

THE CENTURY

This month's 11 fills out the listing of a 100 names who shaped the art in America. Herewith is a listing of the 89 names that appeared in the eight previous installments.

JANUARY

PROFESSOR HOFFMANN (1839-1919); SIEGFRIED & ROY; SIEGFRIED (b. 1939), ROY (b. 1944); JAY MARSHALL (b. 1919); A.C. GILBERT (1884-1961); SLYDINI (1901-1991); HARRY HOUDINI (1874-1926); MARK WILSON (b. 1929); ERDNASE (1872-1905); P.T. SELBIT (1881-1938).

FEBRUARY

RICHIARDI JR. (1923-1985); WALTER GIBSON (1897-1985); RICKY JAY (b. 1948); T. NELSON DOWNS (1867-1938); ALEX ELMSLEY (b. 1929); ROBERT HARBIN (1908-1978); MARVYN ROY (b. 1925); DUNNINGER (1892-1975); U.F. GRANT (1901-1978); HOWARD THURSTON (1869-1936).

MARCH

RENÉ LAVAND (b. 1922); HARLAN TARBELL (1890-1960); LANCE BURTON (b. 1960); EDDIE TULLOCK (b. 1919); ED MARLO (1913-1991); THEODORE ANNEMANN (1907-1942); BEN CHAVEZ (1901-1962); JIM STEINMEYER (b. 1958); WILLIAM LARSEN SR. (1904-1953); BILL LARSEN JR. (1928-1993); MILT LARSEN (b. 1931); DOUG HENNING (b. 1947).

APRIL

AL BAKER (1874-1951); URI GELLER (b. 1946); MICHAEL AMMAR (b. 1956); SERVAIS LE ROY (1865-1953); BILLY McCOMB (b. 1922); HORACE; (1874-1939); DARIEL FITZKEE (1898-1977); CHANNING POLLOCK (b. 1926); DON WAYNE (b. 1948); JOHN NORTHERN HILLIARD (1872-1935); HARRY BLACKSTONE SR. (1885-1965); HARRY BLACKSTONE JR (1934-1997).

MAY

FRED KAPS (1926-1980); GUY JARRETT (1881-1972); JEFF McBRIDE (b. 1959); GARY OUELLET (b. 1945); J.B. BOBO (1910-1996); JOHN SCARNE (1903-1985); ROBERT LUND (1925-1995); HARRY LORAYNE (b. 1926); WILL GOLDSTON (1878-1948); OKITO (1875-1963); FU MANCHU (1904-1978).

JUNE

AL FLOSSO (1895-1976); JEAN HUGARD (1871-1959); JOHN RAMSAY (1877-1962); PENN & TELLER; PENN (b. 1956), TELLER (b. 1948); PERCY ABBOTT (1886-1960); DR. A.M. WILSON (1854-1930); ROY BENSON (1915-1978); JOHN GAUGHAN (b. 1940); MARTIN GARDNER (b. 1914); NEIL FOSTER (1921-1989); NATE LEIPZIG (1873-1939); FRANCES IRELAND MARSHALL (b. 1910).

JULY

MAX MALINI (1873-1942); LEWIS GANSON (1913-1980); DAVID COPPERFIELD (b. 1956); CHARLIE MILLER (1909-1989); PAUL CURRY (1917-1986); EUGENE BURGER (b. 1939); RICHARD KAUFMAN (b. 1958); FLOYD G.; (1877-1959); TOMMY WONDER (b. 1953); LARRY JENNINGS (1933-1998); KARRELL FOX (1928-1998); JACK GWYNNE (1897-1969).

AUGUST

AL KORAN (1914-1972); SAM H. SHARPE (1902-1992); THE PENDRAGONS; JONATHAN (b. 1953) CHARLOTTE (b. 1954); CARL OWEN (1889-1975); ALAN WAKELING (b. 1926); JOHN MULHOLLAND (1898-1970); MIKE CAVENEY (b. 1950); PAUL HARRIS (b. 1954); CHARLES REYNOLDS (b. 1932); RUSSELL SWAN (1905-1980); DAI VERNON (1894-1992).



