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Entertainment

What's happening on stage and in galleries around town



SPELLBINDER

Raw magic

You won't see silk scarves, Houdini escape acts or rabbits in James Galea's magic show.

JAMES Galea hates clichés. The card-carrying entertainer swears he is not a rabbit-producing, cape-wearing, smoke-and-mirrors kind of magician. Indeed, the hunky, Gen Y-savvy, 27-year-old looks almost too cool for the job in his tailored T-shirt, designer jeans and white sneakers. His fresh attire, honest sentiments and no-holds-barred comedic approach to magic has set Galea apart from his contemporaries and from the old notions of magicianship.

"Watching somebody escape from a strait-



jacket for an hour or 30 minutes is just boring. I don't think it's very entertaining at all, so I don't put any of that stuff in the show because I don't want to bore my audience," he says.

Fresh from a sell-out US tour, Galea brings his touted show *I Hate Rabbits* to Sydney Theatre Company, from 4 to 6 December at 8pm, for its encore season. Featuring large cinema screens projecting magnified images of Galea's hands around the theatre, he says viewers will be astounded, frustrated and enchanted by his chicanery.

"My show is aimed at people who hate magic shows. It's amazing and intriguing enough, not corny and cheesy like every other magic show that I've seen before."

Galea was introduced to magic at age 14 when he met a professional card-shark who taught him how to deal aces from the bottom of the deck and steal watches. The sleight-of-hand tricks, high-tech card games and coin-moving illusions he now performs have landed him gigs at Flamingo Casino in Las Vegas and Hollywood's Magic Castle – the Holy Grail for magicians. \$35 to \$50, 132 849/jamesgalea.com