For the sheer lack of self and Teller, magic is all about exploiting the gaps in human perception.

Photo: Courtesy

One of the first tricks in Penn and Teller’s Las Vegas show begins when Teller takes the stage, goes into a corner stage with 12 cigarettes, inhalers, dogs in a box, and changes them. Then he takes all the cigarettes from his right pocket and lighters.

No magic needed for that: Teller pulls out a small surgical scissors from his pocket and calmly cuts open one of the cigarettes. Teller puts it in his mouth and lights it. He doesn’t even count on the audience to notice the scissors. The television camera is focused on his hands, but the lighter has to be held steady to light the flame. The illusion is quite convincing as perfectly every step looks real, even when you’ve shown them the trick.

Penn and Teller demonstrate the seven basic principles of magic.

The trick is called Inside Out and is the first time we pull off a cigarette, ceremoniously, disassemble it, recharge it, and insert it. People will marvel at your ability. Teller says shortly before showing the trick.

"You have no magic here, it’s just open our eyes to what’s there, but that doesn’t mean we’re not performing magic."

For Teller’s tricks to be fully legal, magic is not a form of entertainment. He must be able to reveal the everyday place of magic, so that people become aware of the tricks behind the illusion. He then presents his next trick, a fake cigarette, in his mouth and lights it. He doesn’t even count on the audience to notice the scissors. The television camera is focused on his hands, but the lighter has to be held steady to light the flame. The illusion is quite convincing as perfectly every step looks real, even when you’ve shown them the trick.

Penn and Teller’s performance of this trick shows the seven basic principles of magic.

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