

# *NashvilleVoyager*

December 16, 2025



Daily Inspiration  
Meet: Illusionist Dean Carnegie

*Today we'd like to  
introduce you to  
Dean Carnegie.*

**Hi Dean, we're thrilled to have a chance to learn your story today. So, before we get into specifics, maybe you can briefly walk us through how you got to where you are today?**

My story began as a kid, 8 years old. Back then we used to have these afternoon movies that came on once week around 3pm. I had just gotten home from school and this movie came on called HOUDINI starring Tony Curtis and Janet Leigh. The movie was made back in 1953, long long before I was born. But it was awe inspiring to me. Houdini of course, was the most famous magician of all time, and his life story was playing out before my eyes.

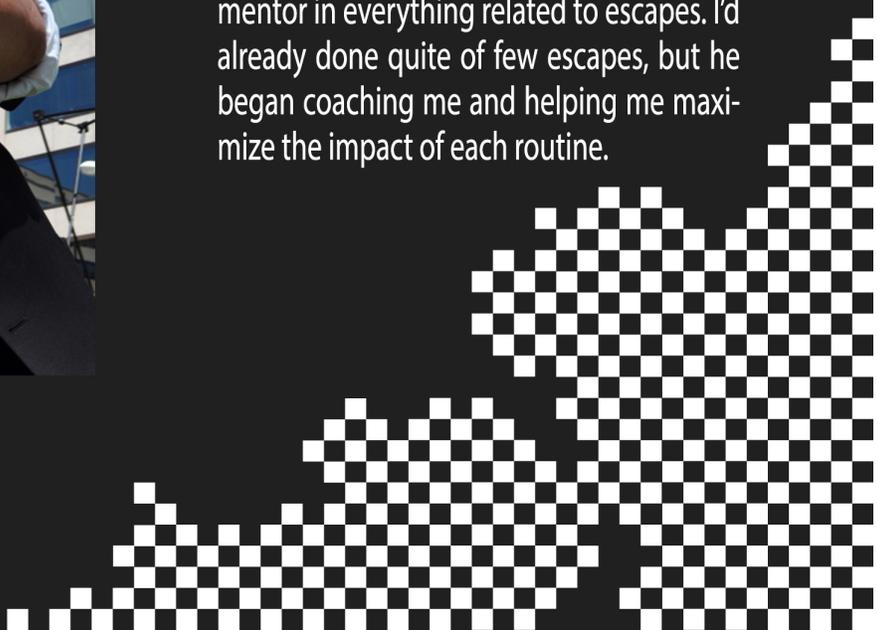


Ever since I saw the movie I was obsessed with magic. I immediately went to the book store and purchased two books on magic, one of which was a biography of Houdini. It wasn't long before I put on a magic show for all the neighborhood kids. My finale trick, escaping from my toy box, lol. I continued to learn and do magic over the years.

After high school I enrolled in the Chavez College of Magic where I learned a specific type of skill oriented stage magic. I continued with escapes and magic over the years doing it part time. Once I escaped from a postal service mail bag in front of a live audience.

Eventually I would decide to do this full time as my only source of income. That was many handcuffs, rope ties, locks and strait-jackets ago.

In the 2000s I became friends with Steve-Mr.Escape-Baker, who had been the biggest escape artist since Houdini. Steve took me under his wing and became my mentor in everything related to escapes. I'd already done quite of few escapes, but he began coaching me and helping me maximize the impact of each routine.





I think I'm one of only 2 people that he gave permission to do his Tug of War Rope Escape. This is a beast of an escape, getting tied by the wrists by two big spectators and having to free myself in 30 seconds or less. Sometimes there is a cash reward that I'll offer if I can't get free in time. So far, I've never had to pay the cash.

During this period I also became an illusionist. I met Cesareo Pelaez from the famed Le Grand David Spectacular magic show in Beverly Massachusetts. This was the longest running resident stage magic/illusion show in history, They played for 35 consecutive years at their won theater. Cesareo became my illusion mentor in many ways. I've got quite a large show with all the illusions.

