

# Todd Karr

Todd Karr (born 1965) is a magician and publisher noted for his wide-ranging performances and scholarly works.

## Biography

Todd Karr was born in Oak Park, near Detroit, Michigan, and began learning magic at age 9 when he became a regular at the local magic dealer, Romig's Magic Shop in Ferndale, Michigan, with the encouragement of professionals including Milton Kort and Karrell Fox. His interest in magic history was sparked around this time by the discovery of a 1939 copy of *The Sphinx* magazine and a friendship with Robert Lund, proprietor of the American Museum of Magic in Marshall, Michigan.

While performing close-up shows for restaurants and private shows, Karr attended Detroit Country Day School in Birmingham, Michigan, winning the Michigan Interscholastic Press Association's Student Journalist of the Year award. His first bylined local newspaper story recounted his meeting with one of the school's alumni, actor Robin Williams.

At age 14, Karr lectured before the Magic Collectors' Association in Chicago, and the following year he published his first book, *Magicians' Gallery*. While studying journalism at the University of Southern California, he published *Words on Wonder*, written by his mentor S.H. Sharpe, an elderly English magic philosopher; Doug Henning, another of Sharpe's disciples, wrote the introduction for Karr's book.

After an internship writing articles for the Calendar section of the Los Angeles Times in 1988, Karr moved to Paris, France, and began his career as a professional magician. In his eight years there, he performed several private shows for the royal family of Monaco, including Prince Rainier, Prince Albert, and Princess Caroline. Karr appeared on television as an on-screen illusionist and magic consultant for the prime-time series *Attention: Magie* and *Les Mondes Fantastiques*. He also presented magic in French in several European cabarets and casinos including the prestigious Monte Carlo Sporting Club, Casino de Monte Carlo, Princess Grace Theatre, Casino de Paris, and the Folies-Bergere.

In 1996, Scholastic Books published Todd's nature-magic book, *Backyard Magic*. He began publishing works through his company The Miracle Factory in 2000 and has since developed a cult following for his scholarly and artistic tomes. He has collaborated and done research with some of magic's top names, including Teller, Lance Burton, David Copperfield, Jeff McBride, Eugene Burger, John Fisher, Juan Tamariz, Luis de Matos, Paul Harris, Kevin James, and many other luminaries. His books have also shared his conversations on magic with thinkers like Timothy Leary and Terence McKenna.

Todd's translations from French include Christian Fechner's four-volume *The Magic of Robert-Houdin* and *The Award-Winning Rope Magic of Francis Tabary*, and with Stephen Minch he co-edited the *1584 Old French Clever and Pleasant Inventions*. Todd is also a regular contributor to the leading magic journals including *Genii* and *Magic*.

Awards include the Milbourne Christopher Foundation Literary Award and the Society of American Magicians Biography Prize, as well as two junior close-up awards from the International Brotherhood of Magicians.

Todd also served two years as Entertainment Director at the world-famous Magic Castle in Hollywood, California.

## Awards and honors

- \* Milbourne Christopher Foundation 2002, Literary Award
- \* Society of American Magicians 2002, Biography Prize
- \* International Brotherhood of Magicians Junior Close-up Magic Award, Silver Prize

## Published Works (as publisher, editor, or author)

- \* (1981) *Magicians' Gallery* (editor)
- \* (1996) *Backyard Magic* (author)
- \* (2000) *Neo-Magic Artistry*, S.H. Sharpe (editor and publisher)
- \* (2001) *The Annals of Conjuring*, Sidney W. Clarke (co-editor and publisher)
- \* (2001) *The Silence of Chung Ling Soo* (editor and publisher)
- \* (2002) *Germain the Wizard*, Stuart Cramer (editor and publisher)
- \* (2003) *The Secret Ways of Al Baker*, Al Baker (editor and publisher)
- \* (2003) *Mystery School*, Eugene Burger and Jeff McBride (editor and publisher)
- \* (2003) *The Magic of Robert-Houdin*, Christian Fechner (editor)
- \* (2004) *Chicago Visions*, Eugene Burger (editor)
- \* (2005) *House of Mystery: The Magic Science of David P. Abbott*, co-edited with Teller (co-editor and publisher)
- \* (2006) *Roy Benson by Starlight*, co-author with Levent (co-author and publisher)

- \* (2006) Essential Robert-Houdin, (editor and publisher)
- \* (2007) Cardini: The Suave Deceiver, John Fisher (editor and publisher)