MaxMaven

He's created an image that conjures up an association with those imp-like, devilish-looking creatures that appeared on magic posters of yore... downright Mephistophelean. His darkside wardrobe, the hairdo, and the make-up are those of a man of mystery — a role he's been playing 24 hours a day since he turned 24. And it's not just Phil Goldstein (his birth name) acting weird; it's Max Maven, the man who claims to be able to read the thoughts of total strangers.

In a century where spiritualists were exposed early on, fraudulent soothsayers and fortune tellers were arrested and sentenced, and so-called new-age psychics continue to be debunked on a daily basis, Max enjoys a career of entertaining and astonishing audiences with his bizarre brand of mental magic. There have been inspirations from the likes of Annemann, Dunninger, and Chan Canasta, but most of Maven's mind-boggling feats are accomplished through psychological subterfuge that he himself has cunningly created. Max maintains that his "sensory perception and intuitive reasoning" perceive things missed by using "normal communicatory processes."

He is a deep thinker on things other than mental magic and expresses much of his philosophy through his lectures and prolific writings. His perspectives, often with profound parallax, have in turn, caused magicians and mentalists to approach their craft from other directions. If mystery does indeed give magic its meaning, then the enigmatic persona of Max Maven makes us ever mindful of the art that is hidden in the mystery of magic.

Harry Kellar

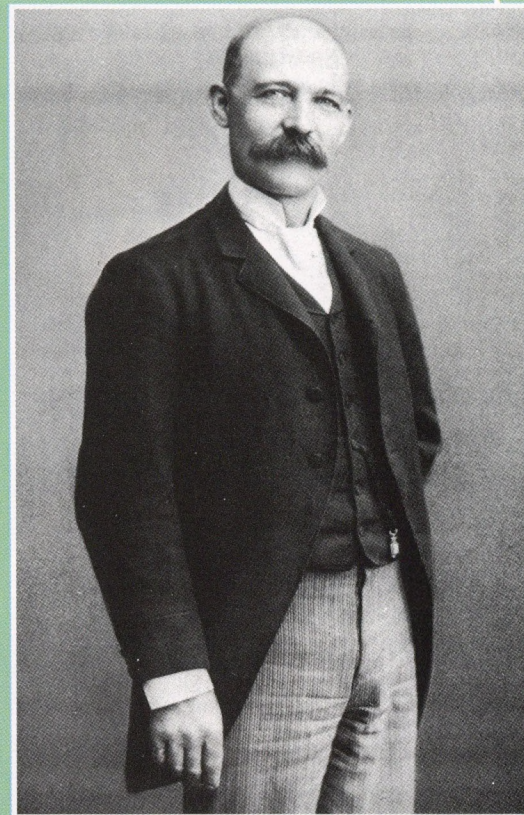
(1849-1922)

As the 20th century was ushered in, Kellar triumphantly trekked across the United States, Canada, and Mexico with his full-evening concert of mystery that he proudly promoted as “A Superb Presentation of Startling Natural Phenomena.” There was no longer a battle for “the greatest” magician on the stages of the nation. His chief rival, Alexander Herrmann, had passed away in 1896. Harry Kellar was the unquestioned favorite conjuror of the American public.

Two decades prior, Kellar had literally traveled *Up and Down and Round About the Earth* (subtitle of his exaggerated memoir, *A Magician’s Tour*) scouting five continents for the curiosities, illusions, and wonders that his audiences had grown to expect. He once wrote: “The end of all magic is to feed with mystery the human mind, which dearly loves mystery.”

By the time Kellar retired from the stage, he had amassed a fortune, the major part of which he invested wisely. He “passed the mantle” to his successor, Howard Thurston, in 1908, the same year the Society of American Magicians named Kellar their first Dean.

In 1917, Houdini enticed him out of retirement for a World War I benefit in New York City. Kellar received an overwhelming display of respect and affection from the magicians who attended the event. At the close of his performance, a veritable shower of roses fell at Kellar’s feet. *The Sphinx* reported, “The audience standing on its feet, like a six-thousand-throated monster, sang ‘Auld Lange Syne,’ they cried, sang a farewell chorus, and wept.”



At a time when it was said that television was “using up” all the good magic, Don Alan used the emerging entertainment medium to catapult his career into that of America’s foremost close-up performer.

