



Chalk Art &



Showmanship

Kerry Kistler

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“
**A man profits more by observing
 an idiot than by the
 speeches of the learned.**

-Arabian proverb

”



Thank You,

to my beloved wife Jill,
 for claiming I am still fun to watch.



to my dear parents, Ralph & Harolaine,
 for always encouraging the showman in their little boy.



Harold foolishly fixes
 another chalk drawing
 using too much Final Net
 and not enough ventilation.

He Still Uses the Foolish

Let me say right up front that flashy showmanship and presentation techniques are no replacement for the secret ingredient that only the Holy Spirit can add to your program. If your real desire goes beyond just making people feel good (nothing wrong with that) or getting a standing ovation (hey, who doesn't like those), then the Spirit **MUST** be involved in the process.

I remember master chalk artist Gary Means relating a story of how one of the most spiritually fruitful services he ever had was one in which his easel collapsed on stage. Definitely not

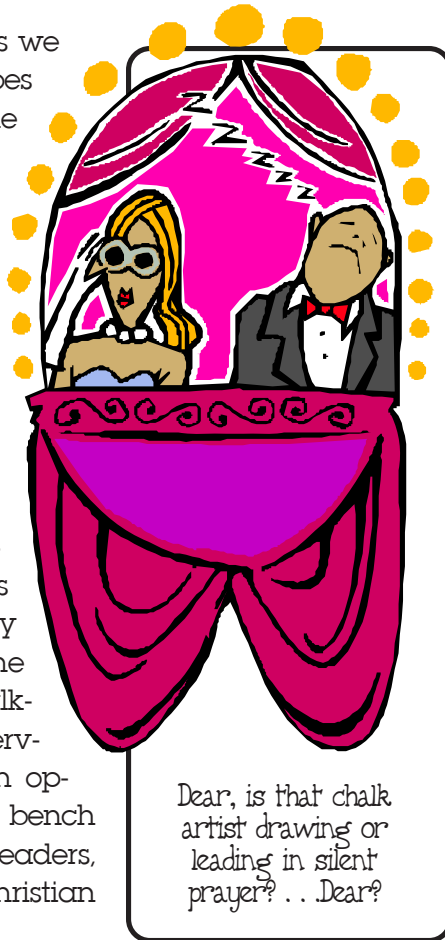
one of those polished moments we want to remember; but it goes to show that God is still in the business of using the foolish things, including our failures, to get the job done.

Having said that, let me relate a true story which still makes me sad when I think about it.

He's Still Workin' On Me?

My wife and I, delegates at an Arts Evangelism Congress, were sitting in Hell's Kitchen Park just off Broadway in New York City. Part of the three-day event included walking around Manhattan observing various street ministries in operation. I was sitting on a park bench next to one of the workshop leaders, a well-known figure in the Christian puppeteering field.

As we chatted, I mentioned that one of my performance areas included chalk art. He surprised me by making some rather caustic and sarcastic remarks about chalk art. He



**“
Man will occasionally stumble over truth, but usually manages to pick himself up, step over it, and carry on.**

-Winston Churchill

”

**“
The naked truth is always better than the best dressed lie.**

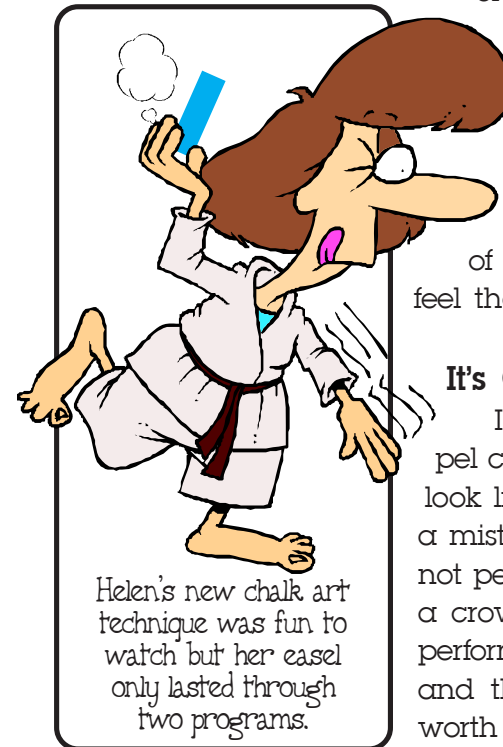
-Ann Landers

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clearly found the whole field boring beyond words. I sat there, slack jawed, groping for words of my own. He claimed that watching a chalk artist perform is about as interesting as watching a puppeteer sitting on stage while constructing a puppet to the tune of “He’s Still Workin’ On Me.” At first I thought this guy was joking, but he was being perfectly serious! Needless to say, I tried to figure out if I should laugh

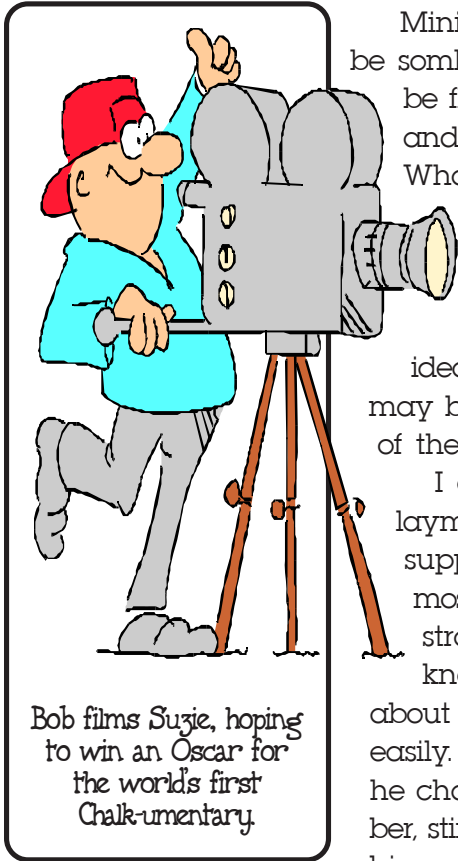
or be offended. After all, “it is smart to pick your friends - but not to pieces.”

