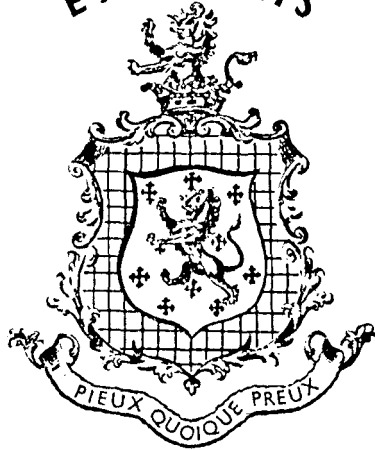


STARTLING

EFFECTS

BY JANEL

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S T A R T L I N G E F F E C T S

BY

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HOW THESE EFFECTS MAY BE USED.

To most people the use of the so called "spook" effects is confined to the "midnight" show, or the Hallowe'en party. It is true that the Midnight Spook Show is a very worthwhile enterprise for the magician to consider. If he is playing schools, clubs, or other organizations by day or in the evening, he can use each of these dates to advertise the big event of the week -- the Midnight Spook Show. This show of course can be widely advertised and if properly played up, especially in small towns or rural territory, will bring more people than respond to the average magic show advertising. Many such shows do very well even in big cities, with the right handling.

However, one of the comments most people make on the average "spook show" is that it offers nothing outstanding or unusual in the "spook" line. It is usually an ordinary magic show, with a few paper skeletons thrown in for good measure. Now there is nothing wrong with an ordinary magic show. But WHY call it a spook show? Why advertise that doctors and nurses will be in attendance to help the fainting women and terrified children because of the horrors to be shown -- and then have a show that consists of the Egg Bag, 20th Century Silks, and the Passe Bottles? It is this sort of nonsense that has hurt business for some performers when they tried such a hoax just to get extra profits, while all the time they might have put on a real "spook" show, and built up a reputation for having something really unusual, something the

crowd would talk about, and something they could feature in their advertising.

Janel here offers some effects that will absolutely "make" a spook show for you. It is true, some of them will take a little trouble to prepare and to use. But if you are collecting money for putting on your show, it is your business to give the audience something worth while. And most worth while things in this life take money, time and effort.

If you are planning a spook show of the type that can be used as an extra performance, it would be advisable to use all the material explained here, and to this add some other effective spirit or psychic effects. The usual magic trick is not suitable for a spook show. However, there are some magic tricks which would be all right. Among these are various slate tricks, in which messages from the spirits, etc. are involved, some forms of question answering tricks if handled as if the spirits were doing the answering, rope or turban restorations and cuttings IF the material is treated with lumincous paint and treated in a ghostly way, or if a suitable spirit patter accompanies the trick. Tricks in which the performer is securely tied in a small cabinet or behind a curtain and is thus still able to cause tambourinos, bells, etc. to sound or be thrown about are of course good. Details for these various effects are written up in many books on magic.

Avoid tricks with a lot of comedy in them - this detracts

from your basic idea. Avoid tricks you have been featuring in your ordinary magic show, because they plainly show that you haven't enough material for two separate and distinct types of show. Remember to keep your remarks, or patter, always linked up with the fact that this is a session with the spirits. Brighter moments may occur, so that there is a little laughter, but use discretion in this proportioning.

Now suppose you are not interested in having a complete spook show. You have a magic show and would like to use some item or items from this book. The average magic show can readily stand a little variety. The introduction of a little "spook" sequence, even though it be for only ten minutes, will greatly enhance your show, enliven it, and give the audience something to talk about. We would suggest, if you are working a full evening show, that the spook sequence appear just before the intermission. If you are working an hour show, or shorter, let it be just before the close, and finish with a pretty or beautiful number, such as a flower act, silk production, or the like. Don't try to follow the spirit sequence with high comedy, as that is asking the audience to run the gamut of too much emotion and you will not get the proper response. If you have a lot of laughs in your show, use them before the spirit work.

In advising how the material can be used, we must not overlook the effectiveness of a single number, such as the Phantom Musician, presented as a complete act on a variety bill of any sort. Suppose your magic group is having a show

on which there will be several different kinds of manipulation acts, a production scene, a chalk talk, etc. Don't you see how well a presentation of the Phantom Musician (or the Shadow Illusion) would fit in? It would offer pleasing variety, would not conflict with any other number, and would make a strange and beautiful feature number.

