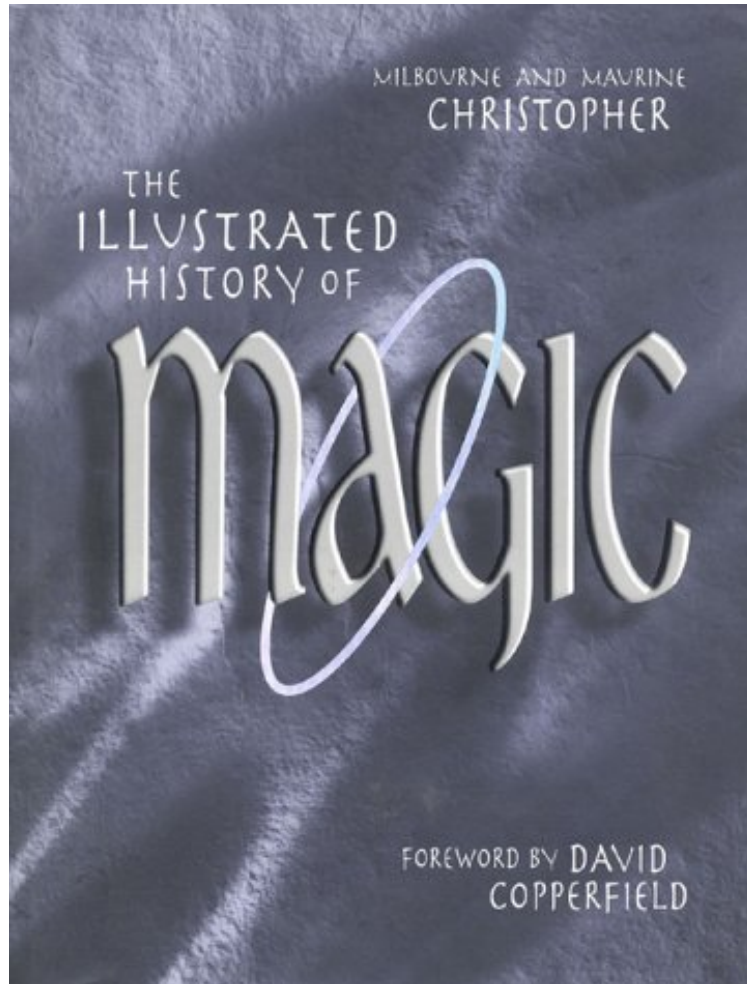


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The Illustrated History of Magic

Maurine Christopher

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Follow the fascinating stories of the world's greatest necromancers, from sorcerer-priests in ancient Egypt to such modern miracle workers as Houdini and David Copperfield.

From Publishers Weekly Feared as the devil's handiwork in medieval Europe, officially outlawed in the British colonies of North America, magic performances nevertheless attracted steadily widening audiences who marveled at the sleight of hand or sought proof of the existence of supernatural forces. First published in 1973 and long out of print, this mesmerizing, intelligent history sweeps from the earliest known image of a conjuring feat—an Egyptian wall painting made around 2500 B.C.—to the feats of that renowned escapologist Harry Houdini. In between, the authors introduce us to Muslim traveler Ibn Batuta's 1355 eyewitness account of an Indian rope trick in a Chinese royal court and to the exploits of trailblazers like French virtuoso Jean Eugene Robert-Houdin, British showman Signor Antonio Blitz and Victorian entertainment producer John Nevil Maskelyne. This updated edition also covers contemporaries such as Doug Henning, Siegfried Roy, David Copperfield and Las Vegas star Melinda Saxe. Among the 300 illustrations (plus eight pages in color) are posters, ads, photos, engravings, cartoons and playbills. Milbourne Christopher, who died in 1984, was a professional magician, lecturer and historian. Maurine Christopher is his widow. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Presenting prodigious feats of prestidigitation and their practitioners, this book, first published in 1973, recounts the stories of notable necromancers from Professor Pinetti and Signor Blitz to Houdini and Blackstone. Period posters and publicity photos punctuate the narrative. Milbourne Christopher, according to David Copperfield's introduction, was a major influence in bringing magic to prime time network television. He died in 1984, and his widow Maurine Christopher has updated his work, adding sections on contemporary leaders of legerdemain, including Copperfield, Ricky Jay, Melinda, and Siegfried and Roy. A bibliography rich in primary sources enhances the production and enables it to live up to Copperfield's recommendation as "the best source on the topic." Suitable for general as well as performing arts collections. Carolyn M. Mulac, Chicago P.L. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. About the Author Milbourne Christopher, Maurine Christopher, Foreword by David Copperfield Milbourne Christopher played a crucial role in reviving magic's appeal for audiences in America and Europe, practicing his craft on TV and Broadway. An expert and author on magic, extrasensory perception, and the hereafter, Christopher lectured at colleges and universities and was at the forefront of the magic world from the 1950s until his death, at 70, in 1984.