

Lex Schoppi (Sven Lex Schoppenhauer)  
Dr. Christian Thurnes , Lee Alex, Ali Bongo,

# QUICK CHANGE

*rapid costume changes for men*



Principles \* Speed \* Techniques \* Special Costumes



When a person believes  
that they are being followed  
on the street by another person,  
who is constantly changing his appearance,  
that person is suffering from a false identity syndrome,  
the so-called

## Fregoli - Syndrome \*

But there are not only people who believe such things!

There are in fact “artists” who perform such things!

Open your eyes! Pssst!

\*Fregoli b.1867 d. 1936

Deemed the greatest Quick Change Artist of all times.

The syndrome is named after him.

He is considered the forefather of the art of Quick Change.

Dictionary of the Art of Magic  
(German book, Author: Hubert Wedler)

Page 229

**The Art of Quick Change:** Related art of the art of magic, the continual change of appearance, of the mask and clothing , which is performed on stage with great speed. The Quick Change artist walks from one side behind a screen and appears on the other side completely changed. He works with specially prepared costumes or with helpers.

Since the author considers "Quick Change" to be the proper name of a branch of art, capital letters are used in respect of this.

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## Preface Lee Alex *(Guest Author and translation)*



I invested in the original German book soon after it was published - and the book really is a great investment for anyone with the slightest interest in the subject of Quick Change, or for anyone who intends to spend their time and energy into creating a Quick Change to include as part of their act, or indeed make a full act with these costumes. Whether you are a

beginner in this subject or are already familiar with the numerous methods, the original German book has something for everyone, including some fabulous inspirational ideas, and even a training program to develop speed. Even if you have a mere interest in this subject but do not actually intend to perform any Quick Change, this publication deserves a place in every magician's library, whether they be a stage, cabaret, street or close-up performer...."

Recently I took it upon myself to contact Sven Lex Schoppenhauer, as I was saddened that such a quality publication should only be released in the German language, especially as there was very little material available on the subject, and in particular few works that concentrated on outfits for men. I was pleased when an agreement was reached upon, as through this work I am able to combine two of my greatest loves magic and languages. In March 2005 my translation work began not only with the original text but with new texts provided by guest authors and Sven himself.

The German language version of the book appeared in the autumn of 2003 and contained 5 different tried and tested methods of closure. This English translation of the book will now has now been completed with several top secret High-Tech methods. In the following pages 15 (!) diverse methods of fastenings are be described. For me this new publication is an Encyclopedia of Quick Change.

Lee Alex, April 2005

Who is:

Lee Alex, born Lee Alexander Stainer, Wimbledon, London 1968, has been professionally involved in the art of magic since the age of fourteen. At the age of eleven when Lee first began to nurture his love for magic, what started as a hobby soon became a way of life. From the very beginning Lee's special talent and natural ability won him numerous awards from local and national magic societies. Lee's knowledge of magic developed rapidly and for many years, whilst still in normal education, his flair for foreign languages was employed by an international magic supply company in England, where Lee translated magic articles and effects for publication, along with contributing his own original effects and illusions. Lee's performing took him all over the North of England for private and public performances parties, fairs, fringe festivals, hotels, theaters, magic society functions, television and performing live for listeners over the radio... This later led to performances further afar, nationwide and cruising. Since this time Lee has performed at various venues all over Europe, Greece, Germany, Cyprus, Austria, England, Poland, Portugal, Bulgaria, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Ukraine and at -40 °C in Siberia! Lee's original employment of classic effects brought up to date, mixed with creative scenarios have most recently seen him planning and performing some major events for international companies in Turkey, adding a fifth language to his bow.



## Preface Christian Thurnes (Guest Author)



Not so long ago I wrote a review for the Magic Circle of Germany's magazine "Magie". It was about a German language book on the subject of Quick Change by Sven Schoppenhauer. I wrote: "Conceptions are described here, that everyone who has already dealt intensely with Quick Change can reproduce"... "The description genuinely works one notices that he knows what he is writing about, and indeed not just in theory but from practical experience. It is precisely this genuineness that makes this book valuable for beginners and others with an interest"... "The book is written in a way that is easy to understand; even some one who is not a tailor can read easily and fluently and be able to follow. This hides the risk for the beginner to completely read over the vast amount of practical experience, which is all so often stashed in the clauses. So beware when Sven Schoppenhauer for example mentions aside >lining in the sleeves...proves to be an advantage<, then this is in practice much more than just a side note!" "No, no have no fear! This preface is not to inform that you have purchased the wrong book. Au contraire! This cryptically written book contains so much valuable information in its clauses, that you should be careful not to read over it. Inspired by Sven's book I published all of my old notes and experience on the subject of Quick Change in the magazine "Magie". Sven immediately made contact with me, and we met in the summer of 2004. Sven insisted that I unconditionally describe my methods as a guest author in the new edition, which of course I am pleased to do. But with this English language translation you have the chance to become acquainted with even more explosive secrets from the treasure chest of Sven Schoppenhauer. If you have had dealings with Quick Change before, after reading the book most probably the same thoughts will run through your head as they did with me: "Why wasn't this book available ten years ago?"