But, faithful are the wounds of a friend and I began to wonder if some chalk artists were guilty of giving this man a reason to feel the way he did.



It's Our Own Fault

I am not saying that a gospel chalk art presentation should look like a karate movie, but it is a mistake to pretend that we are not performing when we draw for a crowd. Chalk art is part of the performing arts evangelism world and that means we need to be worth watching.



Bob films Suzie, hoping to win an Oscar for the world's first Chalk-umentary.

Ministry moments do not have to be somber and dreary. We ought to be flooding the platform with joy and an attractive, winsome style. What do you think of this statement: "God doesn't mind if you mix in a little show biz as long as you get the message across"? If you find this idea offensive or sacrilegious, you may be contributing to that image of the "boring" chalk artist.

I once asked a good friend, a layman, to provide some pulpit supply. This man is one of the most outgoing, animated, demonstrative, and social creatures I know. He can talk to anybody about anything and shows emotion easily. But, when he hit the pulpit, he changed into a monotone, somber, stiff speaker. I hardly recognized him as the same person. I wanted

to shout, "Hey! Where's my friend Joe!?" Be yourself! Don't model your chalk art ministry after some preconceived notion of appropriate pulpit behavior. The object of preaching is to persuade, but the path to persuasion is via engagement. If you fail to captivate your audience, you will likely fail to persuade them.

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They can't call you an old dog as long as you are learning new tricks.

-anon

”

“

Sometimes, when a man is in the public eye, he is just a cinder.

-anon

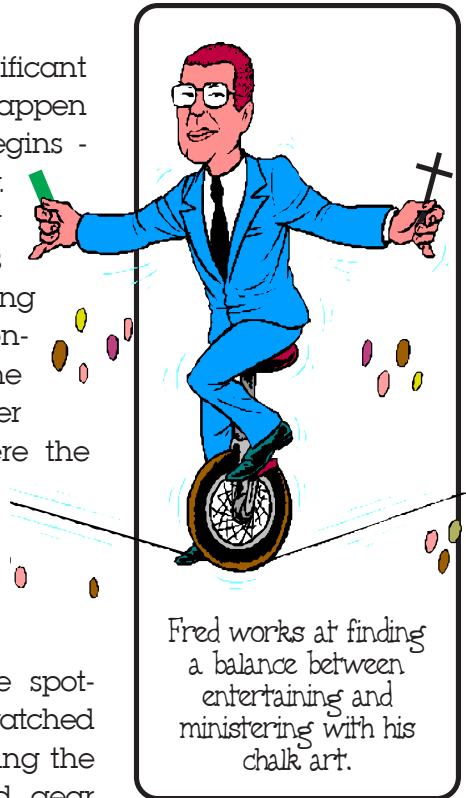
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Preshow Showmanship

Some of the most significant elements of showmanship happen well before the program begins - before you ever start to draw.

One summer I took my kids to the local fairgrounds arena to see a small traveling "mud show" circus. Subconsciously, I tend to watch the staging area out of the corner of my eye - the area where the acts are preparing and warming up. You will always see something interesting that most other people miss.

Sure enough, out of the spotlight and in the shadows, I watched one acrobat carefully polishing the fingerprints off his chromed gear well before his act went on. He wanted his equipment to sparkle while he was on it. When another performer exited



Fred works at finding a balance between entertaining and ministering with his chalk art.

the ring through a canvas flap, I glimpsed more acrobats, behind the canvas curtain, stretching and warming up their muscles in preparation to go on. I don't know why I find this "behind the curtain" view so cool to watch, but it draws me like a magnet. Maybe it makes me feel better about my own preprogram efforts and all the preparation that few people ever see or consider. This backstage world is all part of showmanship; it serves to enhance your performance.

Get It In Gear

One spring while I was traveling, I made a detour off the interstate to catch a certain magic act. The performers' material and patter were pretty good, but some of the props they used were beat-up beyond belief. I literally cringed when I saw this raggedy gear on the platform. It may have been "only" a church program, but the gospel deserves better than a shoddy representation.



The Great Rosco discovers the importance of double-checking his props when performing in Florida.

“

Doing little things well is a step toward doing big things better.

-anon

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**What's the difference between ignorance and apathy?
I don't know and I don't care.**

-Richard Pratt

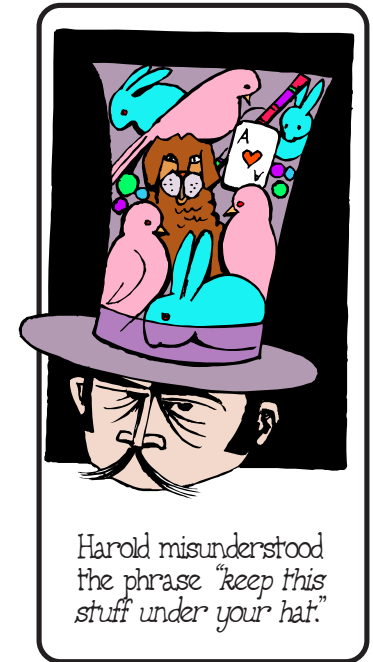
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Please don't use junky-looking equipment. It will detract from the overall quality and message of your performance. There is a reason you don't go to a job interview in tattered clothes. A professional physical appearance serves to enhance what you are trying to say. This also applies to your costume, promotional material, and sound equipment/tracks.

Sound Advice

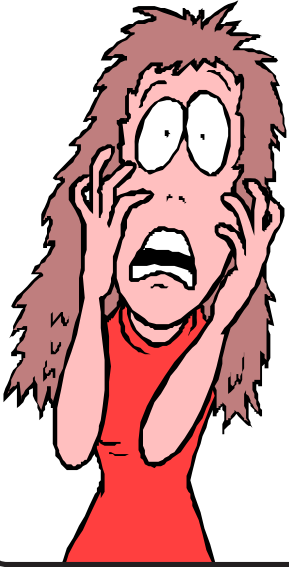
When I started out in chalk art in 1996 my sound tracks were pretty humble. I used the recording equipment I had at home which was basically a dual deck boom box. It got me started, but the quality was poor. The audible "pops" between music cuts along with the background hiss really bothered me. I finally bought a small used stereo mixer and began to phase out my cassettes, eventually replacing most of them with CD versions - which is all I bought until internet downloads became so convenient and reasonably priced.

