

MAGIC UPDATE

Close-up Theater in South Africa

The College of Magic has been training and empowering young magicians of South Africa for more than 36 years. Since opening in February 1980 with 34 students, the current enrollment has grown to over 200 under the guidance of director David Gore.

Located in the Cape Town suburb of Claremont, the training center contains both a stage and a close-up theater, rehearsal rooms, a museum, a library, media center, workshop rooms, video editing facilities, costume department, administrative offices, canteen, a retail magic shop, and what the college describes

as “a multipurpose imagination center and illusionarium.”

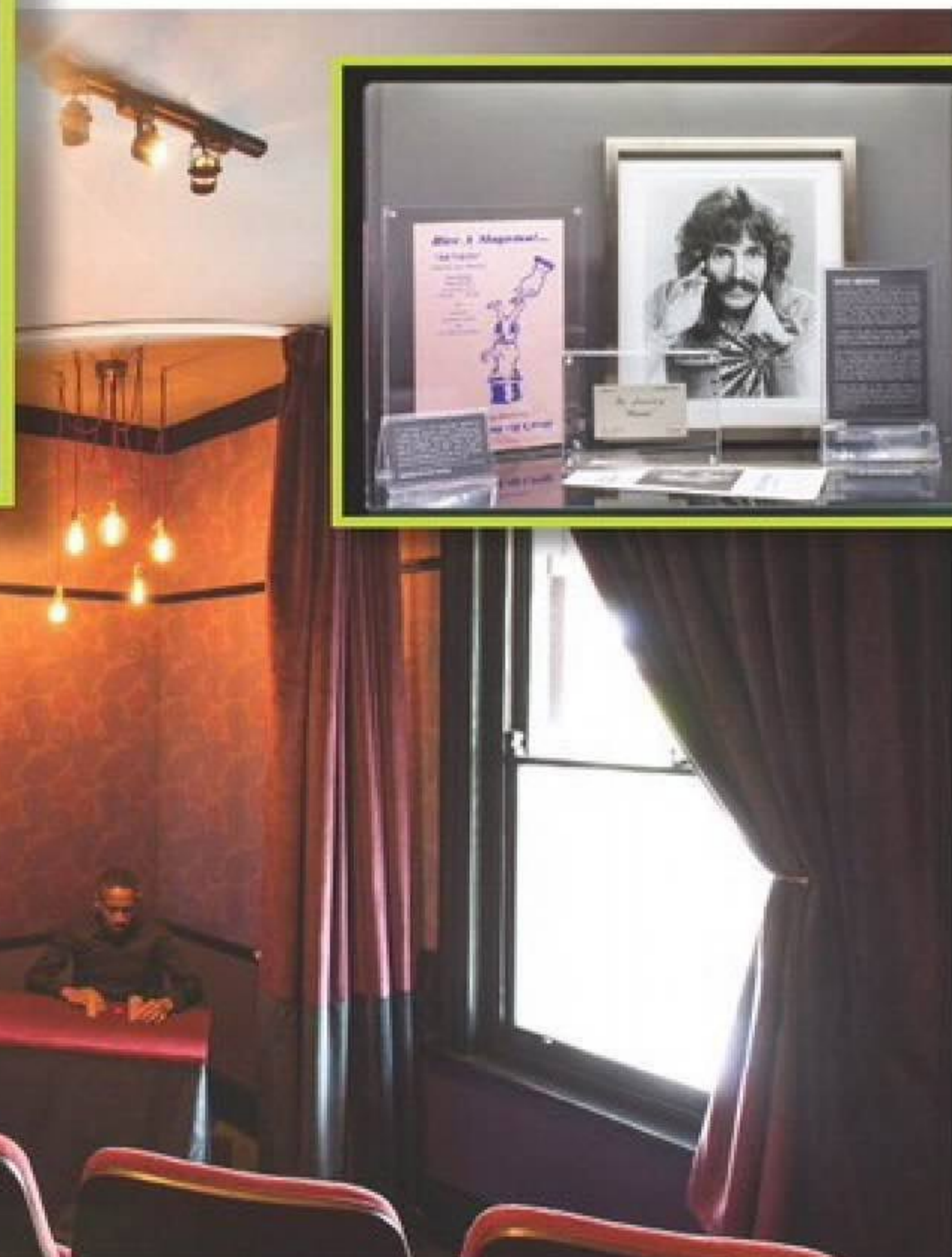
“This place is truly incredible,” says American magician Joshua Jay after visiting the college. “They take children from all backgrounds and they teach them magic; it’s like a real Hogwarts. But their theater was in really bad shape. So we wanted to help.”

British magician Andi Gladwin, Jay’s partner in the firm of Vanishing Inc., says “We worked with a team at the College of Magic, and we produced a close-up theater that we would love to perform in and would be very proud to be part of.”

Thanks to their own 501c3

charity and fundraising efforts, Vanishing Inc. built a new close-up venue for the College of Magic. When the unveiling of the Vanishing Inc. Close-up Theatre occurred in April 2016, the college proudly showed off a performance room that includes tiered seating along with a mini-museum containing rare and inspiring artifacts from magicians of the past.

A plaque on the wall outside the room gives “special thanks to Simon and Ginny Aronson, Scott Robinson, and the Vanishing Inc. Magic Fund,” and it displays a quote by Roald Dahl from his 1991 story *The Minpins*: “And above all, watch with glittering eyes the whole world around you because the greatest secrets are always hidden in the most unlikely places. Those who don’t believe in magic will never find it.”



The College of Magic’s new close-up theater, seen from the back of the room and from the stage. A display case Doug Henning memorabilia.