes:

Roman Shade to Activate Mirror Lights

In place of the door, a Roman shade covers the doorway to this dressing room installation.

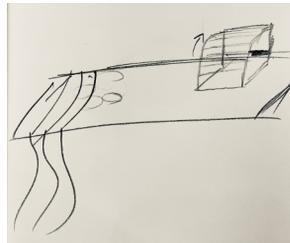
When the usher gathers the fabric to open the shade, a magnetic contact switch is activated when the top folds of fabric touch, so that once the fabric is fully pushed up, the dressing room mirror lights activate. They are turned off when the fabric shade is pulled down. This is activated for every group that enters and exits the space.





Roman Shade and Light Correlations

A photography backdrop stand is hung with a sequence of four Roman shades, each with a light on the floor shining up on it. The strength of a light hitting the shade is congruent with what degree the shade is open or closed (i.e. the fully closed shade, the light underneath it is off; the half open shade's corresponding light is on at 50%; three-quarters open shade's light is on at 75% strength; and fully open shade's light is 100% on). This insinuates the relationship between the strength of the light and the up or down position of the fabric shades.



Segmented Roll-up Breadbox Door

Complimentary snack packs of round Ritz crackers are in a roll-top bread box. Upon opening the segmented, rolling, vertical cover, a light inside activates. Attendees can then take crackers, and pull back the plastic sleeve wrapper to reveal the crackers.

Still Life Vignette

A still life is set up with some of the show props that are partially obscured by a piece of sheer chiffon, as if it is in a freeze frame of being pulled back to reveal the objects.

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Signage in the space notes the various comfort/hospitality stations that people can engage with such as:

Take a photo!

Complimentary!

Take a snack!

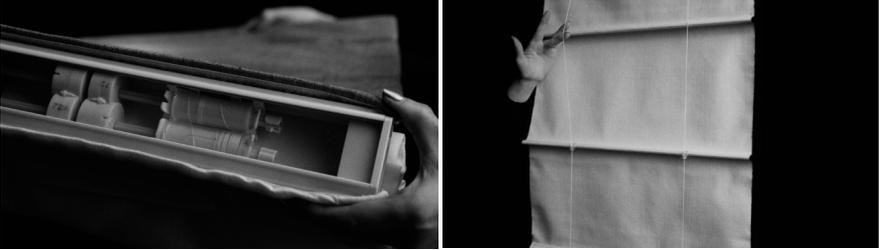
Film

Viewers are shown a two-minute film, which depicts:

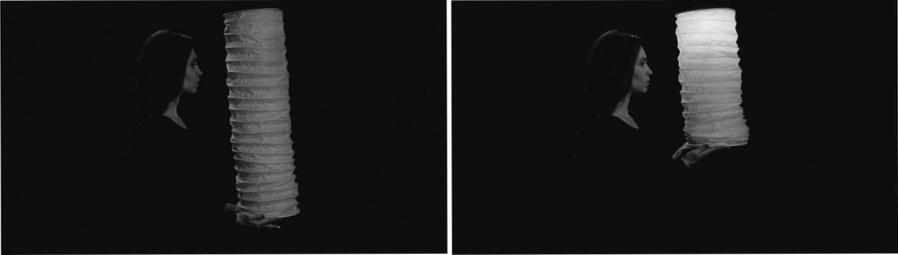
A pendant lamp that is lowered from the ceiling in connection with a Roman shade being opened, showing the crosswise motion. (As shade opens, pendant light lowers.)



Close-ups of the inner pulley mechanisms within Roman shades.



A floor lamp whereby the light only turns on when the cylindrical shade is raised to a certain point.



View the film:

jeanetteandrewsstudio.com/the-attestation

Following a 5-10 minute stay in their respective pre-performance receptions, both subgroups of the Onstage Attendees are escorted out and seated onstage. (They are told that “This artist has reinterpreted a traditional theater space for this work and you will be seated on stage for the performance.”)

PERFORMANCE

Presented by a solo performer, Jeanette Andrews, hereafter referred to as the magician for clarity and brevity.

