

My Magic star up to new tricks

It's no magical illusion.

Barely two months after suffering a mild heart attack, local illusionist and fire-eater Bosco Francis is back at work.

Last Friday, the 48-year-old performed at the monthly meeting of the Singapore chapter of the International Brotherhood of Magicians.

Apart from bending a sword on his neck, he also invited people in the audience to staple money to his body. This "bizarre act", he said, was the first of its kind to be performed here. Instead of pocketing the money, which amounted to \$140 in total, he will frame them up and perhaps sell it as a novelty item one day.

He has also been invited to perform at the Happy Valley Theme Park in Shenzhen in October in conjunction with China's national day celebrations.

"I've found a new lease of life to perform," said the cheery father of three, stating that he has also begun watching his diet and exercising since his recent illness.

Mental fortitude is important too.

"It's all about mind over



ST PHOTO: CAROLINE CHIA

Mr Wong Fook Choy, 84, a fellow magician, staples a \$10 note onto Mr Bosco Francis' arm. This trick was the first of its kind to be performed here.

matter. I believe in the power of the mind to conquer fear," he said of his more dangerous stunts such as fire-eating and walking on broken glass.

One new challenge he is working on will involve pulling a vehicle, possibly a van, via sharp hooks attached to his shoulders.

He began studying magic in the mid-1970s, picking up most of his tricks while assisting an American magician who performed at the now-defunct National Theatre.

When he decided to go into the profession full-time, Mr Francis began working on fire tricks to stand out from his peers.

As the star of Eric Khoo's latest film *My Magic*, he said that the buzz on its screening at the recent Cannes Film Festival is good for his profession.

"Magic is an art that has to be appreciated before it is lost. Ultimately, the show must go on," he said.

Dhany Osman