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### Hawley Magic Brings Magic to GWU Family Weekend

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# Hawley Magic brings magic to GWU Family Weekend



## GWU Today interviews Hawley Magic



GWU reporter, Cole Ray met with world-renowned magicians, Jonathan and Tricia Hawley to discuss their careers in the entertainment industry and what people can expect from their show on Friday at 7:30 p.m. in the Tucker Center. Visit [Gardner-Webb's family weekend website](#) For more information on the show.

## Read the interview here

### **Cole: Tell me a little about yourself and what drew you to magic/illusions?**

Jonathan Hawley: I'm originally from the U.K., a place called Nottingham, that's exactly where I'm from. There used to be a magician on TV for about 18 years when I was growing up as a kid and his name was Paul Danials. He had a magic kit in Woolworths and every time I went in Woolworths I wanted the magic kit. Then one Christmas I got the magic kit and fell in love with magic and it kind of went from there. Typical magical story really.

### **Cole: Where was your first performance?**

**Jonathan:** I used to be a professional dancer. I don't have the body for that now, but I used to. The same for Trisha that's how we met and joined our acts. My first magic performance was at school, which was a disaster. I was eleven. My mom used to make me do stuff like that. Our first professional gig was at a pub in England. We were able to first practice in a pub owned by a friend of mine in this room they did not use for free if we performed one night. That was my first performance. Everyone was drunk and people were fighting. If you

know anything about small villages in England and their Pubs, well that was a typical response. I was doing a traditional link and rings routine and making them fly. So I'm doing the rings and there is music and while I'm doing it there is fighting and screaming and somebody gets thrown out of a door. We thought if we could survive that, we could survive any show.

**Cole: What were your first tricks?**

**Jonathan:** There was Paul Danials on the T.V., but there was also Penn and Teller and they used to show little tricks and things that you could do. They did a show in England and they got a news reporter every night at ten o'clock and everybody knows who he is. So Penn and Teller got him to be reading the news and then all of a sudden in the middle of the forecast he would say "this just in" and reach in and say, "is this your card?" And then he would put it down and carry on with the news. What you were supposed to do was to record this for later when your friends and family would come over and you would do a trick with cards. You act like you got it wrong and then you put the TV on and press play when they weren't looking and the news guy would say "is this your card?" And it blew people's minds. That was kind of like the first thing I did.

**Cole: What magician did you look up to and want to be like when you were first beginning your career in magic?**

**Jonathan:** Obviously David Copperfield. He accomplished everything you can with magic. I think he is a billionaire now. I'm not that close, but I might be one day. I liked Paul Danials a lot more than the style of David Copperfield. Pauls Danials would wear a tuxedo and bow tie kind of style. Copperfield was more like the stage magician with fire and the girls and all kind of crazy stuff. That's what I enjoyed the most growing up.

**Cole: I know you have performed on cruise ships, America's got talent, and in the UK, can you tell me a little bit about these venues and what it is like to preform in each?**

**Jonathan:** We did America's got talent before we did the cruise ships. America's got talent, we still think it was a dream that didn't really happen because the whole experience from beginning to end was absolutely amazing. You go on such highs and lows during the whole thing and I say we didn't fifteen minutes of fame, but we got five minutes of fame. We'll take it, it was good. We had people asking for our autographs, trying to get their picture with us. It was just insane. Before that we were kind of struggling to get picked up so when America's got talent came to Charlotte and we said why not we might as well try because we can't go any lower than this now. So we went and we got through and we got all the way to the live shows.

It was absolutely amazing and then they showed us on one of the first commercials for that show. We didn't even know. We just sat there eating whatever and it came on and we were like "rewind, play rewind". It was important. It was so cool and then from that one commercial, the show hadn't even aired when one of the cruise lines contacted us and wanted us on board. We were still stuck with the show for a little bit so as soon

as we were done they snatched us up and that was the princess cruises and we were with them until the corona virus hit basically. We were with them for eight years. It was amazing because it really did open that door for us. The whole experience of it was just surreal as well.

Especially on you get through and you get through and then it looks like a boot camp in Vegas, which was awesome because you're in a suite in Vegas. It was the Venetian. We did a performance on the Venetian stage in Vegas which was like crazy. It was all a blur really, like did I just do that? The judges were there. We were like O my god, O my god. The scariest thing was the live show. That in the impact performing arts center in New Jersey and it's massive. It's one these theaters that are three or four levels. You're all sat in the green room together, all the acts and we're watching it on the tv as well and they call you to the stage. So we're watching it and then a commercial comes on and "Hawley Magic to the stage". That's when your knees start to go and shake. You go out there and realize while their showing a commercial, you go out and the audience is there. You go out and stand on your mark. As soon as you are there the audience is already cheering and the judges are already there. So you start getting really nervous. I am in position and then come the big speakers and "we're going live in ten, nine, eight, etc." My heart was beating faster and faster. It was just so surreal.