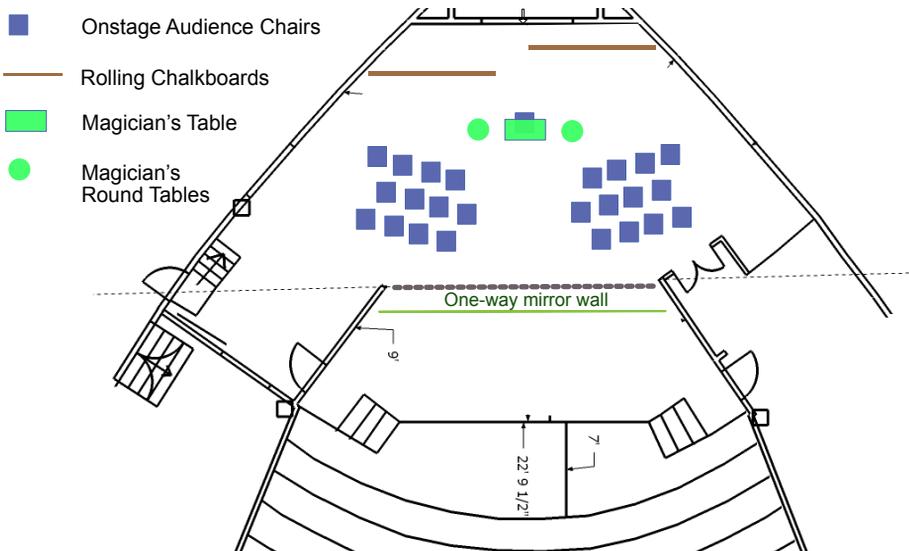
Act I: A Performance of Illusions

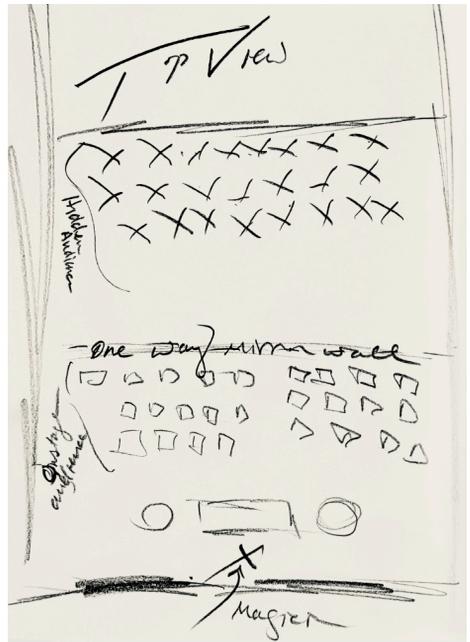
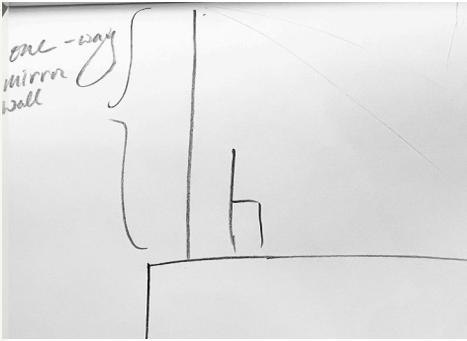
Each group of Onstage Audience attendees is escorted out of their respective installations and seated onstage, unaware of the audience of Hidden Observers in the theater seats who is observing them.

The Onstage Audience is seated so that the one-way mirror is at their backs.

They are instructed that there will be no speaking from this point onward.

A performance of magic commences onstage. It is presented silently, without speaking, with background music.



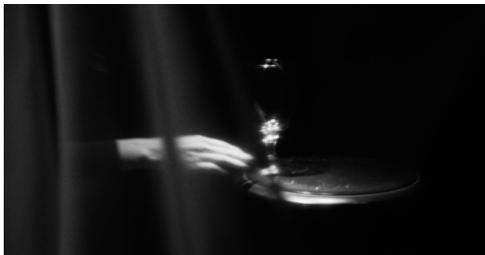


Initially, the entire upstage is a curtain of reflective mirrored mylar film.

Upon the Onstage Audience's entry and seating, the magician is seated with her back to the audience, her actions only visible in the distorted mirrored film.

She is seated at a small rectangular table, with a small round table on either side of it. She slowly drinks a glass of water, which upon finishing, she sets on the edge of the stage left round table.

Slowly a black theatrical curtain closes in front of the upstage mirrored film.



The magician turns to face the audience and unpacks a bag of groceries which contains produce bags of apples, tangerines and whole, in-shell walnuts.