For years, I recorded all my performance tracks to mini-disc. This format offered some great features and served me



Harold misunderstood the phrase "keep this stuff under your hat."

Wanda just learned that the church doesn't even HAVE a sound system.



well for over a decade. Currently I use iTunes and iPod for organizing my music library, assembling show tracks, and as a playback device. For mixing custom chalk tracks, I use Sony's Acid Music Studio software - inexpensive and loaded with features.

These upgrades have solved several problems. All my show tracks now have crystal-clear digital sound, plus I am able to be much more creative when mixing music with narration and sound effects. And since my entire music library is stored on my laptop, I am able to create customized tracks even while on tour. I never imagined the process could be so streamlined and convenient

- it has become a real joy rather than a burden.

Using come-in music while your audience arrives is also a very important pre-show element. Depending on what kind of music you use, it can build an atmosphere of fun, mystery, excitement, etc., before the show even begins.

Another area you may eventually want to control is the sound system used for your programs. There will likely come a point when you finally get weary of having your tracks

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A good scare is worth more to a man than good advice.

-anon

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Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark.

-anon

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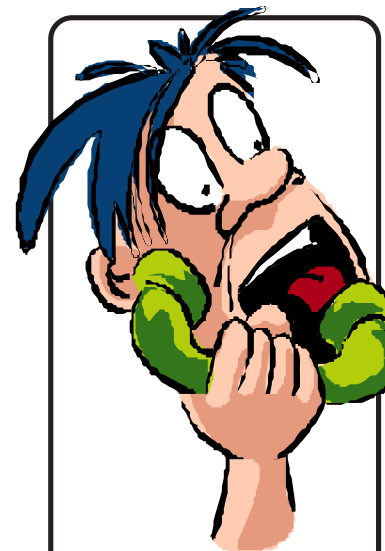
butchered by inexperienced, careless, or distracted sound techs. Oh, the horror stories I could tell: deafeningly loud or barely audible music, awful distortion, accidental starts, missed cues, A.W.O.L. sound techs, etc., ad nauseam.

When you arrive with your own sound system, people will automatically give you a degree of respect. It shows that you are serious about quality sound and committed to achieving it. I am not a control freak; I am a quality freak. At the risk

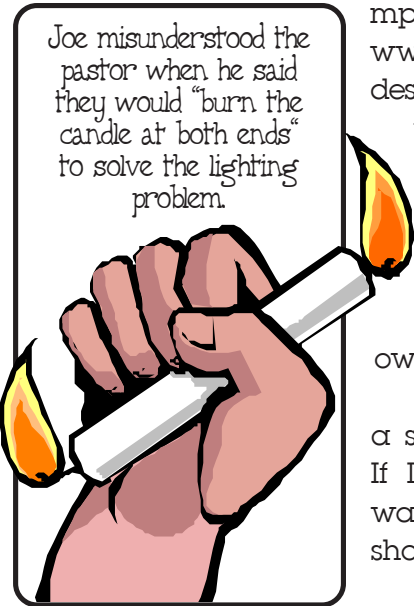
of sounding arrogant, I put far too much effort into my sound tracks and programs to have an amateur sound tech botch things up and make me look like a fool. I do enough of that myself and don't need any extra help.

But, if you really don't want the extra work of hauling and setting up your own sound system, at least spend some quality time with the house sound tech before the program begins - especially if they are still in puberty.

Another option to seriously consider is using a playback device which can be operated with a wireless controller such as the



Quick, bring me the back-up tape! Their cassette deck just ate my sound track!



Joe misunderstood the pastor when he said they would "burn the candle at both ends" to solve the lighting problem.

mp3Tech by Wireless Wizardry at www.ceswebsite.com. This device is designed to seamlessly interface with your sound system giving you complete wireless control of your show music. You can connect this to your own sound system or easily tap into the existing house system and become your own soundman by remote.

I should say here that I do carry a spare playback system with me. If I suddenly discovered that one was out of commission or stolen, the show could still go on.

Being a Moody Artist

Before you set up your nice looking equipment for a program, really think about the environment. Think about the best location for your easel. If there is a platform, use it, even if it is small. If you can't be seen, what's the point? Which brings me to lighting. Since the lighting in some venues may be very poor, consider investing in some stage lights or a follow spot.

There was one youth event I did where a guy killed the house lights at the opening of my performance, which began with a magic routine to music. I had asked him to cut the lights when I began the chalk art segment, but he misunder-

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How far the little candle throws his beams! So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

-Shakespeare

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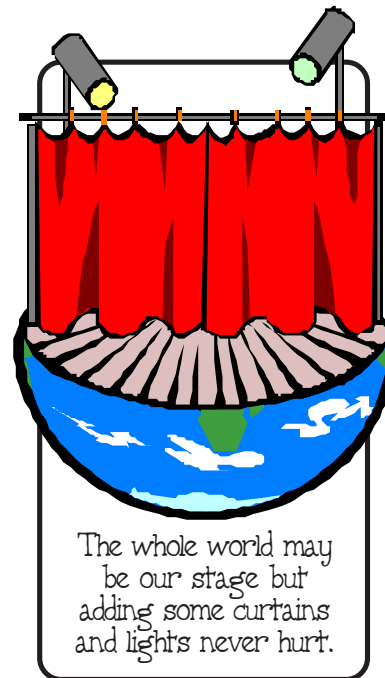
“
. . . if you tell me that curiosity killed the cat, I say only the cat died nobly.

-James Stephens

”

stood and the whole prechalk segment was very poorly lit. Shortly after this disaster I decided it was worth the extra effort to control the lighting environment during my programs.

I would rather have control of these technical issues than be at the mercy of well-meaning but (sometimes) untrained volunteers. So, I invested in two 850W Hedler C10 stage lights and two 250W par 38 can lights, two stands, and a basic DMX dimmer system for each set. Of course, using dimmers along with colored gels will allow you to alter the mood in creative and subtle ways. This, too, is part of showmanship.



The whole world may be our stage but adding some curtains and lights never hurt.

