

## Cue Command

**Deceptively Simple** remotely puts iTunes music in your control.

*Reviewed by Francis Menotti*

These days, if a working pro uses music in his act, there is little excuse for it not to be sleekly, tightly controlled. Fortunately for the magician who wishes to use music but has not the means to have someone run the sound, there are a variety of remote-controlled music devices sold at varying levels of functionality and price.

Deceptively Simple's Cue Command is one such device that quite satisfactorily fits the needs of the musically accompanied solo performer. The most important detail to note is that this is designed to work directly and exclusively with Apple products: the iPod Touch, iPhone, or iPad. It won't work with other mp3 players or tablets. So if you already have an Apple device, Cue Command could be a great option. The unit is elegant and simple to set up — a couple of wires to connect and a threaded detachable long-range antenna. It has a built-in wire with a plug to attach directly to an Apple device. Download the free Cue Command App from the App Store and follow the instructions. The whole system works right out of the box within five minutes and it's quite intuitive to operate.

The Cue Command interface works directly with your iTunes playlists. So whatever music and sound effects that you wish to set up, as long as they can be added to a playlist, they can be played via the remote. The interface also has the option to play a separate pre-show playlist on continuous play. That is, once the pre-show music is started, the playing track automatically advances to the next in succession rather than stopping and cueing up the next track, as in Performance Mode.

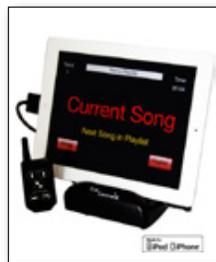
There appears to be no clear or shortcut way of presetting volume on each track, so some real-time volume control might be necessary. That said, the RF remote has large raised buttons to easily control the volume up and down.

Cue Command boasts a 100-yard-plus range of communication between the remote and unit. While I didn't test it at the nearby football field, it had no trouble operating through the walls of two buildings from across the street. It should certainly be sufficient for any professional's needs in any venue configuration.

The remote is small enough to fit in a trousers pocket, and the buttons are raised and easily navigated without looking at them. There are the aforementioned volume buttons, as well as play/pause, track back, and a track forward button. In Performance Mode, the system acts as one would expect: pressing the play/pause button starts the music, while pressing the track forward button will fade out the current track and cue up the next.

As with every product and its review, the prominent question arises: is it for you? The Cue Command functions very well and seems as though it should survive real use by busy workers. Compared to other systems on the market, the primary positive feature seems to be the remote's range. While 100 yards seems a bit excessive — if in such a situation, shouldn't the venue perhaps have an official sound technician? — it may put certain users at ease. Another point of interest is that the unit generally does need a direct power supply in order to operate. When asked about this, Deceptively Simple responded that battery-operated versions are available by special request (and presumably at an extra cost). If it's a concern, contact them directly.

The only questionable aspect of the device comes down to a matter of preference. Is it worth the asking price of close to \$600 when one needs to purchase (or already own) an iOS device? And then, does one wish to rely on using said device for shows when already using it for other everyday life applications such as talking on the phone or checking emails? This is no more than an opinion that must be formed and answered by the individual potential purchaser, but it's worth serious consideration. The R&D, effective functionality, look, and FAA and Apple approval all make the pricing understandable; it is high quality and does exactly what it claims to do. Even the packaging, for what it's worth, is sleek and minimalist to live up to the official Apple standards. So, again: is it for you? (That's your cue.)



## Classics

### DeMuth Milk Bottle

**Frederick DeMuth** created magic that looked cartoonishly amazing.

*Re-viewed by Gabe Fajuri*

Frederick DeMuth is a name that is not remembered by most magicians of the modern era. And yet he created at least one trick so good that it looked like something out of a cartoon. Here's what it looked like:

The magician covers an empty glass with a borrowed handkerchief, then places a small plate on top of the glass. Next, a milk bottle (remember those?) filled with milk is placed on top of the plate. Then, without cover, the milk visibly diminishes in the bottle. It slowly, stunningly seems to evaporate into thin air. The effect is nearly perfect. To conclude, the magician removes the bottle, picks up the plate, and whisks away the dry handkerchief. The formerly empty glass is now filled with milk.

As one magic catalog put it, "Operates anywhere, self-contained — self-working — no duplicates. A marvelous effect for any program."

I'll say! And one reason why the hype is actually true in this case is because the trick looked exactly the way it was written up in the magazine ads and catalogs. Watching DeMuth's trick work was like watching a ghost drink the milk through a straw, just the way you've seen it in cartoons.

DeMuth, by the way, was an employee at the famous Corning glass factory in Corning, New York. This gave him the opportunity to develop his milk bottle trick, and other effects and utility items, in the very factory where they could be made in small quantities or show him how he could make the tricks at home.

Of course, no matter how good the effect, times and fashions change. Who drinks milk from a bottle anymore, let alone glass bottles?

And yet, as I've said many times before in these pages, there's a kernel of an idea here that's waiting for someone to come along and reimagine it for modern audiences, with modern materials. Well, what are you waiting for?

Milk Bottle by Frederick DeMuth. No longer manufactured, although may occasionally be available as a collectible.

Cue Command by Deceptively Simple. Electronic unit, cords, and RF remote. Free App downloaded separately. \$595 plus shipping. Available from Deceptively Simple, [www.deceptivelysimple.com](http://www.deceptivelysimple.com).