

## ***Ex Libris* by Joaquin Ayala, PhD.**

Hello folks and welcome to the Ex Libris article for March 2016! As I write this the warmer weather is becoming more frequent, the days are longer and Michigan Magic Day is getting that much closer. Some of us are going to be performing for folks prior to the big evening show that weekend, and I thought an article on J.B. Beaubeaux (Anglicized as 'Bobo') and his magnum opus, *'Modern Coin Magic'* would be most appropriate. Why? Because the book has some rather easy material in it that is great for performing in those types of environments, and besides, what is more organic or recognizable than coins?

J.B. Bobo was born in Texarkana, Texas in 1910 and was given only the initials 'J.B.' His grandfather, who had immigrated from France in the 1890s did as many other immigrants did and 'Americanized' the name to 'Bobo', which is also the phonetic way of pronouncing Beaubeaux. After moving north to Canada until he was almost 20, he returned to Texarkana where he became interested in magic. It was then that he also met his future wife, Lillian who eventually became part of his magic act. Together the Bobos became very well-known around the school show circuit, performing somewhere in the neighborhood of 400-500 shows per year at the peak of their partnership. It is estimated that they performed some 14,000+ school shows alone in their 50 year career together.

It was not until 1947 that Bobo decided to start putting some of his magic ideas to paper and published some of his work in various books. J.B. was a multi-talented individual and was not only a great magician but also a talented artist, photographer, videographer (cinema), cartoonist and a craftsman, making most of his own magic apparatus. He also designed his own show flyers.

In 1952, Bobo penned what would ultimately become the work he was most famous for and a work which was destined to become a modern day classic and a bible for all coin workers, *Modern Coin Magic*. The book was published by Carl W. Jones and to date, it is one of the most complete books in the arena of sleight of hand coin magic and contains many classical methodologies which have stood the test of time, as well as many updated handlings and innovations by the author himself. The material in the book starts by teaching the very basic coin techniques and culminates with a section of complete routines using various techniques taught earlier in the book. In 1966 Bobo updated the book as *The New Modern Coin Magic*, adding 186 pages through four new, meaty chapters. This edition was published by Magic Inc. and edited by John Braun. Both this and the earlier version were illustrated by Nelson C. Hahne, a very well-known illustrator of magic books.

Other books written by Bobo include the 1947 *Watch This!* and *The Bobo Magic Show* in 1984. J.B. Bobo died on September 12<sup>th</sup>, 1996 at the age of 86 in Texarkana, Texas.

Take a peek at this book because there is a very entertaining piece that you can do that does not require difficult sleight of hand called *The Thieves and Sheep*. Another which requires a very

common coin gaff (a Copper/Silver coin) that is easy to do and fooling to boot is *Presto Change-o*, which is a favorite of Johnny Thompson (yes, The Great Tomsoni).

Until next time folks, enjoy the weather, get out there and spread some magic and remember: Comfort the disturbed and disturb the comfortable! – **J.M.A.**