



A treatise on the Gozinta Boxes

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The Box Goes-In-Da Box

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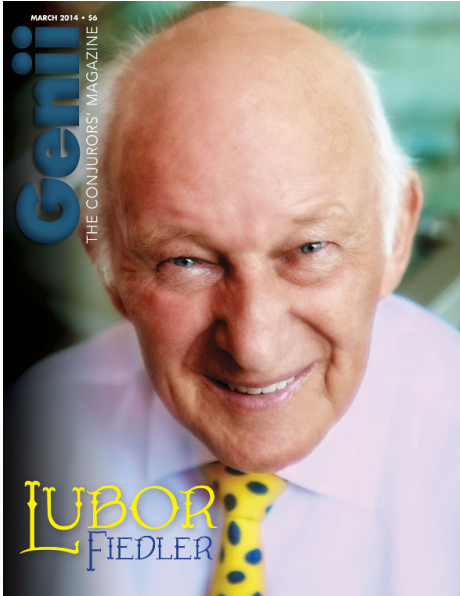
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Chapter 1

Introduction

The life of a genius is often defined by how their creativity is able to shine despite great personal adversity. Lubor Fiedler is one of those rare creative people that are able to thrive, while enduring personal suffering. Born in 1933 in what is now the Czech Republic, Lubor spent his childhood under the shadow of the Nazi occupation. The end of the second world war didn't liberate the people of Eastern Europe as the communist regime took control of the country. Lubor worked as a chemical engineer and occupied his evenings with magic. He published several effects in East German magazines but the regime did not take lightly to his unsanctioned hobby, and he was ordered to work in a coal mine as atonement. The pressures of living in these circumstances eventually proved too much for Lubor, and he defected to Austria where he had a career performing and selling magic.

He called himself a "collector of secrets" and developed an oeuvre of ingenious magic tricks using innovative methods of deception. Lubor explored the edges of methods to create the illusion of magic and introduced inventive methods such as hidden blow dryer to levitate an ashtray or acetone to dissolve and move objects. Because of the unusual nature of his work, some refer to Lubor Fiedler as the "Willy Wonka of Magic". Six months after a candid interview with Dustin Stinett was published in the March 2014 edition of *Genii*, Lubor Fiedler passed away, leaving a legacy of magical inventions that earn him a place among the pantheon of the masters of the magic.



Lubor Fiedler (1933–2014) on the cover of *Genii* in March 2014. Photography by Kari Hendler, Copyright and Reprinted by Permission of The Genii Corporation.

Lubor Fiedler became a household name among magicians when he revealed the *Lubor Die*, now commonly known as the gozinta boxes. The basic plot is that the magician opens a box which has a die inside of it. The box that contained the die is then placed inside the die, creating a paradox of size and a superb exposition of subtle topological magic. His invention was bought by Supreme Magic, but soon several unlicensed versions appeared in the magic marketplace and his trick is now known to almost every magician in the world.

This booklet analyses the gozinta box in great detail. The next chapter discusses the origins and use of the word gozinta and describes the history of the gozinta box magic trick. The third chapter provides a detailed account of the design the boxes, which require the reader to have some knowledge of elementary algebra. After these theoretical deliberations instructions are provided to create your own gozinta boxes using construction paper, a knife and glue. The last chapter discusses the many variations for presenting the gozinta boxes. I hope this ebook will inspire magicians to further innovate on this enigmatic piece of magical theatre.

Chapter 2

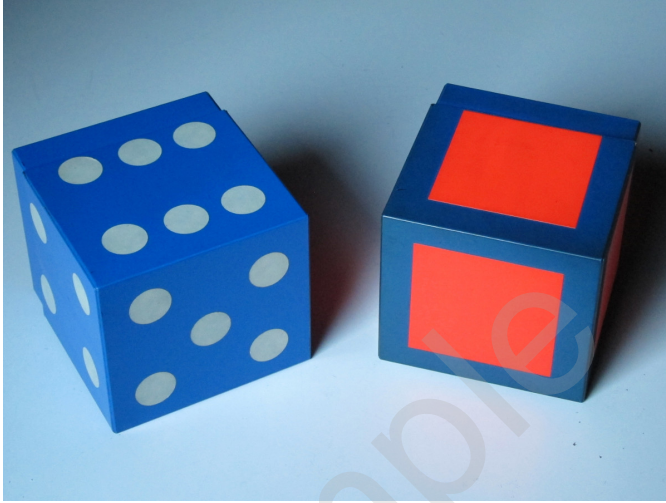
Goes-in-Da Box

The word “gozinta” (sometimes written as gazinta) is an uncommon word that, according to Google *ngram*, first appears in the English language around 1910.¹ The word gozinta is a form of eye dialect, just like words such as *fella* instead of “fellow” or *helluva* instead of “hell of a ...”. Eye dialect is used by groups of people to distinguish themselves from others and is nowadays commonly heard in hip-hop music and other subcultures, but the phenomenon is as old as language itself.

The term gozinta was first used by primary school teachers to explain the principles of long division. For example, 2 gozinta 4 because $2 \times 2 = 4$, 4 gozinta 12 because $3 \times 4 = 12$, 8 gozinta 24, 9 gozinta 72 and so on. Gozinta is not only a tool for primary school arithmetic, but it is also a principle in higher mathematics. Defined formally, gozinta signifies that a number is a factor of another number. Gozinta is also used in higher mathematics and a gozinta chain is a known problem in the field of combinatorics. A gozinta chain is a sequence $\{1, a, b, \dots, n\}$, where each element properly divides the next. The gozinta problem challenges mathematicians to find gozinta chains with certain characteristics.² These abstract mathematical problems find practical applications in communication engineering, especially in encryption technologies for electronic communications and in designing acoustics in concert halls.