As early as 1952, Don had learned from his 26-week series, *Magic*, that TV was an omnivorous creature that eagerly absorbed and effectively eliminated anything new and different. Instead of declaring television a wasteland, he decided to turn the “airwaves of the future” into his test site. By the time Don went network with his *Magic Ranch* series, he had transformed the tube into his proving grounds. In 1962, he advised others: “Television has given magic its greatest opportunity, not only to present conjuring under ideal conditions, but to interest and arouse millions of people in the art.”

Don continued to unveil an arsenal of the most innovative, most commercial close-up routines ever. The “Chop Cup,” “Ranch Bird,” “Benson Bowl,” “Chinatown Quarter,” “Devano Rising Cards,” and “Invisible Deck” are but a handful of the tricks that are now regarded as classics because of Don’s inimitable touch. Never claiming to have invented these effects, he merely wished that his highly personable presentations not be copied. Don’s passion for elevating the art of close-up was best expressed during a lecture in which he explained some of his signature routines. “I raised them from a child. I nursed them, I worked at them, I loved them...”



Don Alan

(1849-1922)



David Devant (1868-1942)

David Devant personified artistry in magic. His imaginative and inventive magical sketches enriched the programs at Maskelyne & Devant's Egyptian Hall in London. His first playlet, "The Artist's Dream," was a resplendent integration of illusion into story. Over the course of the century, it found its way into the repertoires of many, including Kellar, Blackstone, Virgil, The Pendragons, and Lance Burton.

Devant's stagecraft ranked with that of the best actors. Everything was scripted and written out, including move-for-move stage directions, all dialogue, and lighting and music cues. At a time when many illusionists used only a piano for accompaniment, Devant insisted on an orchestra. All scenic elements were specified, and nothing in a sketch looked like magical apparatus. Props onstage appeared as ordinary furniture or household items. In the case of his masterpiece, "The Mascot Moth," Devant made everything, including the secret apparatus, invisible.

Our Magic, which was written in collaboration with J.N. Maskelyne, remains a legacy to Devant's style of harmonizing magical feats with dramatic constructions. The guidelines set forth in that volume continue to be employed for the creation of magic sketches still popular in Broadway productions, on Las Vegas stages, and in television specials today.

Harry Anderson

Late-night television aficionados were flummoxed by his loquacious legerdemain on *Saturday Night Live*. His half-dozen guest appearances on *Cheers* brought him even wider fame. Then, in 1984, "Harry the Hat" Anderson, already one of magicdom's enviable characters, was offered a real gig as a television thespian.

The revered Robert-Houdin axiom that the "magician is an actor" suddenly became paradoxical. Harry had to hide his "Linking Rings," "Shell Game," and "Three Card Monte," beneath the long robes of his new *Night Court* character, Judge Harold T. Stone. You see, Mr. Anderson took the job of playing the young, unorthodox justice seriously. Result? The show enjoyed nine successful seasons on NBC, followed by his star role on another network series, *Dave's World*.

Did Harry forsake his well-defined and often-emulated magical personality for a career in acting? Nope. The trixter image couldn't be forgotten. Countless were the times when Harry was asked "Are you going to do some magic tonight?" during appearances on *The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson*, *Merv Griffin*, and *Late Night with Dave Letterman*. Harry would perform his latest trick, often having to be reminded to plug his current sitcom. In 1989, as he basked in the high ratings of *Night Court*, he was honored as the Magic Castle's Magician of the Year. Accepting the coveted award, Harry said, "What makes this moment so wonderful is the suggestion that after all these years together, magic has begun to believe in me."



Stewart James (1908-1996)

He was an only child, and his parents did not let him associate with other children until he was eight. However, a mail-ordered Johnson Smith & Company catalog had already opened his eyes to an outside realm of wonder. Instead of writing away for magic effects, Stewart wrote down his own. "When I became interested in magic, I escaped to the world of my imagination and my friends who lived there. We worked out tricks together."

Stewart James was a shy genius. Almost all of his adult life was spent in an unusual house that his father had built in 1917. Here he invented magic that was extraordinarily original — tricks with unorthodox plots, new methods, and highly imaginative presentations. "Miraskill," "Evolution of a Dream," "Sefalaljia," "The Nullifactor," "The Love-Sick Tennis Ball," and "Remembering the Future" are but a half-dozen of the hundreds upon hundreds of his creations, most of which were shared in numerous magazines.

