Magic and the Human Mind

They are scientists at the Barrow Neurological Institute in Phoenix, and they have teamed up with magicians and illusionists to learn about the human mind.

Why are our brains so susceptible to illusions?

How do magicians use humor to perform tricks?

What do artists like Leonardo Da Vinci have in common with magicians?

Join the conversation with MacKinnon and Martínez-Conde. They’re taking your questions through January 12, 2011.

Additional Resources:

Best Illusion of the Year Contest: Click here for award winning illusions from around the world.

Change Blindness: British illusionists Derren Brown tests people’s attention in this video. Click below to watch the video and tell us, would you notice the swap?

Black Art: Watch French magicians Michelle and Ernest Ostrovsky perform this classic act called Omar Pasha. Then ask MacKinnon and Martínez-Conde how it works.

Galina

Hi,

Just saw the video. I am referring to the video of Derren Brown — people switch. Pretty interesting experiment.

First of all, I would have noticed that it was a different person.

Second. How do you know if the people didn’t notice that it was a different person, did you ask them later? Maybe they didn’t notice, but only 1 guy actually said something. Maybe the other people just didn’t want to say anything.

When you are approached by a person, you pick up on their side, their tone of voice, height, I would have totally noticed the switch.

What do you think contributes to people not realizing that they have been duped? Maybe they were in their own little world and weren’t paying attention.

Thank you.