The professional magician will find that he can often sell this act for use on variety bills consisting of all kinds of performers, such as are often used on Convention or business gathering shows, banquets, benefits, etc. Notice that he could appear on the same bill with a magician, or he himself could do a magic act, and then double with the spirit number -- so little do they conflict.

We need not tell you, finally, the superlative use of the material herein for parties, dances, and celebrations. For Hallowe'en parties, New Year's parties, Harvest dances, and similar affairs, these effects are just grand.

We hope that we have given you some ideas of the many uses the material has to offer. If you are interested in framing an extensive show, and would like the names of other books which will supply additional material, send a stamped envelope to L.L.Ireland, 109 N. Dearborn St. Chicago, Illinois and you will receive information on this subject.

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The following is a suggested introductory lecture for use with the various spook effects.

It is the witching hour of Midnight. The date is October 31st. Throughout the evening, gaiety has reigned, happy laughter has rung out, costumed dancers have whirled and dipped and swung through the colorful Halloween decorations.

Now the merrymakers have cast off their masks. Now, at the witching hour, the appointed time for the spirit visitors to arrive from the other world, an eerie quiet falls over the assemblage, an atmosphere of tense expectancy grips the party.

Suddenly the master of ceremonies appears out of nowhere, advances to the platform in dead silence. He speaks:

"Ladies and Gentlemen:

I bring to you a message from the Genie of the Spirits, the Master of the Ouija Board. The crowning event of this evening's frolic is about to be presented.

Leave dull care behind, desert your mundane worries. The time has come. The ghosts will walk!

I must ask that all persons remain seated or stand at the sides or far end of the hall. We must not offend our ethereal guests - and the spooks will require the center of the floor. A spook needs elbow-room, and you'd better not offend him!

No one will be permitted to leave or enter this Chamber of Mystery during the black-out. In all fairness I

suggest that those with weak hearts or high blood pressure do not tarry to witness this fearsome performance. For such as these, now is the time to retire. I repeat, NOW IS THE TIME TO RETIRE...

Very well. Everyone seems willing to stay, and none may complain that they weren't given fair warning. However, for any who later may feel themselves slipping, we have gentlemen of the medical profession with us. They will bring you to. If necessary, they will bring you TWO MORE.

Please be seated or stand where you are. Do not move about in the dark, lest you stir the anger of the Weird Ones from the Other World. Ladies and Gentlemen, the show is on."

The stage is set. The audience is eager. The atmosphere is electrically charged. The performance begins.

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THE PHANTOM MUSICIAN

Ordinary System: At seances, bells rings, tambourines bounce around, stringed instruments float over the heads of the sitters, playing spirit music. Whether or not you are a believer in spirit return, you have been entertained and you do not begrudge the price of admission.

Magicians are usually familiar with the operation of these effects. It is known to them that a Swiss music box is the spirit, for instance, that operates the guitar. It is not very loud and the music is far from that produced when the instru-

is in the hands of an artist. But the seance sitters are easy to please. Any kind of a "demonstration" is accepted, especially if the medium has had an expert build-up before the big show.

Improved System: In my system of presenting the Phantom Musician, there is no need to caution your audience to be quiet lest they "frighten the spirits away". It is unnecessary to resort to any kind of an alibi if you operate under the improved plan.

I had a music box among my effects. I removed it from its case, mounted it in my guitar and tried it out. Thus I satisfied myself that this puny effect was not for my audience -- a large number of persons, all of whom would demand spirits noisy enough to be heard without ear strain.

The large round opening in the front of the instrument gave me my idea. I own a public address system, microphone and phono-pickup. After research and experiment, I satisfied myself that I had a Phantom Musician far superior to all others. The spirits may control the medium, but the writer of this explanation controls the spirit manifestations, simply by the invocation of science, common sense and perfectly natural means. You can do likewise.

HOW TO BUILD THE PHANTOM MUSICIAN: Get an old guitar and a permanent magnet speaker at an electric or radio shop. We will assume that the one you get has a voice coil of eight ohms resistance. Mount this speaker inside your guitar.

This speaker should have a two wire lamp cord connected to its terminals, the connections to be soldered unless they

connect to binding posts. Run this wire through a small hole at bottom and tie a knot to hold strain away from speaker, so as not to pull wires off. (See Sketch A).

