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Abstract:

Visual and non-visual illusions in magic

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The sense of vision is used extensively in the art of magic, but is this strong association between magic and vision fundamental or merely conventional? In this 30-minute presentation, I provide demonstrations of how the sense of vision play a pivotal role in some magic tricks, but not in others. Although the latter kind of tricks are conventionally presented using the sense of vision, they can also be presented to blindfolded participants because the main factors involved in evoking the magical experiences are illusions of spatial imagery (i. e. errors in our intuitive reasoning about how objects may or may not change their configuration in space) rather than illusions of vision. The adaptation of tricks based on illusions of spatial imagery for non-visual presentation may be useful for making the art of magic more accessible for people with blindness or visual impairments.