Look Behind the Curtain

Another mood setting element to consider is putting a backdrop behind your easel (thank you, Gary Means). Here are three reasons:

First, it gives you a place from which to enter after you are introduced and a place to vanish when you are done. With a backdrop, you have created a miniature theater. It creates an atmosphere of mystery for the audience. I call this the, "Don't look behind the curtain!" principle. Re-

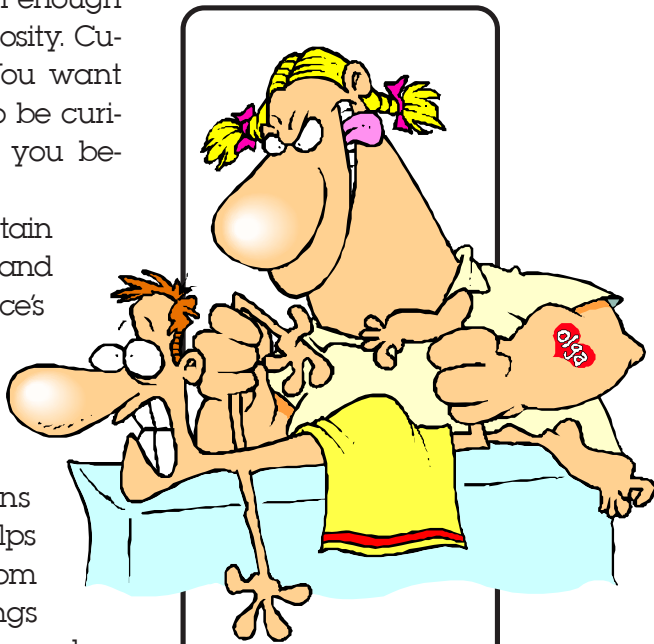
member the Wizard of Oz? Even though it was Toto who first pulled back the curtain with his collar (Really! Look again), Dorothy had seen enough to pique her curiosity. Curiosity is good. You want your audience to be curious even before you begin.

Second, a curtain frames the easel and keeps the audience's eyes from wandering off the edge of the drawing to other distractions behind it. It helps to isolate you from the other trappings on the platform like a drum set, baptistry, or pool table (common in rec halls).

Third, it provides a handy dressing room. No, really. I set up my equipment in street clothes then change before the program begins. But, this can be tough to do, depending on your location. There have been times when it was just easier and quicker to change behind my backdrop than to track down a usable dressing room. But, do it quickly. You never know when some kid will sneak up and start snooping around your equipment, and, SURPRISE! "That's why you don't look behind the curtain!"

No Prtfalls, Please!

I know some of you may disagree with me here, but the



However, there are probably a few things you should NOT do behind your curtains. Some people will walk backstage without a bit of warning. Really.

“
**Experience is a wonderful thing.
 It enables you to recognize a mistake
 when you make it again.**

-Winston Churchill

”

life you save may be your own. I almost always use a drop cloth under my easel to catch the dust. Almost. I still put down a cloth when I am working on carpet. I no longer do so on hardwood or other slick flooring. Never. This is just plain dangerous. It doesn't matter how well you tape the cloth down, you will have the feeling of instability under your feet. Unless you are using a rubber backed painter's tarp, you will subconsciously move more slowly and delicately as you draw.

Just let the dust fall on the floor, apologize for the mess and ask for a broom and mop after the program. Fully 95% of the people will brush aside your offer by saying, "We have

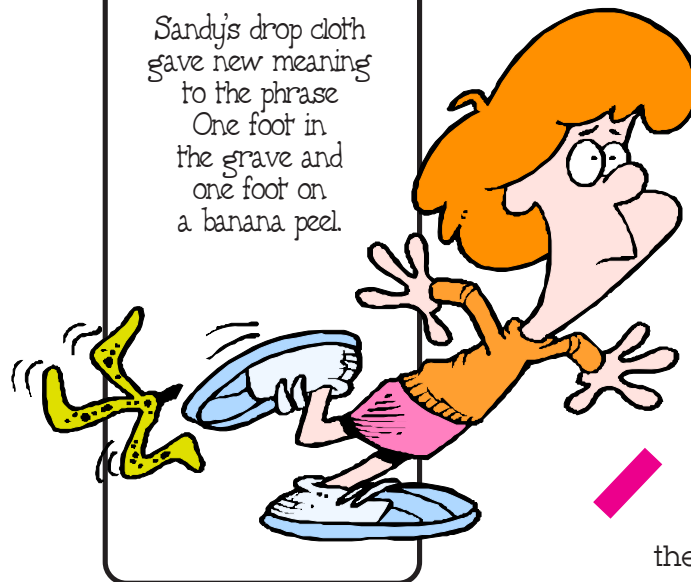
people here who will take care of

that." However, do

be conscious of chalk dust on their piano or organ. If your easel is close to either, you might want to suggest that they cover it during the program. I carry a dark sheet in my gear for just such a purpose.

Okay, on with the show. . .

Sandy's drop cloth gave new meaning to the phrase
 One foot in the grave and one foot on a banana peel.