**Cole: What is your favorite magic trick and why?**

**Jonathan:** I don't have a favorite really. There's so many. I don't know to be honest. I like them all. They're all my favorites for different reasons. I like the one I do with the lightsabers, but honestly I like them all.

**Cole: Since you perform on cruise ships, how has covid impacted your business?**

**Jonathan:** Since Covid we've obviously had to stop working on the cruise lines. That was our main source of income. It has affected us a lot. Basically we've not been working. We've been prating a lot. We do our illusions in a warehouse and we go there and we set up our lights and we practice just to keep our bodies there. I always loved photography as well. We've always done our own promotional stuff as well. Our own promotional photos and videos and all that stuff and I have kind of taught myself basically to do that. If I wasn't doing magic, I would love to do photography. We never thought that would be an actual reality, but then covid hit and we had to do something so we started getting into that and we've been doing actually a lot of shoots on Gardner-Webb University. Good thing about photography is you can stay six feet away and still do a shoot.

**Cole: Trisha, since you are from Shelby, what is it like to preform where you grew up?**

**Trisha:** Both of us love it because he feels like Shelby is his home now too, but we love performing locally because we have so many friends and family. You just get that natural support because everybody wants to support their local people. So I really love performing in Shelby. I think it is one of my favorite places to preform because when I was growing up I never got the opportunity and I think the first time we preformed at the Don Gibson twice. The first time was so cool because it was a packed house. There were so many faces

and people we knew and that's what's nice about it when you go out there on stage you see faces. You just know you can mess up and they'll still love you hopefully. We don't mess up. Knock on wood. There's not as much pressure when you have friends and you know you got that support.

**Cole: I watched your clips on your website and noticed you do some escape performances. They appear to me dangerous. Can you tell me about those acts?**

**Jonathan:** Yeah, there are a few dangerous acts, one of them is I have to put a straight-jacket on. It's made of canvas and leather and buckles. It's a real tough straight-jacket and somebody from the audience comes up and they put me in the straight-jacket and they make sure it's all tight and they're fastening it all around. Then Trisha and another assistant will lay me down and hook my legs up to a device which is twelve foot wide. It looks like a bear trap in a way. It's a twelve foot wide thing with big spikes on it and there's a saw on top of it like a buzz saw and a rope that holds the spike, the big claw thing up. So I lay down and they hook my feet up and it lifts up in the air and goes all the way up and I have to escape out of the straight-jacket and get myself off the contraption before the saw cuts the rope and releases the, we call it the jaws of death. So that's kind of cool and we do another one as well in which I get chained up in like a box with spikes above my head and that same kind of deal with the saws coming down and cuts the rope and then the spikes will drop down through the box. So there's a couple of dangerous thing in there which take practice and escaping and stuff. You got to stay slim for the straight-jacket otherwise there is no way I'm getting out of that thing.

**Cole: How do you come with new tricks and what do you perceive is the next frontier for magic?**

**Jonathan:** We're always developing and coming up with new ideas and new tricks and when I do this show for you guys, I got another show the weekend after. After that I'm going to take a little break and I'm going to develop a new show. It's a different style of show, but it's more like storytelling and things like that and close-up magic. So I'm going to develop that kind of show. So we're always developing, coming up with new ideas, trying to come up with new ways, to do things, and make it look cool. I think as far a magic in the future, I think magicians are really good at adapting, like we've always got to adapt. We've got to adapt with the technology, with everything. With Covid everybody adapted and started doing shows online. Then they have to get all the set up for all that and figure all that out so I think we're very good at adapting as magicians and I think that's what we'll do.

**Cole: How long does it take you to perfect the trick?**

**Jonathan:** I'm still perfecting them every time I perform them. I think to get it to a point to where you put it on a stage, it takes a lot of rehearsals, a lot of hours, and what Trisha does in the show it can take months and months of practice just for one illusion because you want that you have to get a feel for each other. You have to get that time in and everything. So it takes a lot. Otherwise it can be dangerous you know because you've got fire and spikes and things like that. Each trick is a little different. Some might not take as long where as

other ones might take a long long time. I do an effect with coins in the show. I practiced it for about six months, every single night. When I came in on the cruise ship, I practiced on the bed. Then I realized I had to practice differently. I would let the shower run and let the room let get really really hot because I had to practice with my hands really sweaty. It was a completely different ball game from being nice calm and relaxed and cool to being in show mode where you're sweating and kind of shaky just a little bit from anxiety and a little bit from adrenaline from nerves and stuff.