She has a member of the audience select an apple from a produce bag, and she sets the apple off-center on the stage right round table. She slowly eats a tangerine, and then an in-shell walnut.

She then goes to crack a second walnut and it vanishes in her bare hand.

The magician then pushes the apple out of her reach, to the center of the stage right round table.

She then borrows a one dollar bill from a member of the audience. (All attendees were asked upon registration to bring one dollar bills.)

The audience member signs the bill with a thick red marker, and it is slowly displayed to the audience.

It is then folded and wrapped in a thin napkin, with the bright red signature visible through the napkin. The bill wrapped in the napkin is then placed in the empty water glass, which is off center on the stage left round table. The magician then slides the glass to the center of the table, exercising the full extension of her reach. It is now pushed out of her immediate reach.

She then shows her hands empty and slowly pushes up both sleeves.

She then leans as far as she can without leaving her seat to grasp the edge of the napkin with the bill inside, however the bill has vanished.

She then exercises the full extension of her reach to lean to the stage right table to pick up the apple which has been resting, isolated, in the center.

It is cut open to reveal a tangerine nested inside of the apple.

Again displaying her hands empty, the magician peels open the tangerine, where inside, she finds the vanished whole in-shell walnut. The walnut is cracked open and instantly the audience member's bill with their bright red signature is seen. The signed bill is returned to the audience member to confirm the authenticity of their signature.



ACT II: Questioning

Large chalkboards that extend the full width of the stage are wheeled out. They serve as substrate for written communication between the magician and the audience for the remainder of the work.

Via frenetic writing on the chalkboards, Onstage Audience members are instructed to remove surveys hidden under their chairs. They are 4-part carbon copy forms consisting of a top, white copy, and the carbon duplicates as yellow, pink, and gold. (The Hidden Audience also has copies of this for reference.)

THE ATTESTATION

by JEANETTE ANDREWS

Please answer these questions with your initial gut reactions.

Mark your response to each question with a bold "X" where your intuition lies along each scale. (Press hard!)

Keep your answers confidential.

DID THESE ACTIONS HELP SELL THE ILLUSION?

1. When the magician showed that her hands were empty, I became:

More **Skeptical** of the Magic

More **Convinced** of the Magic

2. The bill being signed by the audience member made me feel:

More **Skeptical** of the Magic

More **Convinced** of the Magic

WHERE DID YOUR SCRUTINY LAND?

3A: Did you notice when the magician pushed her sleeves up?

No

Yes

3B: When the magician pushed her sleeves up, I became:

More **Skeptical** of the Magic

More **Convinced** of the Magic

4A: Did you notice when the magician moved the apple and glass away from her to the center of the table?

No

Yes

4B: When the magician moved the objects away from her, I became:

More **Skeptical** of the Magic

More **Convinced** of the Magic

PART 1

PART 2

[From here, all instructions pertain to Onstage Audience only.]

Each member of the Onstage Audience completes the survey and tears off the top, white part to retain as their copy.

The three copy portions of each person's form are collected in separate, clear grocery bags by color. Each person then draws a new slip of each color from each of the bags, to compare and contrast their answers against.

They notice an uncanny pattern emerging – their answers are similar to others on Questions 1 and 2. Yet for Questions 3 and 4, they seem to have opposite interpretations of the moments in question of the performance. Members of the audience wonder about why those around them interpreted the moments so differently.

As this uncanny moment settles, the magician then re-performs the moments in question of the performance. However, this is done without props and simply miming the gestures, giving the audience an opportunity to re-view the performance of those actions under the lens of those around them who interpreted the actions differently.

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Act III: A live, light-based data visualization

The Onstage Audience is then instructed to open envelopes under seats, each of which contains a high-power, narrow beam flashlight.

Those who were in the “Taught that objects moving towards the center of a space invisibly activates something” have flashlights that project yellow light.

Those who were in the “Taught that fabric being pushed up invisibly activates something” have flashlights that project blue light.