If you are a beginner: read carefully! Read every word! Just try! Somethings read as self-evident, but in practice are difficult. Other things in contrast read as illusory, but when you try, it actually works. Sven Schoppenhauer provides in this book a valuable foundation now build your castle in the sky upon it: a performance which astounds, entertains and enchants many, many people!

So let's go! All you need is your reading glasses, and may be a couple of... well, you will see. Have fun, and good luck. Let's begin, turn the page....

Dr. Christian Thurnes (KONG)

Who is:

Dr. Christian Thurnes (KONG)

KONG has been around for many years as a magician and presenter in the roll of entertainer. Comic amazement amazing comedy his recipe is simple, and KONG concocts it with relish. In the nineties Kong appeared as a Quick Change artist. In his program "Time travel" he changed several costumes (!) according to the time he was visiting with his "Time Machine". He was considered in Germany as one of the very few Quick Change artists who was presenting multiple costume changes.





## Preface Sven Lex Schoppenhauer

Before we start, until the year 2003, I had seen no historical material about the art of Quick Change. The manuscript to the German book consisted of many notes and concept studies which were necessary for the development of my costume changes. I began my documentation in the year 2000. My German book, which originally contained 80 pages, appeared in the autumn of 2003 in which I introduced techniques which have been tried and tested by me. Small passages from the original manuscript have already been published in the year 2001 in the magazine of the Magic Circle of Germany "Magie". Whoever fancied a costume change (Quick Change) had to ascertain that there was very little specialist literature on the subject. Of course, Quick Change could have experienced a relatively greater development. I dare to doubt however that we would be able to obtain ready costumes off the peg from a trading post. Initial annoyance about lacking literary material on the subject was changed around by Quick Change artists under pressure from research. Apart from a huge investment of time in working out suitable techniques, many wrongly cut yards of material fell victim to countless costume prototypes. All costume changes are developed with laborious detailed work from scratch and then perfected through experience. Therefore each single technique represents a unique copy, in effect a concept of the artist. During the preparation stages of this book we searched together with Lee Alex for references. It is unbelievable how much has indeed all ready been written on this subject. They are like small pieces of a puzzle.

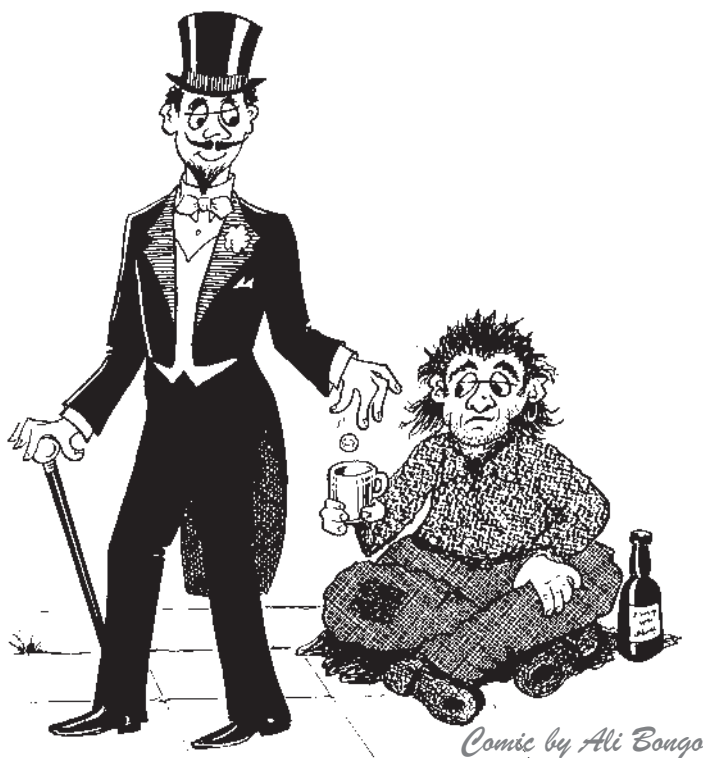
In the art of magic costume change has perpetually been considered a "real secret". Even amongst performers of costume change there are always unanswered questions. The knowledge around the possible techniques does not replace by any means the necessary development time. Techniques cannot be adopted without further development. The green costume change performer will gain this insight at the latest after their first prototype. I don't want to frighten you off, but these words by way of introduction seemed important to me.