“

**Talking comes by nature,
silence by wisdom.**

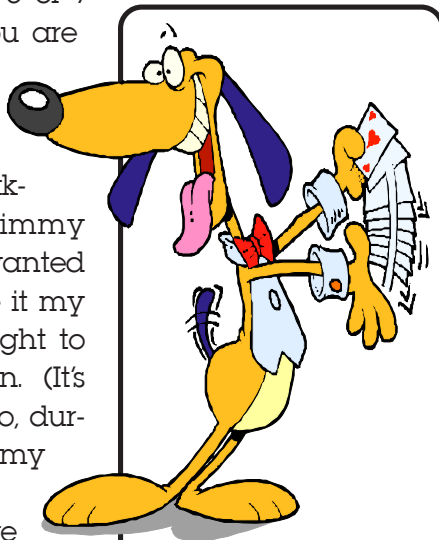
-Bernard de Voto

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The Universal Language

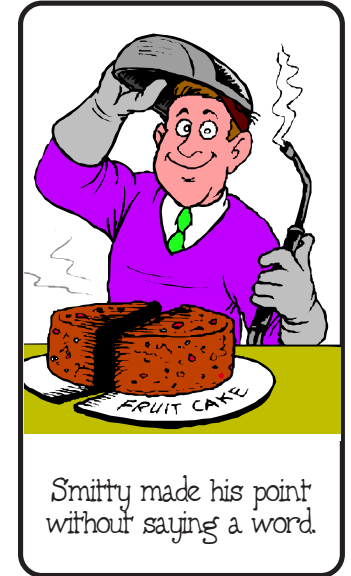
When I was about 14, our family went out to one of those cabaret/dinner-theater-style restaurants located in Honolulu. It was the kind of place where 6 or 7 variety acts perform while you are eating your dinner. They had a Chinese magician on the bill that night (it was a Chinese restaurant). Since I was taking magic lessons from Jimmy Yoshida at the time, I really wanted to meet this performer. I made it my goal to get backstage that night to meet this excellent magician. (It's that backstage thing again.) So, during the intermission, I made my move.

As I approached the stage door, a show girl coming out stopped me from entering. She only spoke Chinese, but it was obvious that she wasn't letting me through that door. But, I was ready. Silently I



Rex never did figure out how to "speak" but he sure knew how to strike a pose.

showed the gal my empty hands, back and front, made a fist, carefully reached inside and slowly produced a red silk scarf with a flourish (thank you, Master Yoshida). The girl watched carefully and when the scarf appeared, a Kool-Aid smile spread over her face. She said a few words in Chinese and opened the stage door for me. She instantly knew my reason for wanting to go backstage.



Smitty made his point without saying a word.

What's Your Sign?

Where spoken language fails, body language sings. You and your drawing should be "singing" a duet, with your body transmitting a clear lyric - or the drawing becomes a solo. Isn't it cool to watch a person speaking in sign language? I had a program once where a signer stood next to me and "spoke" to the deaf in the audience. She even signed through all of the songs on my sound track. I found myself wanting to watch her translate my words as well as the song lyrics with her captivating movements. It was a unique experience that taught me a solid performance lesson: dramatic movement attracts immediate attention.

“

**Where words fail, music
[and body language] speaks.**

-Hans Christian Andersen

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“

It is the dim haze of mystery that adds enchantment to pursuit.

-Antoine Rivarol

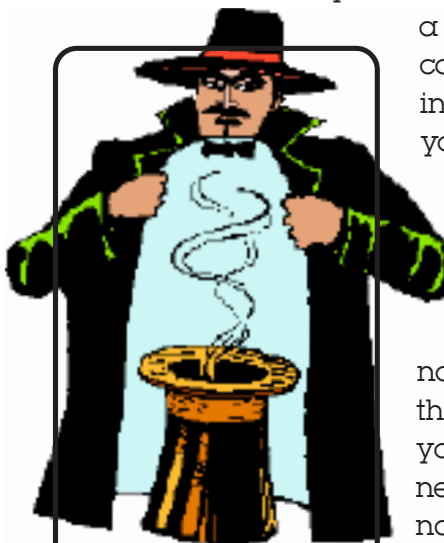
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Meet My Buddy, Bagly

As I near the last moments of talking, just before I actually pick up the chalk to draw, I build a bit of tension by inserting one of those unexpected movements. I have a cloth bubble-gum bag (the type with a drawstring) filled with baby powder resting on my chalk tray. I pick this up and begin to knead it between my hands. This serves both a practical and

a showmanship purpose. First, it coats your hands with powder making them easier to wash when you're done drawing. Second, a misty fog of powder will waft about you and look very mysterious, adding to the mood. It's like a poor man's fog machine.

This simple movement is a nonverbal cue to the audience that things are about to change - that you are about to get down to business. It's rather like watching a gymnast chalk up their hands before beginning a routine. It can also be a cue to the person running the house/platform lights. If you are using an in-house sound tech and he's slow on the play button, you can always grab the bag and con-



The Great Karl shocked everybody when he revealed that the mysterious smoke was not coming from a fog machine.

tinue to powder up until he starts the music. If he's asleep at the switch, you can throw Bagly at him without fear of injury (okay, I'm kidding - a little).

I sometimes pick up Bagly in the middle of my drawing and powder up again if my arm needs a short rest, or just for effect. You will find that squeezing Bagly also helps with stress. This humble little bag is a powerful prop. Many people have asked me about Bagly after my shows.

Sealo's Lesson

In my collection of magic memorabilia, I have a couple of autographed sideshow postcards - or "pitch cards." On the front of each card is a picture of a sideshow performer Stanley Berent (aka Sealo).

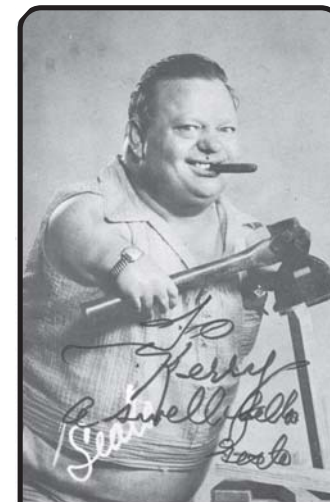
He was one of those unfortunate victims of a birth defect which left him with flipper-like hands growing directly from his shoulders - he had no arms. Imagine the difficulty of performing the simplest of tasks - tying your shoes or driving a car. If any person had reason to be hard and bitter at life, it was Sealo.

“

Obstacles cannot crush me. Every obstacle yields to stern resolve.

-Leonardo da Vinci

”



On the reverse side Sealo wrote, "To Kerry, Wishing you the best in your coming years and please always stay as you are - just a swell fellow, will you?"

“

**. . .the difference between half a heart
and a whole heart makes the differ-
ence between defeat and victory**

-A.H.K. Boyd

”

Yet, Sealó, the performer, was a consummate showman. I was only 14 or 15 as I stood in that sideshow tent watching Sealó perform, but he defined the word “showman” for me that day. As he began his pitch, Sealó acted like it was the first time he had ever presented it even though he had delivered it thousands of times before in a thousand different

cities. He was smiling, joking, winking, laughing, and animated as he went through his spiel. He demonstrated how he shaved, shuffled cards, chopped wood, and more. He knew how to entertain and if he hated his job you would never have known it.

