

A New Image to Mentalism

An Interview with Kevin Nicholas, Modern Mentalist



Kevin Nicholas

EDITORS' NOTE *Kevin Nicholas' stylish flare is coupled with an energy that pulls audiences and leaves them speechless. He began honing his craft at 13 years old. Within two years, he was already an international award-winning magician and on his way to captivating audiences with his illusions. Nicholas' dedication to his craft has taken him around the world to perform his own brand of magic known as Modern Mentalism (modernmentalist.com). A natural performing artist, his journey has placed him front and center with countless celebrities, fashion houses and sports icons. His shows incorporate his experiences and impeccable style, creating a high-end performance.*

Did you always know you had a passion for being a mentalist?

I didn't always know I had a passion for mentalism or magic. I always knew I had a passion for entertaining and, when I found magic, I found my vehicle to perform and entertain. Mentalism came some years later when I started honing who I was as an entertainer and developing my style and personality, as well as my way of connecting with my audience.

How is being a mentalist different from being a magician?

The difference between being a mentalist and being a magician is the same as the

difference between being a country music artist or a hip hop artist. Both are in the same family – just different styles. I call myself a “Modern Mentalist” because I like bridging the gap and blending both genres. I love the visual aspects of magic tricks such as card effects and other effects I perform, coupled with the connection and intimate relationship I create with my mentalism style.

Does mentalism work better in a more intimate setting?

Mentalism does work great in an intimate setting. As a mentalist you want your audience connected to you as you go down this amazing rabbit hole of entertainment. Mentalism is like a jazz band set; there are these fluid yet almost organic and spontaneous moments where you don't know what might come next during your performance. You want your audience to be invested and connected to these moments, so having an intimate setting is definitely a plus.

Will you discuss your process in creating your work?

My creative process is similar to an artist or fashion designer in that I want my audience to feel a connection to who I am. For me, it's my other passions that create my pieces of performance – my love of fashion, travel, cigars, wine, cocktails – and I get inspired by characters from movies. For me, I create by performing and, over time, these effects will change and evolve into an effect or a magic trick and become a piece of my art.



Kevin Nicholas entertaining celebrities

Your passion is performing for people, but there is the business side as well. Is it hard to find the balance?

Performing and business goes hand in hand. It's always business whether I'm performing or not. In our world today, we are all a brand from what we post on social to the dinner or drinks I have at a bar, I'm always on. I want to meet everyone and bring magic into everyone's lives. I created a life over the past 20 years where I have come to love the romance of both the amazing times and the hard times. Like all businesses, there are busy times and slower times. As an artist, this can be amazing and rewarding, but also frightening and stressful. As an entrepreneur, I control the future, just like any business owner.

Can mentalism be taught or is it a skill that a person is born with?

Mentalism, like magic, is an art form. Like anything, it can be taught but not all entertainers, like musicians and artists, are the same. There is only one Kevin Nicholas and I feel I bring a new image to mentalism and magic. I can learn to play a song on a guitar, but it won't sound like Eric Clapton or John Mayer. In the same way, you can learn a magic trick, but it won't look, sound or feel like Kevin Nicholas. I was born with a love of people and I love learning and connecting to them. Mentalism and magic are my vehicles for doing that.

With the success that you have achieved, do you miss the early days when it was all about the work and you were building your career?

I miss the early days very much. I was 15 years old performing at a restaurant three and sometimes four days a week for five or six hours hopping table to table. I wasn't thinking about whether this was what I would do as my career or for the rest of my life. I was just loving performing. I would walk around entertaining people for tips and getting my countless hours in. I was in the grind and wouldn't accept the answer “no” if a table didn't want to see me perform. It was these early years that molded me. They made me appreciate hard work and allowed me to appreciate where I came from and what I have become. I am in no way close to satisfied, even with all the success and amazing clients I have. There are millions of people that have not seen me perform and I can't wait to blow their minds. ●