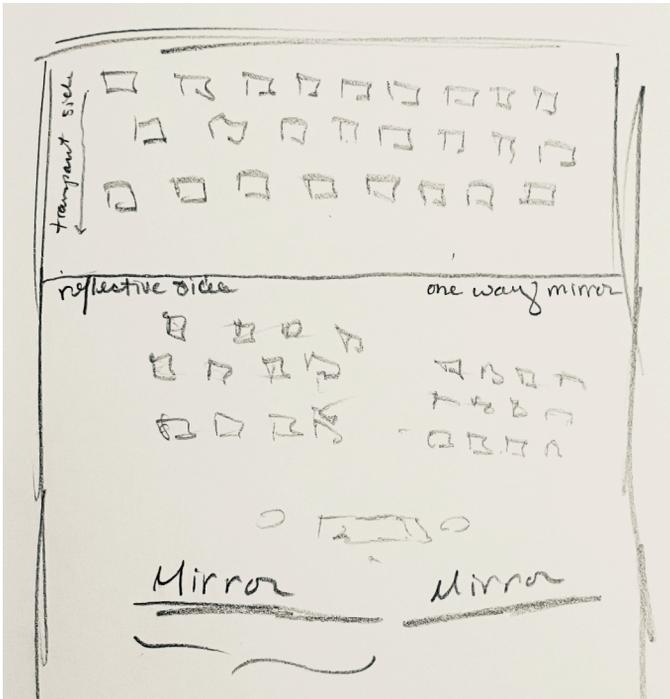
(The Onstage Audience is still unaware that their seemingly singular audience was divided into groups.)

The magician draws the first question and its corresponding scale across the chalkboards and audience members are instructed to shine their flashlights on the position where they marked their answers on their questionnaires.

On the first two questions, the answers from people in both groups cluster together in agreement.

On the subsequent questions pertaining to the convincers, they see that the interpretations of those moments are opposite, with the colors of lights pooling together at opposite ends of the scales.

The Onstage Audience wonders if perhaps it was not just them as an individual viewer interpreting things so differently, but this appears to be part of a larger trend, signaling that perhaps there were distinct groups of viewers... How else would there be this distinctly color-coded response? And how were those different interpretations created?



REVEAL OF THE HIDDEN AUDIENCE

Just as this notion starts to set in, the magician slowly rotates the chalkboards that span the entire width of the upstage portion of the stage, and it is seen that the backs are large mirrors. The Onstage Audience is now looking at themselves in a wall of mirrors. (The one-way mirror wall is still at the Onstage Audience's backs.) They are now between two walls of mirrors. The onstage lights dim as lights in the theater sharply illuminate the Hidden Observers... The Onstage Audience now sees the mirror wall that was behind them almost dissolve and in the reflection, now they see an entire audience of people has been hidden right behind them, observing them the whole time.

BLACKOUT

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All audiences, Onstage Audience and Hidden Observers, are escorted out of the theater. After several minutes, all groups are escorted back to a reset stage to engage in a choreographed conversation on the nature of belief.

POST PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION

All attendees from both the Onstage Audience groups and the Hidden Audience are escorted back to the stage and seated in groups of eight for dialogue:

- Four members of the Hidden Observer audience
- Two members from the Onstage's Audience of "Skeptical of objects moving towards the center of a space"
- Two members from the Onstage's Audience of "Skeptical of fabric being pushed up"

Each member of the Hidden Audience is given a card with a single question on it that they pose to the others in their group. Each round of conversation is timed for five minutes via an hourglass and a chime struck to signal beginning and ends of discussion rounds.

For those who were seated in the theater seats, what did you think those seated on stage might have believed?

For those who were seated on the stage... Once you realized that other people around you had different interpretations of the moments designed to increase your conviction in the magic, did you reevaluate your original opinion of those moments? Why or why not?

If a magician's gesture can convey to one person that her hands are empty and to another that she's activating a hidden device, what does that tell us about how we infer cause and effect relationships?

Today we've seen how insidious suggestions can influence our beliefs. What do you think this shows about who we trust, what claims we are skeptical of, and why?

At the culmination of the discussions, attendees are left with a rhetorical question to reflect on and are escorted out.