Leave ten inches out from the instrument and place a midget cord connector on end of this short piece. The part with the prongs would be best for if disconnected when a live circuit, these exposed ends would be dead, while the other live contact is enclosed. Strain knots should be used here also.

Make up an extension cord of the same kind of wire, using the other part of the midget cord connector on one end of it and a seven prong radio plug on the other. The extension cord I used was 75 feet in length. Support this speaker with wood screws or wire it down tight to inside back of your instrument. Center the speaker in the round opening of the instrument.

The back of the instrument should be painted a dull black. The front and sides should have a good grade of white paper glued thereon. Let dry well. It is a good practice to sandpaper before applying the glue. Then apply a coat of Balmain's luminous paint on this paper.

If this outfit is to be used for some time, apply the base paint to the wood. Several coats will be necessary, each coat to dry at least twenty-four hours. Apply the luminous paint over this base. Luminous paint glows in the dark after a few minutes' exposure to a bright light.

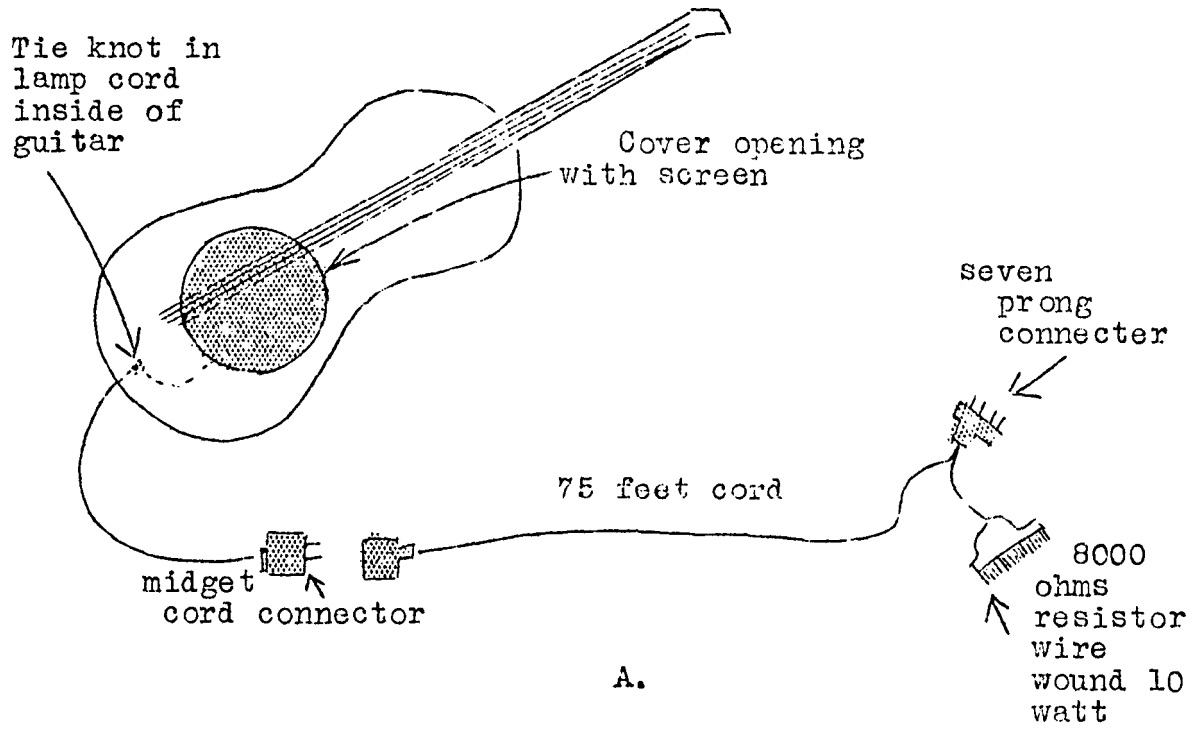
You can purchase the Balmain's luminous and the neutral base paint at Devoe and Reynolds, New York and Chicago, also at Watson's, Chicago. A complete line of the materials for all the luminous or fluorescent articles mentioned in the book is obtainable from Fluorescent Pigments Corporation, 445 W. 41st St. New York. For luminous colors and other materials, write to Stroblite Co. Dept. B, 35 W. 52nd St. New York, N.Y. Applying these paints on paper saves much time and expense.

