

# MASTER of ILLUSION



It's rare to find someone who dares to turn their back on a career in order to make a living from their hobby. It's even rarer to find someone who has done it with such success as Philip Partridge.

Despite gaining a degree in Pharmacy from Manchester University, studying for a post-graduate diploma and working for five years in the NHS as a clinical pharmacist, Philip still harboured a childhood dream – to be a magician. “I have always been interested in becoming a magician since the age of seven,” says the Didsbury-based performer. “I was given a magic set for Christmas, which had actually been intended for my brother.”

With that seed planted, when his enthusiasm for magic grew stronger than his interest in medicine, Philip decided to turn his hobby into his job and, with the help of the Prince's Trust, became a full-time entertainer in 1997. “Once close family could see I was making a living they were happy,” Philip reveals. “On Halloween in 1998 I presented a Night of Magic with The Liverpool Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.”

From there, things snowballed as Philip cannily built his reputation and earned more and more high-profile gigs. He appeared (with his mum) on the BBC1 Saturday night show, I'd Do Anything, and got the chance to perform in Las Vegas. More high-profile performances followed, including a stint at Brooklyn Beckham's third birthday bash.

## Charming the Prince

When Prince Charles came to Bowdon in April 2003, Philip was there to meet – and baffle – the Prince with his tricks. Prince Charles was so impressed that he mentioned Philip on his official website. This in turn led to his talents being spotted by the exclusive 7-star Burj Al Arab hotel in Dubai, where Philip performed last New Year's Eve to an audience that included Sven Goran Eriksson and his partner Nancy.

Despite the glamour, Philip is still firmly Didsbury-based and uses his magic talents to help businesses. Companies such as PC World Business use Philip to attract potential clients to their stand at trade shows, and he also boosts morale at call centres by visiting with his close-up magic show. “I love entertaining people,” he says, “Whether it's in a close-up intimate setting or on stage.” Though it started as a hobby, Philip takes the business side of his performing very seriously. Having benefited from the Prince's Trust when he started out, he now works with the Trust as a volunteer mentor, helping out other arts-related businesses and visiting schools to inspire kids to follow their dreams. Philip tells them: “I have turned a hobby into a business. I love my magic, but you have to be practical to survive, so it is business first, entertainment second, and magic third.”



If you would like more information about Philip, you can check out his website at [www.philippartridge.co.uk](http://www.philippartridge.co.uk) or to make a booking, call 0161 448 2672.