LIST OF UNUSED QUESTIONS FOR POST-PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION

- What makes you infer that something is causal?
- Philosopher C. Thi Nguyen notes that "Hostile epistemology is the study of how environmental features exploit our cognitive vulnerabilities.[....] We are essentially finite beings, with limited cognitive resources. We are perpetually reasoning in a rush, because there is far too much information than we could ever fully process. Our desperate attempts to cope with a cognitively overwhelming world will inevitably leave holes in our armor." What do you see as some of the biggest holes in our epistemic armor?
- When you are skeptical of something, what can shift your belief to become less skeptical?
- How can visual evidence confirm or topple our beliefs?
- What makes you become more firmly rooted in a belief? (What makes you become less sure of a belief?)
- The mechanics of belief polarization in the face of the same 'evidence'... Discuss.
- When speaking on the value and context of data visualizations, computer scientist Jarke J. van Wijk notes that, "[t]he amount of knowledge gained depends on the image, the current knowledge of the user, and the particular properties of the perception and cognition of the user."
- How do you think that the "properties of perception and cognition" influence the interpretation of a magic performance?
- What makes us define action and events as causal versus communicative?
- In this performance, people had different 'attack surfaces' for distrust and heightened scrutiny. What do you think this shows about how we build trust in visual information? What would make you change your level of confidence about the evidence?
- What is a justified, true, belief? Does that constitute knowledge?
- Can a chain of inferences lead to a rational belief?
- What does magic show us about the formation and possible breakdown of visual disinformation?
- What does the social frame of the magic performance show about how visual belief is constructed?
- Philosopher Tamar Gendler's idea of 'alief' is noted as a mental state that is automatic or habitual, and can be in conflict with a person's explicit beliefs and responses that are sometimes conscious and sometimes based on how things seem."You can believe one thing while alieving another." What does magic show us about how we believe and possibly alieve?

- On Reasoning...

Deductive reasoning: starts with general principles and applies them to specific cases, guaranteeing a true conclusion if the premises are true.

Inductive reasoning: starts with specific observations and aims to generalize to broader rules.

Abductive reasoning: starts with an observation and seeks the most likely explanation for it, without guaranteeing the truth of that explanation.

Using the example of a magic performance, what can we learn about abductive reasoning?

- Philosopher Laurie Paul speaks of causation and 'fragile events,' whereby we believe that if any one event in a causal chain had not occurred, the entire end result is shattered. If we take a magic performance as a 'fragile event,' what does that show about the nature of causation and causal inference?

"Modern magicians may make us doubt our grasp on reality, but their performances do not point to a concealed ontology. In performing, magicians mobilize secret knowledge and skill to create mysterious situations or effects that spectators intensify with their own imaginative abilities. With cunning artistry, they lead us to wonder at the reality we inhabit and construct for ourselves." - Graham Jones

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scrutiny(n.)

early 15c., "the formal enumerating of the votes in an election to an office or dignity" (according to OED, "Now chiefly in Canon Law"), from Late Latin scrutinium "a search, inquiry" (in Medieval Latin, "a mode of election by ballot"), from Latin scrutari "to examine, investigate, search" (from PIE root *skreu- "to cut; cutting tool;" see shred (n.)). The meaning "close investigation or examination" is recorded from c. 1600.

Perhaps the original notion of the Latin word is "to search among rubbish," via scruta (plural) "trash, rags, rubbish" ("shreds"); or the original sense might be "to cut into, scratch."

Harper, Douglas. "Etymology of scrutiny." Online Etymology Dictionary, <https://www.etymonline.com/word/scrutiny>. Accessed 8 September, 2025.

"Causality is
a secretive
affair, yet out
in the open.

An open
secret."

Timothy Morton

Believer
Skeptic

Metacognition of beliefs

Causal inference

Causal network

Causal chain

Delicate

Collapse

Causation

Counterfactual

Prior

Apriori

Reflect

Reflection

Prove

Proof

Updating

Belief vs. disbelief

Trust and scrutiny

Seeking

Explanation

Convinced

Constraints

Shattered

Communication/consensus

Knowledge

Smoke and mirrors

YOUR DELICATE BELIEFS ARE THE EXPERIMENT



BACKGROUND RESEARCH INFORMING
THE ATTESTATION

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DEDICATION & THANKS

In Memory of Ginny Aronson.

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No machine learning/AI has been employed at any stage of this process, creative or logistical, at any point.

WHAT WILL THEY BELIEVE?

WHERE WILL THEIR SCRUTINY LIE?

WHERE WILL YOUR SCRUTINY LIE?

DISBELIEVE THROUGH THEIR EYES...
YOU ARE INVITED TO BELIEVE AND

THE MECHANICS of

THE

ATTENTION

by LEANETTE ANDREWS