Referring to the seven prong radio plug connected to the long cord: since your speaker requires only two wires and it has a voice coil resistance of eight ohms, solder your two wires into the prongs that will fit into the contact holes marked zero and eight on the output. Reversing these wires would not make any difference.

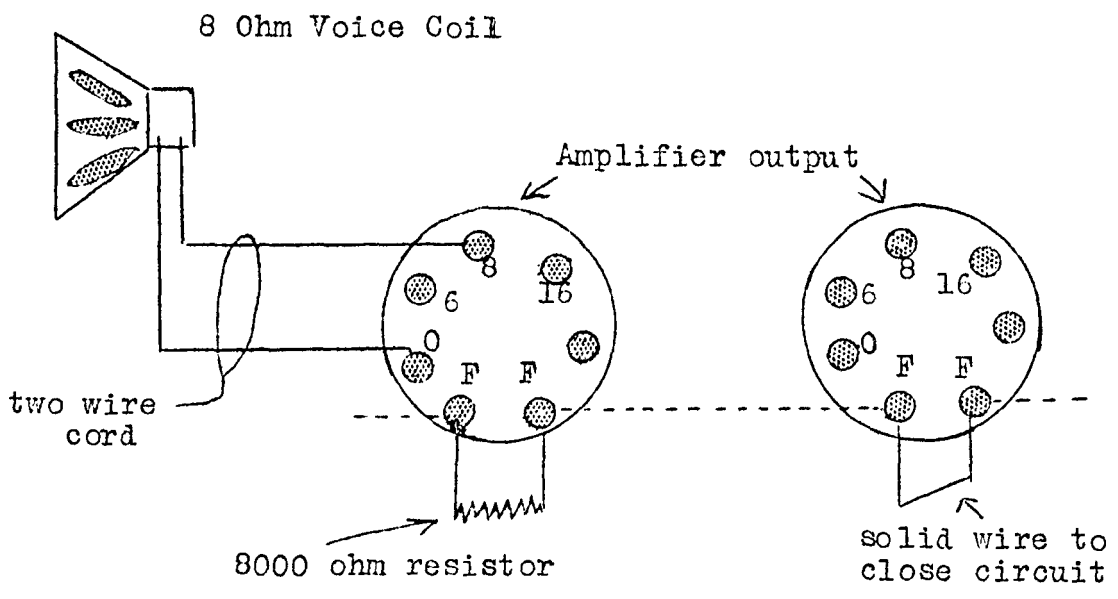
Now solder a short piece of twin wire to the prongs that will connect contacts marked F. F. on the amplifier output. Run this short piece through the opening of the plug alongside the other long cord. On this short piece, place a TEN WATT WIRE WOUND 8000 Ohm Resistor. Solder these connections.

In service, this resistor becomes quite warm. It will be well to keep it clear of painted surfaces or inflammable materials.

The reason for the resistor is that my dynamic speakers had a field of 4000 ohms. The ten watt resistor of 8000 ohms equalled the resistance of the two dynamic speakers which were



P.M. SPEAKER



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disconnected. The other output was closed with a short piece of wire, about size 10. Bare the two ends an inch, bend it staple-like, place into the F. F. contacts on the other output. This will close field circuit.

(SEE ELEMENTARY DIAGRAM C)

All speakers and amplifiers are not of the same ohmic resistance. If in doubt, consult some person experience in this work. The writer could not possibly give data to meet all the amplifiers on the market.

HOW TO OPERATE THE PHANTOM MUSICIAN.

Have your amplifier, phono-pickup, and guitar concealed from audience view. Place on the turn-table your solo guitar record. Make a test to see that all is in working order.

Your instrument should have been in a bright light for about ten minutes before going on. Your long cord should be coiled so as not to tangle when being pulled away. Carry the instrument out in the dark and at the proper time the operator at the amplifier starts the record.

This then, is the Phantom Musician. It can be made even more thrilling and spectacular by providing illuminated skulls on the floor at the same time, together with other wierd effects.

