

The Towers

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April fool's day hypnotism; no joke

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News Editor

On April 1, Peter Gross, a hypnotist of seven years, worked his trade in the Campus Center Odeum, courtesy of Residence Hall Council. Though some members of the crowd were skeptical, twelve volunteers seemed to prove otherwise.

Gross, a member of the National Guild of Hypnotists, ran his show for entertainment purposes. The volunteers, or VIPs as he called them, were brought onto stage and quickly put into a deep sleep, soon to become victims of his imagination.

The VIPs, named for their unique position as opposed to sitting in the audience, were first put under the impression that they were five years old, and Gross was their teacher. Each time their "teacher" turned around, the "five-year-olds" made faces and laughed at him. When he turned back, every one of them pretended to be the perfect child.

Adding a little creativity into this routine, Gross made an addition to



Lebo Merafhe fell out of her chair and off of the stage after seeing Peter Gross' pants ripped open.

Photo by: Sidath Wijesooriya

HIGHLIGHTS

Yellocard

It is official! April 19 at 8 pm, there will be an acoustic Yellocard show on campus. It is so official that...

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War in Iraq

As we passed the five year anniversary of the US-led invasion of Iraq last week, President Bush...

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Strage Awards

The Strage Innovation Awards took place in the Campus Center on April 1 with the competition...

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What's Happening

Updates from around campus keep you in the loop, sent in by people from around the

“HYPNOTIST”

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the “five-year-olds” repertoire of ideas to use against him.

“In addition to making faces and laughing when I turn my back, one of you will be holding a water pistol when you wake up. This



Joe Krasinskas was hypnotized while in the audience.

Photo by: Sidath Wijesooriya

person will try to shoot me but find that they are holding the water pistol backwards and shoot themselves.” Gross told the hypnotized and sleeping VIPs.

Placing a water pistol in one of their laps, he woke them up with a clap, and sure enough, the one with the water pistol shot himself in the face to peals of laughter from the crowd.

Moving on, Gross periodically put the VIPs to sleep and changed the situation they believed they were in each time. He convinced them that everything was as the audience saw it, they were hypnotized up on the stage in the Odeum. However, the back of his pants had ripped clean open. Once again the VIPs on stage broke into laughter every time Gross turned to face the audience, while others covered their eyes.

The trick was elaborated on by having the front of his pants ripped open rather than the back. Some students began laughing so hard they fell off their chairs.

The ripped pants routine led into Gross controlling the VIPs into believing that they were in a dance contest to win one million dollars. Just as quickly as he had finished talking, all the participants were up and running around

dancing like no one was looking.

The obvious routines for a hypnotist often led into more creative ideas. One of the crowd’s favorites played off of WPI’s intuitive side. While the VIPs were asleep, Gross told them that the number seven did not exist; six and eight were sequential numbers.

Once awake, Gross singled out one girl, Sarah Lax, and asked her to hold up her fingers and count them. Much to the audience’s delight, Lax ended up with a puzzled look as she found herself reaching ten before she tallied her final finger. Still puzzled, Gross chuckled and had her sit down to think about what had happened and try to figure it out. Moving on, he asked another girl to stand up and do the same.

“One, two, three, four, five, six, eight, nine, ten...f#\$%,” the girl, Rhiannon Chiacchiaro said, reaching ten before finishing, just like Lax. The crowd erupted in laughter once again. Gross moved back to Lax one more time, but once he gave Chiacchiaro some time to think, Gross was in for a surprise himself. When asked if she had figured out what was wrong, Chiacchiaro, with a huge smile on her face, counted down from five on each hand, adding the two to come to the conclusion that she had “ten fingers!” Gross took a moment to react at the time but once again got the last laugh when he asked her to add two and five together, receiving the response, “Eight!” After the performance, he only had good things to say.

“I love working with smarter groups,” he later said. “They usually are more creative.”

During a much more active portion of the show, Gross had all the participants running back and forth between the audience and stage performing various ridiculous tasks. One group of people was assigned to reply whenever they heard the hypnotist’s name. Whenever he said it, which happened frequently to provoke them, the group stood up and yelled, “Peter Gross rules!”

However, this triggered a response from another group of participants, who all would yell, “Shut your mouth!” Just as a fight between the two groups was about to break out, some music came on, and everyone went to the front to perform, not just sing, YMCA by the Village People.

Even more people would

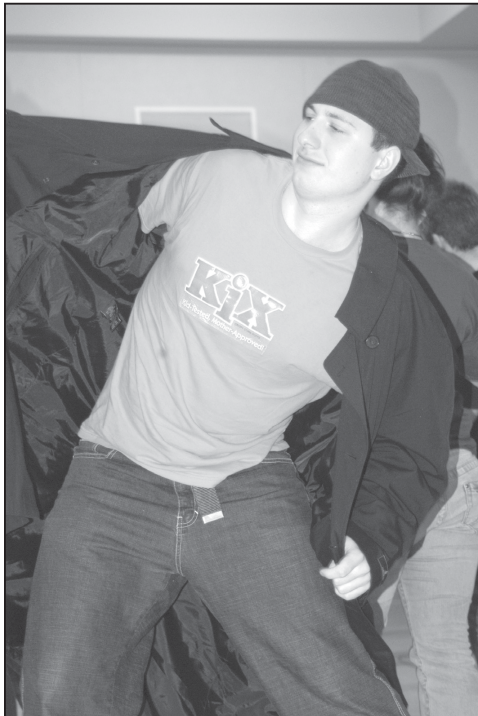
be constantly walking between their seats and Gross. One person, Cordell Rogers, kept going to Gross to receive an award, which was simply a bow commonly put on presents. Every time he sat down however, he went back up to retrieve another.

Simultaneously, Joe Krasinskas was doing the same thing, but instead of a ribbon, pieces of tape were being stuck to his face. The pieces remained there until the end of the show, at which point he was covered with the black and blue tape.

The third person going between her seat and Gross was Amanda Rinaldi. Whenever Amanda went to Gross, she wanted to shake his hand.

Between all the people moving around, yelling, and dancing to YMCA, the Odeum became quite hectic, yet extremely hilarious.

This hypnotist was the latest program made possible by the Residence Hall Council. Peter Gross has been in the business of show hypnotism for seven years, after he trained in Las Vegas under the direction of another professional hypnotist. He has done shows for Microsoft, Boston Scientific, Bose, and multiple cruises. For more information, his website is www.funnymagic.com.



Madison Dickson, the million-dollar dancer.

Photo by: Sidath Wijesooriya