

belt, says his favorite shows are the more intimate ones that include strolling, “close-up” magic. “People can experience what is happening,” he says. He also prefers to use objects he finds where he’s performing for spur-of-the-moment sleight-of-hand.

Of course, there’s always a cynic in the crowd. “I love winning the scientific and jaded over,” Marmer says. “I feel like I’ve accomplished something.”

Teaching magic to kids is another specialty of Marmer’s, but he goes beyond card tricks and rabbits. As he performs, he talks to the children about physics and the “perception of failure. To me failure is when you’ve given up.”

But not to worry, he says, “I always teach them how to do a trick before I send them home to their parents.”

Marmer has also been known to drop in on a homeless shelter on his way home from a paying gig to perform.

For all of that, Marmer, who enjoys skydiving, skateboarding and cooking and belongs to Temple Emanu-El, says he finds the most magic in his children, 9-year-old Daniel, “an incredible chess player — he wants to be in the Guinness Book of World Records” — and 6-year-old Peter Max. □

hear the blues.”

Malkin speculates that “there must be a Jewish connection” to the blues. He points out that Leonard and Philip Chess, Polish immigrants in Chicago, founded the label that became Chess Records and recorded legends Muddy Waters and Howlin’ Wolf. “There has always been a love for it,” Malkin says. He notes that his father is a fan of newer blues artists Stevie Ray Vaughn and Eric Clapton.

Malkin, who grew up attending Congregation M’kor Shalom in Cherry Hill, remembers that he loved his Jewish learning. “It was cool,” he says, in part because of discussions about Jewish artists and musicians that were woven into his Jewish education classes, in grade school and after his confirmation. Malkin graduated from Towson State University in Maryland with a degree in communications. He moved to Atlanta in 1995, in part because of how friends here praised the city’s reputation for good music. He is engaged to be married later this year to Nancy Rosette, a video editor.

“The blues is a universal music,” Malkin says. “Listen to those [traditional musicians] singing about what you are going through, [and you realize] we are all in this together.” □

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