When *Stewart James In Print: The First Fifty Years* appeared in 1989, with its well-over 400 effects, it became the largest magic book ever published. The volume also contained his system of creative invention. "Every new idea increases the capacity of the mind to take in more new ideas so the horizon of the mind is ever enlarging. My great desire is to discover or create a principle of magic that will continue in use long after I am gone." There's little doubt that the fulfillment of Stewart James' wish has only just begun.

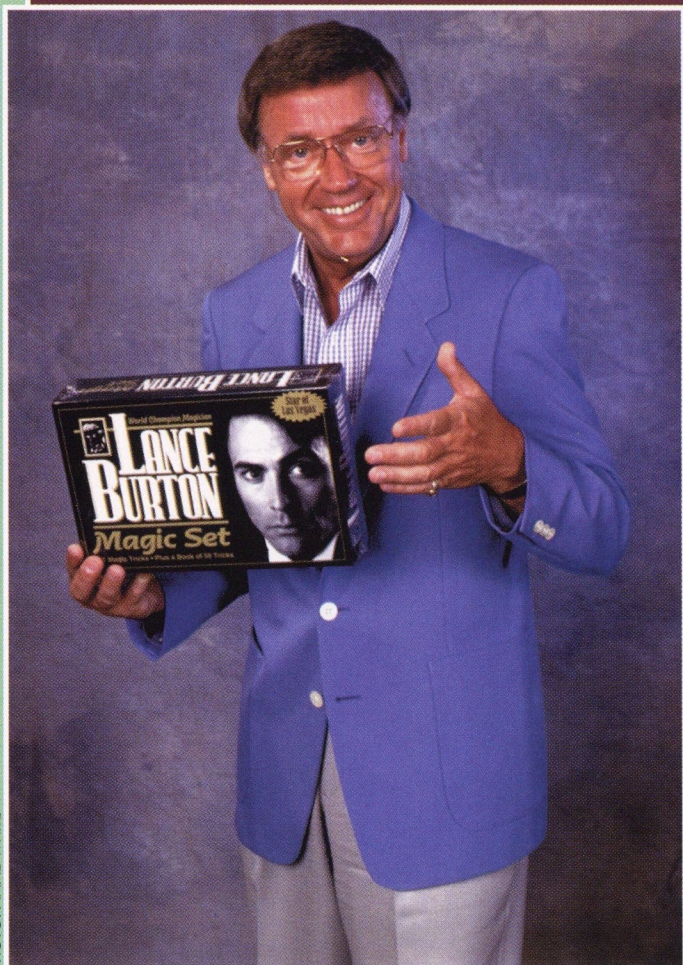


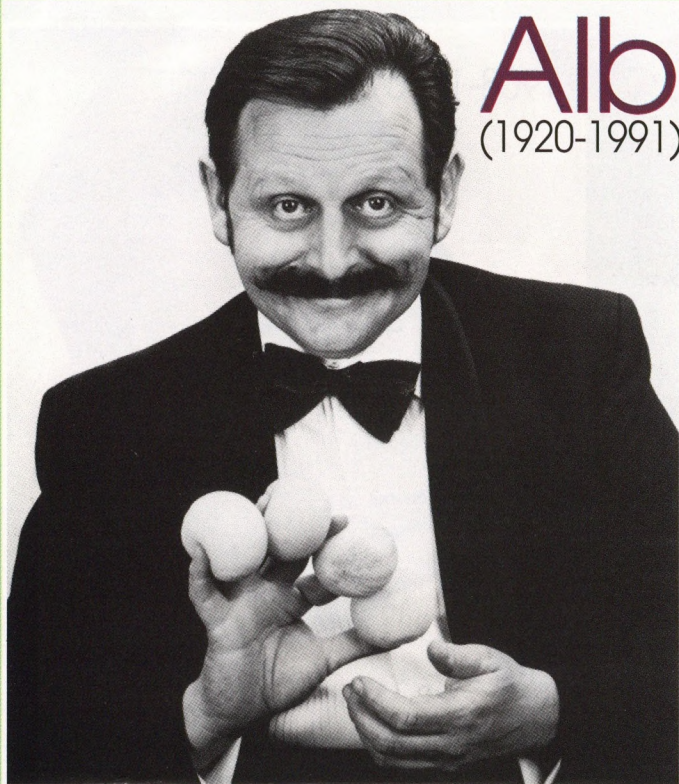
PHOTO: ANNE WHITE

Marshall Brodien

The first magic prop that Mrs. Burton bought for her son was a deck of "TV Magic Cards." And apparently she wasn't alone making that gift purchase after watching Marshall Brodien's infamous card-trick commercials of the early '70s. Lots of viewers were interested in becoming card tricksters, as 17 million trick-decks were sold.