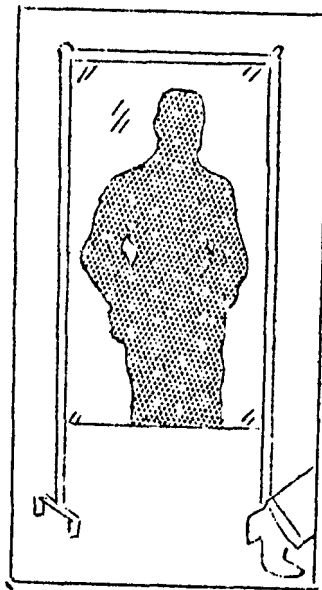
I recommend guitar solo records. Do not use any which include vocal or other music, for naturally this would be fatal to the success of the demonstration. I used a group of

classical Spanish guitar selections, DECCA, ALBUM No. 60.

If you have a public address system but a phono-pickup is not available, you can have a guitar artist play a solo thru the microphone. This also would have the advantage of dispensing with the trouble of the records and the phono.

The artist and microphone, of course, must be further away from the audience than in the phono system. The obvious reason is that the artist at the microphone must not be heard -- only the reproduction of his music at the speaker, which is floating among the audience in the darkened auditorium.

To get this floating effect, the guitar is carried on a pole, and the movements of the operator must not be hurried. If the effect is to be used only once or twice, the pole can be attached by laying it flat against the handle, and binding them together with stout cord or wire. The luminous coated paper should then cover the bindings so they will not show. For a more permanent article, attach a flange beneath the handle on the strongest part of the guitar, and into this flange a threaded pipe or pole may then be screwed when ready to work. In all cases, the pole is painted dead black. On a stage, the instrument may be floated by means of wires from the ceiling, or a wire stretched across the stage. The guitar would then have a wire at the end of the handle, and two at the lower end, all of which would terminate in small rings, through which the overhead wire would pass. Thus it would be slid along as desired. The area of floating is in this case very limited, of course.



WALKING AWAY FROM YOUR SHADOW.

From the audience viewpoint, here is an effect which is sensational, baffling, and best of all, very laughable. At the same time it can be built at little cost, depending on the size you make your shadow screen.

A screen is placed down center stage. It may be placed upright on a table, so that the audience has a clear view beneath it and to the back of the stage. Indeed, the audience may watch as the screen is placed by the magician or an assistant.

The assistant stands in readiness with a spotlight. The magician takes his place in front of the screen. The spotlight is cast on him. The house lights are dimmed. The orchestra or musician favors with an appropriate selection: "Me And My Shadow."

After a brief pause, the magician steps briskly aside, leaving his shadow clearly and boldly imprinted on the screen!

Mystification is added to the startling effect since the screen may be turned around and its back side exhibited to the audience. There is a definite comical appeal, and merely to announce that you are going to walk away from your shadow will bring at least a titter of pleasurable anticipation.

HOW TO BUILD THE SHADOW APPARATUS: Luminous paint is responsible for the success of this effect. A frame two feet ten inches wide and four feet long would make a screen suitable for any kind of a show. If only a hand or head shadow is

desired, the screen may be reduced in size to suit.

Get some heavy paper board, such as that used by artists, at an art store or paper supply house. You should acquire this before proceeding with your frame, since you may have to take a size slightly smaller or larger than you expected and it is difficult to cut by hand.

Make a wooden frame, using lumber two inches wide. Make it boxlike, with the paper board to form the bottom. The frame should be painted a dull black and the paper board given two coats of luminous paint, which also should be applied to the inside of this box frame. Let the first coat dry well for at least twenty-four hours or longer before applying the next coat.

When finished the frame must be covered with a black velvet or similar material to exclude all light. It must never be uncovered until the very time you are ready to perform. This is absolutely vital to the success of the effect. Handle your equipment like a photographic plate. This is the only part of this effect which must be given most delicate attention. Even so, it is much less trouble than entailed in many other magic effects.

Next in importance is a good light. An efficient spotlight is desirable, and this is available at most theatres, clubs and lodges. The screen may be covered with a sheet of cellophane to avoid soiling it. Use upholsterers tacks to attach the board to the frame.

Another plan is to build a frame somewhat similar to the sketch, with a roll shade treated with luminous paint.

Personally, I made my own version in the previously explained way, but the shade method has its merits. With it, the frame can be made to knock down, which would be of benefit to the travelling showman.