By way of contrast, there was another performer there that day - a human blockhead & fire eater. He was a much younger man than Sealó, but he acted much older (notwithstanding the fact that he pounded nails up his nose and stuffed torches down his throat for a living). But, from strictly a showmanship point of view, the second guy projected real road-weariness and boredom in both his body language and monotone delivery.

The contrast between Sealó

“Step right up folks and see the eighth wonder of the world, that rarity among rarities, the elusive, the incredible. . .the gospel chalk artist!”



and the Blockhead was glaring. Even after several decades, the disparities between the two have stuck with me. One guy was captivating to watch; the other guy was just a hack - going through the motions - and it showed.

Years later, someone told me that Sealó had been a heavy drinker, which may be true. It's possible that Sealó was somewhat “medicated” when he pitched his act that day. How much more should we, being filled with the Holy Spirit, captivate a crowd (for the glory of God) with the showmanship of a Sealó? Use chalk art to show your excitement about Jesus and how much you love Him!



Maestro Fingerfinger traded in his baton for lecturer's chalk after seeing a gospel chalk performance.

Conduct Yourself!

Why are we afraid of being flamboyant? I suspect we are afraid of looking stupid or offending others, or simply feel unsure of our abilities. I've been to the symphony a few times over the years and I think the conductor is great fun to watch. He shows every

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**A man who wants to
lead the orchestra
must turn his back on the crowd.**

- Napoleon Bonaparte

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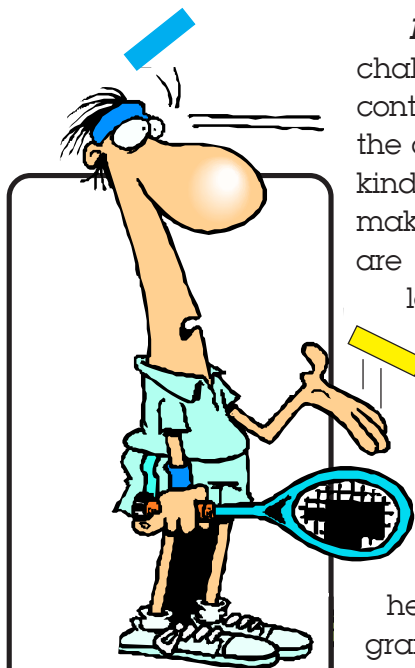
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Life is like a game of tennis; the player who serves well seldom loses.

-anon

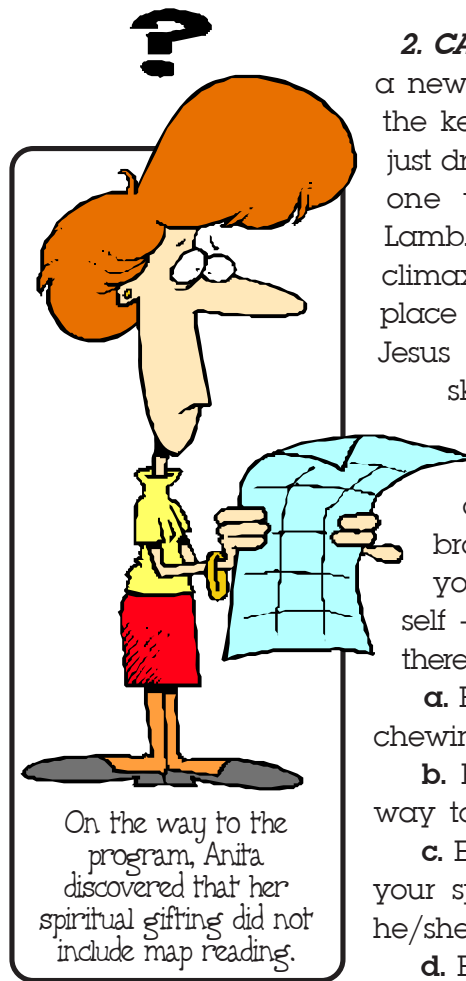
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emotion possible with that little baton. He attacks the air, caresses it, shakes his fist, and embraces the whole orchestra with a sweep of his arms. So, start showing some passion, some emotion while you draw! You are the conductor and the easel is your orchestra. Try these ideas for starters:



Stanley never expected the easel to return his serve.

1. ATTACK THE PAPER with your chalk. Making bold, wild, or semi-controlled lines when you first begin the drawing. You will need the right kind of music in your sound track to make this look good. Imagine you are playing tennis; whacking volleys, forehand and backhand, to the rhythm of the music. Listen for the accents in the music and “fire those strokes in there,” even if a few of them are “throw away” lines that you will eventually cover up later. Nothing makes me smile more than hearing someone say after a program, “I thought you had ruined the drawing a few times, but somehow you always managed to save it!” I reply with a smile, “Whew! I was worried a few times myself.”



On the way to the program, Anita discovered that her spiritual gifting did not include map reading.

2. CARESS THE DRAWING like it's a newborn child. Again, music is the key here. Let's say you have just drawn Jesus' face while someone was singing “Watch the Lamb.” As the song swells to its climax, reach over and lightly place your fingers on the figure of Jesus while looking up into the sky. Get the idea?

3. SMILE. A LOT. I will always remember Seal's broad, toothless grin. Look like you are really enjoying yourself - like you are thrilled to be there, drawing, for just that crowd:

- a. Even if you would rather be chewing glass right then, smile.
- b. Even if you got lost on the way to the show, smile.
- c. Even if you had a fight with your spouse in the van because he/she got you lost, smile.
- d. Even if you had to cover all of the church windows with black plastic by yourself (again) because the pastor thought it wasn't necessary - even then, smile.

“

It doesn't take a lot of muscle to give the heart a lift.

-anon

”



Master chalk artist Gary Means tries the retro approach with his drawing technique.

Of course, let common sense prevail here. I would not do a lot of smiling while drawing the crucifixion to the strains of "The Via Dolorosa".

4. MOVE AROUND THE DRAWING. A LOT. Keep 'em guessing, "Is he/she done drawing that _____ (mountain, tree, lighthouse, etc.)?" Don't get locked into any area of the drawing for more than a minute - even if that part isn't done, fly across the paper and dash in a tree or bush or something and go back to the unfinished business later.