Perhaps of greater importance was the fact that Brodien took the success of his electronic-era Svengali pitch and went onto market even bigger and better things magical. A series of magic products were promoted for NBC's *The Magician* starring Bill Bixby. Even more magic enthusiasts were cultivated when Marshall reshaped the traditional box of tricks and sold over five million of his Marshall Brodien Magic Sets, "as seen on TV."

With his two-decade pursuit of toy and department store distribution, Brodien has made more magic accessible to kids and aspiring magicians than any individual since A.C. Gilbert. The Disney organization and Harmony Toys sensed the high standards that Brodien had established and commissioned him to produce their movie-themed magic product lines. And, for over three years, Marshall's been marketing top-of-the-line magic sets and special trick-packs for Lance Burton, that guy who once received a deck of "TV Magic Cards" as a birthday present.



Albert Goshman

(1920-1991)

“My name is Albert... what’s yours?” Every night, the imaginary curtain went up with that exact same line. When the two ladies from the audience gave their names, it was Albert’s cue to smile and say, “I’m going to magish for you.”

For the next 21 minutes, Goshman proceeded to transform the tabletop into a miniature stage of illusion. An orchestra (cleverly concealed in a cassette player) accompanied the marvelous scenes of sleight of hand with sponge balls, bottle caps, cards, coins and, oh yes, salt and pepper shakers. If you said “please,” as Albert requested, the expected happened — a vanished coin miraculously appeared beneath a shaker. If you forgot to say “please,” expect the unexpected — only Albert knew when, and underneath which shaker, the elusive coin would reappear. With unflinching misdirection, and charming and unassuming humor, Goshman held his audience spellbound. They were astonished. They laughed. They applauded madly. They loved Albert.

In 1969, Goshman took his show/lecture to England. The artistic structure of his act was so strong, that his performances were praised by Londoners as “brilliant close-up recitals.” Back in America, at the Magic Castle, where Albert honed the act to perfection from thousands upon thousands of nightly performances, it was simply acclaimed to be “pure magic, by Gosh.”