¹Google Books Ngram Viewer: books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=gozinta.

²Project Euler. Gozinta Chains: projecteuler.net/problem=548.



(a) Lubor Fiedler (1970). *Lubor's Die*. Supreme Magic Company. Photo by Franz Kaslatter (used with permission).



(b) *In-n-Outer Box*, Royal Magic (1981).



(c) *In & Out Boxes*, Empire (2005).

Various versions of the gozinta boxes.

Chapter 3

Designing Gozinta Boxes

The impossibility of the gozinta magic plot is subtle and requires spectators to think about what they just saw. This subtlety dissolves when the trick is expressed in mathematical language. In the sterile logic of mathematics, the magical nature of this structure is immediately apparent. Although not suitable for performances, using a mathematical approach helps to define uniform rules for designing and constructing gozinta envelopes, boxes and even a triple gozinta box. This chapter describes the theoretical considerations of gozinta magic design, which requires some knowledge of elementary algebra. The following chapter puts this theory to practice and explains how to create gozinta magic tricks using construction paper and sticky tape.

Gozinta Envelope

Before moving to the three-dimensional world of the *Lubor Die*, we first look at the two-dimensional gozinta envelope. Let's assume that *Adair's Gozinta Envelopes* have a width a and height b . The envelopes obviously cannot actually fit into each other as that would be a real miracle. The area of both envelopes is defined by $a \times b$. Fitting one into the other implies that $ab < ab$, which is an invalid statement. To simulate this reality, the internal envelope is turned ninety degrees, and b is shorter than a . To hide the rotation, the envelopes appear to be square as b is only marginally shorter than a . The difference between the

Chapter 4

Creating Gozinta Boxes

After these theoretical considerations, this chapter provides practical instructions on how to create your own gozinta boxes using nothing but a template, construction paper, a scalpel, a steel ruler and a glue stick. These instructions will produce only simple paper versions of the boxes. Creating a performance-quality box will require highly accurate and professional production techniques.

Most gozinta box effects are relatively pricey due to the production techniques required to achieve the required accuracy and thin walls. Given the small market for this effect, the boxes have to be produced in short runs which increases the manufacturing cost.

With the advent of 3D-printing, short run production costs have significantly reduced. Chris Wasshuber has pioneered this technology and his innovative *Gozinta Boxes Revisited* is produced using this contemporary printing technology. As these production techniques become more reliable and widely available, not only gozinta boxes, but many other magic props such as Okito Boxes and so on will be produced with much greater ease and lower cost.

When Chris attended MIT in 2005, he took a product design class where teams were tasked to design a new product and manufacture a prototype. Chris formed a team that worked on a shelving system that used a property of the gozinta boxes. The product consisted of a crate with gozinta-like dimensions so that the box could be inserted into another identical one as a drawer. Beside the gozinta aspect, each box could also be flattened and connected to each other in

Chapter 5

Presenting Gozinta Boxes

The gozinta boxes routine is a subtle effect that is very easy to perform technically, but hard to present as a piece of magic. The Gozinta Boxes are a minor mystery that is not likely to ‘kill’ or ‘fry’ your audience, but it will certainly mystify them. The gozinta plot is therefore a perfect interlude within a textured magic show.

The gozinta has an illustrious performance history with some legendary magicians using this trick in their shows. Doug Henning performed a large version in his 1981 television show and used the boxes to materialise actress Marie Osmond, assisted by then teen actor Ricky Schroder. The boxes were designed by Dick Zimmerman, who innovated on the gozinta concept by introducing a shallow lid. Paul Daniels performed the boxes on television in his 1983 Magic Christmas Show and some years later showed the Tenyo *Paradox* version on a talk show. Last, but certainly not least mentioned here is David Berglas, who performed the gozinta boxes in his 1991 show in the Lyric Theatre in London.

Many versions of the gozinta boxes have permeated the world of magicians and the vast majority of people that have been in magic for a while undoubtedly own at least one set. Most magicians are amazed by the cleverness of their gozinta boxes, but only a few perform this routine. Most gozinta boxes are stored in the bottom drawer of magic collections because we fail to see how to perform gozinta magic in a meaningful way.

Chapter 6

Closing

In the past forty-five years, the gozinta boxes has attained legendary status in the magic world. Its popularity is unwavering as new versions are being released every so many years. I wrote this booklet to satisfy my own curiosity on the gozinta phenomenon, but also to inspire other magicians to develop their own versions of this topological oddity. The design and construction chapters aim to help magicians to construct their own gozinta boxes. The chapter on ways to present the boxes are based on an extensive review of the literature. It is not intended to provide ready-made scripts but to show the enormous diversity of views on this topic so that you can develop your own.

This work is based on extensive internet research in the Conjuring Arts Research Centre Ask Alexander website, ebook warehouse library.com and The Magic Café. I would like to thank Richard Kaufman and prolific Tenyo collector John Mazza for allowing to use their images. Austrian magician Franz Kaslatte maintains the luborfiedler.at website and also has provided some of the images in this ebook. Lastly thanks goes to gozinta innovator Chris Wasshuber for his support in writing this booklet. I have aimed for completeness writing this material, but there is certainly more to learn about the gozinta boxes. If you have any additional information about this trick, then please share it with me. If you have any comments or suggestions about this booklet or like to share your own gozinta routines, please visit magicperspectives.net and leave a message.

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