5. MOVE AROUND THE EASEL. A LOT. Left to right, right to left. You are not a window, you are a door. Stay out of the way of the drawing - do not park in front of it while you draw or you will lose the audience. If you normally draw right-handed, force yourself to draw left-handed every few minutes. Even if it is just blocking-in an area or adding some fluoro highlights to something. Your dominant hand can still do most of the tough stuff, but let your other hand look busy once in a while too.

People will think you are ambidextrous, but more impor-

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Great dancers [& chalk artists] are not great because of their technique; they're great because of their passion.

-Martha Graham

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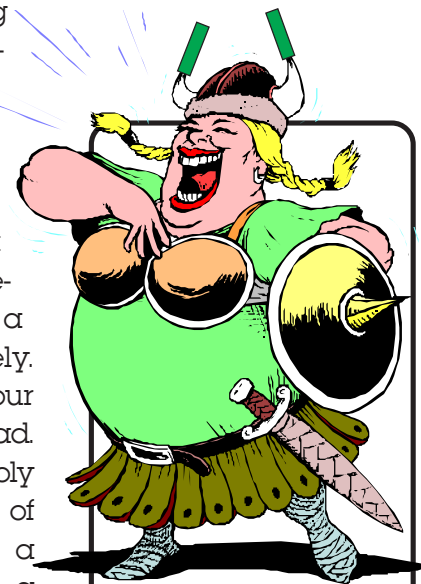
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There is no strong performance without a little fanaticism in the performer.

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

”

tantly, it will force your body to the opposite side of the easel. This allows the other side of the audience to have an unobstructed view. In fact, several times during your drawing, completely walk away from the easel and check out the overall composition. Hold this position for 5-7 seconds, letting the audience absorb the drawing without you in the picture (pun intended). Let the drawing sing a solo for those few moments and then plunge right back in.

6. RESPOND TO THE MUSIC. Sing along with it. Dance a happy jig to it. Nod in agreement with it. If the lyrics ask a question, respond appropriately. When one song asks, "Does your light still shine?" I nod my head. When another song says, "The Holy Ghost will take the chicken out of you," I flap my elbows like a chicken a few times and get a laugh. And, when the same song says, "The Holy Ghost will live inside of you!", I turn to the audience and make a sweeping motion. Which reminds me. . .



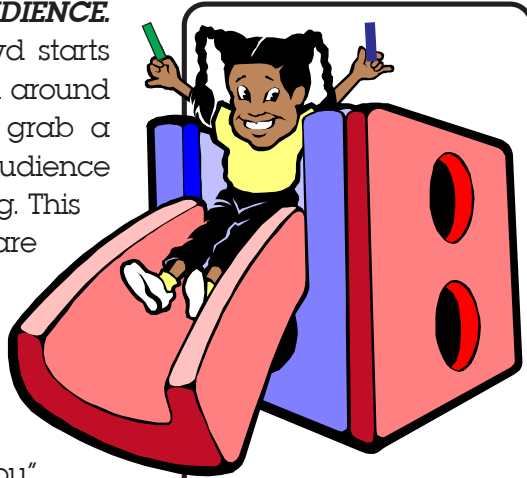
Helga's first attempt at a chalk opera did not meet with critical acclaim but it was still lots of fun to watch.

7. INVOLVE THE AUDIENCE.

If someone in the crowd starts clapping to a song, turn around and encourage it. Or, grab a volunteer out of the audience to help with the drawing. This works best when you are on ground level and not a platform. When you grab a 5-10 year-old kid by the hand, escort them to the easel, and let them "help you" draw, you will win the hearts of your audience.

Any child can help you block in a foreground area such as water or grass. Just hand them the color you want and coach them in their ear as you demonstrate what you want them to do. After the person has drawn for thirty seconds or so, step back, strike a "Ta-Daaa" pose and begin applauding your helper. The audience will join right in.

Then, escort your little helper back to their seat, slip them one of those little handi-wipe packets and resume your drawing. If necessary, you can always draw over your assistant's work but the real point is you have just helped your audience feel that they, too, could become a chalk artist.



It was obvious from an early age that Tamika would grow up to be a chalk artist someday.

“

There is always one moment in childhood when the door opens and lets in the future.

-Arnold H. Glasgow

”

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Laughter is much more important than applause. Applause is almost a duty. Laughter is a reward.

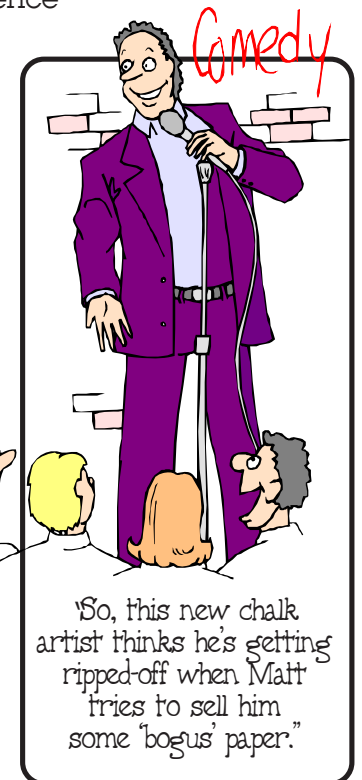
-Carol Channing

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8. WOULD YOU CARE FOR A LITTLE WHINE? When something goes wrong, so what? I once failed to firmly tighten the thumbscrew on one of the front telescoping legs of my easel. Halfway through the drawing I felt as though I was slowly losing my balance. In fact, it was my easel that was falling over - sloooooowly. It would have crashed to the ground if a quick-thinking audience member had not rushed to the platform and grabbed my easel.

Another time, an extension cord to my sound system failed and I completely lost my music. I kept drawing in the silence for two or three minutes while my wife tracked down the source of the problem. My response? I turned to the audience once and announced loudly, "This is what we call 'Acapella Drawing'". Yeah, it cracked everybody up and nobody really even mentioned the problem after the program. Some thought it was part of the act!