My favorite is a mystery where a person is placed into a large coffin like box and then a dozen very large broken pieces of glass are forced through the box. There is no place for the person to hide so the conclusion must be they've been sliced into a dozen pieces. Then suddenly there is a surprise twist, the box is split in half making it even more baffling. Of course, the person comes out just fine.

I've always enjoyed the history of magic. I have over a thousand books on magic and magic history in my personal library. I collect vintage magic posters and props from famous performers. In 2011 I started The-MagicDetective.com blog where I write articles about the history of magic, many on Houdini.

In 2018 I started a podcast called the ***MagicDetectivePodcast.com*** which, again, is all about the rich history of magic and magicians. On occasion I will speak in-person on various magicians to historical groups, and at magic history conferences. Next year is the 100th anniversary of the death of Houdini, and I have a lot of unique things in store to celebrate that, including some escapes and speaking engagements among other things.

I moved to Nashville during the pandemic, but it seems I'm always on the road performing. I'd love to do more here in town as it's a fantastic place to perform. The audiences I've worked for here in the area have been some of my favorite. Nashville is a wonderful town for the art of magic!

**Would you say it's been a smooth road, and if not what are some of the biggest challenges you've faced along the way?**

I've had a few ups and downs over the years. One of the worst came when I developed an extreme bruise down my entire left arm from taking blood thinners. I wasn't able to use my arm. I couldn't take the pain meds because I couldn't drive if I took them. So I had to learn to do my show with one arm, obviously I had to adjust a lot of material to make it work.

The pandemic was a challenge. How do you work when your livelihood is live performances and all those venues are closed? Well, I started doing virtual shows. I set up a makeshift TV studio in my house and began to perform all over the country from my house! It was a great deal of fun. I learned how to make the shows interactive, so folks at home could participate in the magic and

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As far as Nashville, as I said, I'd love to work more here and I plan to starting 2026. Ideally I'd love to find a location and do a show regularly. I have so much material, I could create a small intimate theater show or even a big theatrical illusion show. I tend to enjoy LARGER material. I prefer for my audience to be able to SEE what is happening. A deck of cards, for example, is really hard to see on a stage. So large props, even oversized decks of playing cards, are a great way to go for me.

**As you know, we're big fans of you and your work. For our readers who might not be as familiar what can you tell them about what you do?**

One of the great things about being a magician is you get to learn many different skill sets, not just performing. I never expected that script writing, creative writing, video editing, sound editing, lighting, prop building and more would all become things I'd add to my list of skills. But then again, I enjoy the creative process. My hobby, besides magic, is painting, and of course I paint magicians.

Again, it's all about being creative and finding new ways of expression. Sometimes a piece of artwork will inspire a magic routine. Sometimes a famous painting might inspire a magic routine or give me an idea on a new technique to use in my paintings. I love to dabble in different styles so I've tried impressionism, cubism, surrealism and many other styles of painting. My stage moniker by the way is The Artist of Mystery, So everything I do ties into magic.

**What sort of changes are you expecting over the next 5-10 years?**

In regard to magic, there has been a big trend towards mentalism and mind reading. I've enjoyed adding this to my roster of things. But, different types of magic goes in cycles and I think stage magic will have a comeback. As technology and ai move forward, being able to see LIVE performers, whether it be singers, musicians, comedians, or magicians will become even more popular. Right now it's hard to trust any videos you see online, ai can create anything. But in the case of a good performing artist, they can create wonders IN PERSON, this goes for music, magic, comedy and any good live performance. It's almost a break from technology. And yet, we all use tech for production values, sound engineering and so forth. But I do think LIVE in-person shows will increase greatly, stage shows, intimate close up magic shows. all of it. Nashville is the ideal place for that to happen as it already has the music scene, magic is coming on quickly!

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