I repeat that the luminous paint may be applied on the paper board without the use of base paint. Where base paint is recommended it refers to application on wood or metal. This information is valuable to the builder in that it will save him considerable time and expense.

HOW TO OPERATE THE SHADOW ACT.

The screen is placed by an assistant on the stage. The black cloth covers the luminous painted board. The magician informs his audience that it is possible for him to walk away from his shadow, and that he intends to prove it.

Here is a splendid opportunity for some comedy, relying on the fact that most people consider one's shadow immutably attached to one's self and cannot envision the possibility of a severance. However, it is likely that a few in the audience may have an idea how the effect is to be accomplished. This will not spoil the show in any degree.

The house lights are dimmed, or may even be turned out entirely. The magician removes the black curtain and stands in front of the screen and close to it. The spotlight is focussed on him, casting his shadow on the luminous painted screen. Of course that portion of the screen outside his shadow, being affected by the light, will become luminous

after the spotlight is turned off.

The magician steps nimbly to one side. Presto! There is the shadow or silhouette, exactly as it was cast on the screen by the form of the magician. The applause will be spontaneous, enthusiastic, sometimes even riotous.

For use with a spook or spirit show, we think it best if the magician act in the capacity of the person who walks away from his shadow. This gives him an ability seemingly denied to ordinary people. But in a magic show, or where comedy is desired, a spectator may be asked to "walk away from his shadow" and of course if he stands before the screen the effect will be the same as when the performer himself stands there.

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GENERAL EFFECTS TO ENHANCE THE SPOOK SHOW OR PARTY.

Paper skeletons, paper mache heads of all kinds, and similar items can be purchased already made. When painted with the luminous paint, and exposed to light before showing, these objects can be carried about on dull black poles, in the darkness, and they do much to add to the spook atmosphere. If the heads are hollow, and have a hole where the neck would be, they can be dropped over a pole, and as you move about with them, they will rock and swing around in a very lifelike and weird manner.

The cover of the book illustrates a number of objects

that will work out well after being treated with the luminous paint and then attached to black poles. Any part of the object not wanted to appear can be painted with dull black paint. Show card color is good for this, is cheap and easy to apply and dries in a few minutes.

Theatrical gauze floating in a large mass, or draped from a head gives a very ghostly appearance. However, it is a little trouble to prepare. It can be treated with luminous paint in this manner: one part of the paint to five parts turpentine. Add two ounces Demar Varnish. It is a little expensive to prepare as more material is used in coating the gauze than would be used in painting over a solid surface.

All luminous treated objects must be exposed to as bright a light as possible just before being taken out on the stage or on the floor. Have the stage, floor, or area of the show in as absolute darkness as possible. This gives the utmost in results.

A sponge tied to a stick, dipped in ice water and then squeezed so that it does not drip, but so that it is damp to the touch, makes a good object to be carried around in the dark. Use it to touch spectators lightly on the cheek or neck. A rubber glove filled with crushed ice works fine along these lines, too.

To work out another idea on the heads and faces, other than working with actual shaped objects, these can be painted on paper cardboard about 24 x 18 inches, nailed against a light wooden framework, or a solid board, the

entire back and sides of same being painted a dull black. These are on poles, and they will have a blinking effect, or an effect of appearing and reappearing when turned about on the pole. The pole can just be slowly revolved in the hands to get this effect. The make-up of these is so simple that a number of them can be used, with good results.

When presenting these effects in a building with windows low enough, faces can be made to appear just outside the windows, as a preamble to the ghostly routines. A ghost made of yards of white or gray gauze hung from a skeleton head can be made to pass the windows on a pole, and the gauze will stream out behind. Tie a small flashlight inside the head, and slip an envelope made of blue cellophane or crepe paper over it. This the blue light streams out the bottom of the head and illumines the many folds of the gauze.

Various noises can be used to carry out the ideas. Certain whistles have a wierd sound, and the rattling of a chain is always symbolic. You may have a good moan or howl in your own voice, or can find someone who does. These things add to the occasion. The tramp of heavy boots on stairs or on a board raised up off the floor makes good atmosphere for the entrance of your ghostly figures.

Small bells, a tambourine, a "wind chime" (lengths of glass hung on strings to tinkle together) hung from long poles and held over the audience in the dark will create mystic sounds from spots right above their heads.