This book is intended to give the student a basis upon which to build. It eases the phases of planning concepts for costume changes. However, it is more sensible to adapt the techniques to the existing stage conditions instead of reshaping the whole scenery for a single costume change. The first lessons are devoted to Quick Changes without special costumes. To be able to perform Quick Change without the use of special costumes sheds a new light upon this art. Indeed, in this way many costume change developments brood for months on end and many unnecessary prototypes are spared. Further on I describe prepared costumes, screens, so-called "shadow" techniques and finally a multiple costume change. Maybe this book is able to fill a gap in library of magicians.





# Chapter 1



***It is the clothes that makes a person!***

## The Cartoonist:

Ali Bongo was born in Bangalore, India of Anglo-Scottish parents, and did his first magic trick at the age of five years. By his teens he was entertaining at children's parties and inventing his own tricks. For ten years he worked in magic shops in London, including four years as manager of the magic department in Hamleys Toy Shop. By 1964 he had perfected his costumed comedy magic act "The Shreik of Araby", which has taken him to perform in forty countries around the world, with many T.V appearances.

For nine years he worked with T.V magician David Nixon as his adviser and assistant, followed by sixteen years with Paul Daniels T.V. Magic Show. Now between writing for and illustrating magical magazines and books, he advises on magic and special effects for films, television, stage musicals, opera and ballet. A recent project was for The Royal Ballet in Covent Garden, London quick changing the old crone to the good fairy in Prokofiev's "Cinderella".



### Chapter 1 The 'Quick Change'

Quick Change - the art of changing a costume at lightning speed. The distinctive feature of Quick Change is that it is seldom presented on stage, however it is more omnipresent than we believe. Sometimes they may not even be noticed by the audience; in illusions they are a wonderful component of misdirection.

Costume Changes in Illusions: During a performance of "Origami" the vanishing and reappearing assistant changes her costume, or at least the costume's color. Is this a Quick Change? In the sense of the definition of the word, actually it is not, but in the sense of the actual time available to the assistant it can be considered as such.

Pop stars increasingly use ingenious costume change techniques during concerts in order to fit their attire to the choreography.

There are also such pop stars who use these ingenious costume change techniques as part of their show. They use these instead of dance in order to spice up the seemingly erratic performances of today. If you were to present this costume change as an illusion instead of them, the teenagers may even rub their eyes instead of just shouting "Cool!"

In "Holiday on Ice" there are rapid Quick Changes with special costumes for the performers in a specially prepared "Quick Change area". They arrive on skates at the costume stand, already undressed to hang the things up and on the way back to the ice they dress themselves again, or are already dressed. The reason for special costumes lies in the fact that skates are worn. The trousers are opened from the inner seam.

The presenter in a variety show: after every act a new costume, actually a lot of time, but the spectators only register the change seconds later and forget over the length of time of the performances what the compere was wearing before. The spectator perceives this costume change evermore as a Quick Change : "Wow! He/she is always changing costume and so quick!"





# QUICK CHANGE

This book about costume change techniques for men points beginners in the right direction. The first half of the book is intensely dedicated to the different techniques. The user is trained in 36 sequences to accomplish costume changes. The combination of individual sequences results in very fast complete costume changes. This is described through six examples.

The second half of the book concerns itself with special preparations, aids and multiple costume changes. Finally a multiple costume change with six costumes from preparation and through the handling is presented with a series of 48 photos. However with this book the author cleans up an old prejudice by also attesting to the „magical user“ that the most complicated technique does not necessarily have to be the quickest.

The user is not only presented with the ability to perform split second costume changes with various articles of clothing - whether it be a janitor's costume, a dinner jacket or a tails costume. Even the split second change of a tie, bow tie, scarf or a shirt are explained.

The German language version of the book appeared in the autumn of 2003 and contained 5 different tried and tested methods of fastenings methods for holding the materials closed, and ways to open them, the so-called „tear-away“ seams. This English translation of the book has now been completed by the author and by guest authors with several top secret “High-Tech methods”. In the quick change book from Lex Schoppi 15 diverse methods of fastening are described, some of these from the original book, some newly presented methods by Lex Schoppi, a guest author, Dr. Christian Thurnes who introduces us to some top secret methods, and innovative combinations of these methods by Lex Schoppi.

The author, grandson of a magical performer, has been performing magic himself since he was eight years old. He turned an initial annoyance at the lack of literary material on the subject into a drive of research. The magic inventor and specialist in the art of quick change has an international reputation as a designer of quick change costumes. The international magic press and star magicians from Las Vegas have praised this book on the subject of his own special costume inventions. Never before has there been such a comprehensive study printed on the Quick Change methods for men's costumes. Without the use of expensive special costumes, this art is presented in a new fashion. With his stage partner Alina he transform today the stage into a catwalk and present 10 designer costumes at high speed tempo.



photo by Zakary BELAMY