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# The Neuroscience of Magic and Illusion



Perception is indeed reality when it comes to what we see. And nowhere is this more apparent than during a magical act. But beneath all the showmanship and flair, these artists are actually triggering complex neuroscientific processes which help create the seemingly impossible on stage.

In this podcast, we speak with [Dr. Susana Martinez-Conde](#) of the Barrow Neurological Institute, and Founding Member and Executive Chair of the [Neural Correlate Society](#). Dr. Martinez-Conde is a recognized expert in the field of visual neuroscience who has been leading key research in the area of visual illusions. Most recently, Dr. Martinez-Conde's work has been featured in Scientific American ("[Magic and the Brain](#)") and in Nature Review Neuroscience ("[Attention and awareness in stage magic: turning tricks into research](#)"). The latter was co-authored with Dr. Stephen Macknik as well as with the professional magicians Mac King, James Randi, Apollo Robbins, Teller, and John Thompson.

Be sure to join us as we talk about the fascinating subject of human visual perception and put a spotlight on how magicians manipulate human attention and awareness to both entertain and delight us. (Originally broadcast 26-March-2009)

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