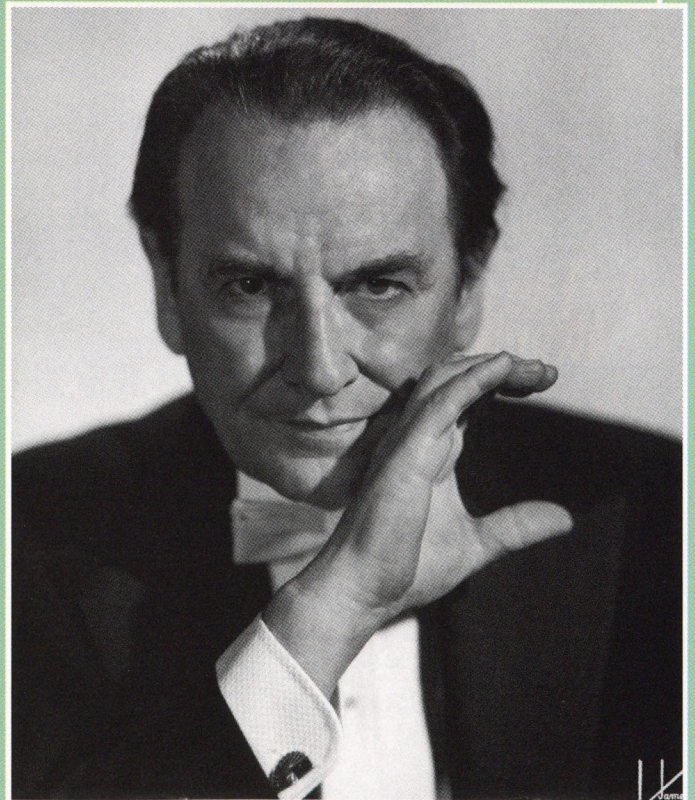
Milbourne Christopher

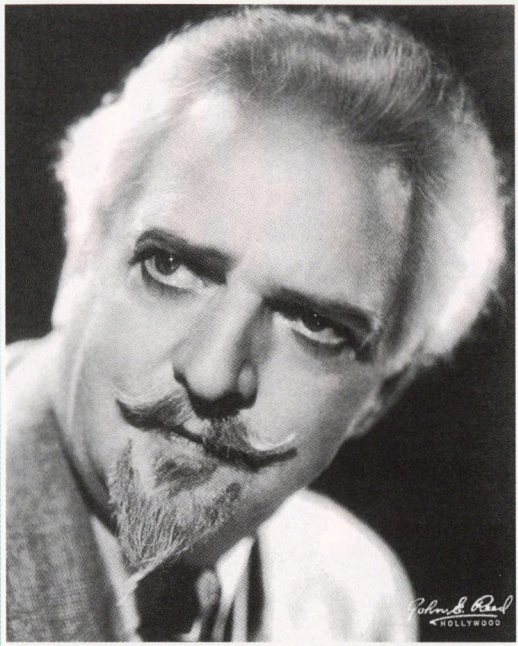
(1914-1984)

He was called “The Marco Polo of Magic.” His multi-career travels took him to 72 countries, and just as the legendary Polo had explored the world and returned home with stories and ephemeral treasures of its many magi, so did Milbourne Christopher. He was a voracious accumulator of magical knowledge, and he devoted his life to personifying the wondrous history of the art, whether it be through his performing, his endless researching, or his writing.

Christopher’s debut as a performer was on a church show in 1926, the same year that Howard Thurston signed the 12-year-old’s application to the Society of American Magicians. Fresh out of school, Milbourne got his first writing job by convincing the editor of *The Baltimore Press* to hire him on the strength of a stack of magic history articles he’d written. When the paper folded, he played night clubs across America, then made his first tour of Europe in 1935. Wherever he went, even during his Army years, he made it a habit to search for magic books to add to his ever-growing library.

Over the years, The Christopher Collection provided inspiration for his profound writings, as well as his valued expertise for stage and TV shows. In 1957, his NBC Producer’s Showcase, *The International Festival of Magic*, elevated the viability of magic as primetime entertainment. The pioneer efforts and achievements of Milbourne Christopher made it possible for subsequent generations of performers and producers to share their art with millions worldwide.





Dante (1883-1955)

Harry August Jansen was performing a full hour of illusions on a Midwestern vaudeville circuit when he came to the attention of Howard Thurston. In 1923, a deal was struck with the young Dane to build and troupe a second unit of Thurston's popular show. The name Dante was bestowed upon Jansen, and for four years he toured smaller towns and cities across America with *Thurston Presents Dante in Thurston-Kellar Mysteries*. By 1928, the show had taken on the lyrical name of *Sim-Sala-Bim*, and Dante persuaded Thurston it would be to their mutual advantage to take the production abroad. It became an international sensation, playing all five continents.

Dante was the first to present an evening of illusion as a musical revue. Always working with a full orchestra, in a flamboyant, grandiose style, he spoofed the timeworn impson-the-shoulders masters, presenting his mysteries with a lively devil-may-care attitude.

When World War II brought Dante and company back home in 1940, he took *Sim-Sala-Bim* to New York's Morosco Theater, making it the 20th century's first magic revue on Broadway. Afterwards, he toured North America, then returned to Great Britain, Europe, and Scandinavia. After retiring to California in 1949, he appeared in a few Hollywood films. However, it was that Broadway run that's become magic history's reminder that no American illusionist ever succeeded better in portraying the archetypal image of a storybook wizard than Dante.

Cardini (1896-1973)

"He appeared in an age of sleights and skill and he had a sureness of hand and a proper scorn for clumsy artifice. He knew every turn and twist of his craft. Artistry tingled at his fingertips. His sleight of hand was as delicate as lithe fingers and nimble brain could make it."

John Northern Hilliard
from his "Notes" to *Greater Magic*



PHOTO: MARIO CARRANDI COLLECTION