Stuff happens. That's how you learn to do better the next time. Now my wife is ready with some



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**Creativity is allowing oneself
 to make mistakes. Art is knowing
 which ones to keep.**

-Scott Adams

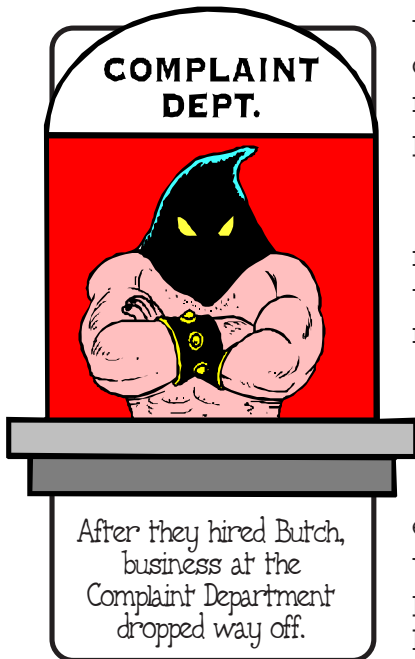
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backup piano music just in case.

Dropping chalk is also common, especially if you draw like a maniac. When it happens, do not bend over to pick it up unless it's a color you absolutely must use again. It looks awkward, sometimes provocative, and is usually unnecessary. Instead, show some humor if you lose a stick. Act like you're still drawing for a few seconds then "realize" the stick is gone and wave good-bye to it. If you grab the wrong color of chalk by mistake, make a few strokes with it first. No need to announce your mistake.

In other words, when things go wrong, (and they will - count on it) don't complain, and don't pitch a fit. That's bad showmanship - and a poor witness.

9. REDIRECT THE PRAISE. When finishing up my drawings, I try to time it so that there is a bit of music left on the sound track. I step behind my curtains so that the drawing can sing another solo for a moment (another good reason to have a backdrop). Normally, even the most conservative group will break into spontaneous applause. I step back out, take a small bow and immediately redirect the



praise to Jesus. I point and look upward and may applaud my Saviour. I may point to Jesus' face in the hidden drawing or to a cross on the church wall. Anything to acknowledge Jesus as the one due the praise. And keep smiling.

I'm So Glad We Had This Time Together (thanks, Carol Burnett).

One last word about Sealó. After watching the sideshow acts that day back in 1976, I left the tent with the rest of the crowd. But, for some reason, I turned around and went back in looking for Sealó. I snuck around a canvas flap (again, with the backstage thing) where they kept the headless woman illusion. I was one of those snoopy kids who wanted to look behind the curtain. SURPRISE! I caught Sealó answering nature's call in the sawdust (really, but don't ask).

After his initial surprise wore off and I had apologized about 18 times, Sealó befriended me. He should have kicked me out on my ear but he forgave quickly. Then, he showed me around backstage (woo hoo!). He autographed and gave me two of his pitch (souvenir) cards which he normally sold



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**. . .and please always stay as you
 are - a swell fellow, will you?**

-Stanley Berent (aka Sealó)

”

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**Keep away from people who
belittle your ambitions.**

**Small people always do that,
but the really great make you feel
that you too can become great.**

-Mark Twain

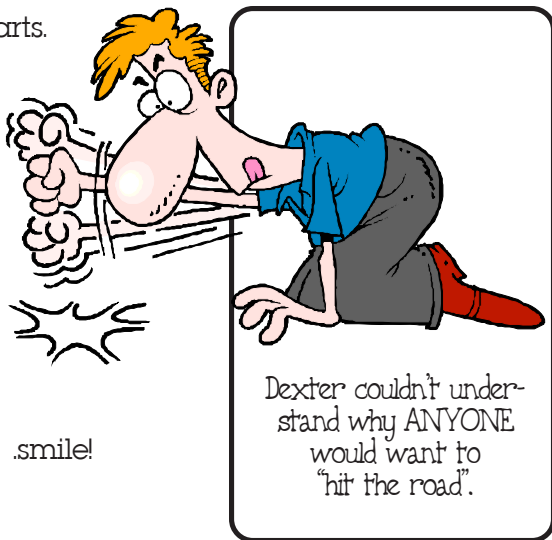
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for \$1 each. He answered the unthinking questions of an immature kid with smiles and a wink. When I finally left, he reached out one of his “flippers” and gave me a hearty handshake .

Here’s the point. Your showmanship shouldn’t stop when the drawing is finished. All of your interaction with people following the program will be remembered. Don’t have a performance victory during the show and then drop the ball while packing up your gear to leave. Let the people help where they can and continue to win their hearts.

After all, you are Christ’s ambassador on and off the platform. This, too, is showmanship - it’s letting Jesus’ love show through you as His servant. What could be more fun and fulfilling?

And, don’t forget. . .smile!



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**Progress is impossible without
change, and those who
cannot change their minds
cannot change anything.**

-George Bernard Shaw

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Thanks for coming by.
Hope you enjoyed the show!

“I sure enjoyed your new book!”

“Kerry Kistler provides within these pages gems from his experience that will provide tremendous value to anyone wishing to take their chalk art presentations to that next level. Great job, Kerry. I highly endorse your efforts.”

- *Toby Travis*

“I love Kerry Kistler’s book, *Chalk Art & Showmanship*. It’s full of insightful and practical advice for anyone who works on stage. This book clearly targets areas of poor performance pitfalls that hinder a chalk artist from connecting with his audience. Once I began reading *Chalk Art & Showmanship* I found it hard to set down. The book is full of inspiring and thought-provoking quotes and unique illustrations.

Any performer who wants to present the gospel entertainingly and effectively will benefit from Kerry’s insights. Without hesitation, I recommend all performing artists to take advantage of Kerry’s rich performance background by learning from him through *Chalk Art & Showmanship*.

- *Randy Christensen*

“Although I am not a chalk artist, I certainly appreciate the art form presented well. Kerry Kistler has described through understandable stories and ideas how to share the gospel through chalk well! This book will help any performer take notice of his or her art and look for the details to do it better.”

- *Barry Mitchell*

“Everybody should read and learn from this pretty good piece of writing. All of the cartoons will give you a lift too.”

- *Gary Means*