

# DAVID COPPERFIELD

## BIOGRAPHY

---

### DAVID COPPERFIELD HAS BEEN HAILED BY AUDIENCES AND CRITICS ALIKE AS THE GREATEST MAGICIAN IN THE WORLD.

He's the first living illusionist to be honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. He was knighted by the French government. He—along with Steven Spielberg, Martin Scorsese and Colin Powell—received the Living Legend award from the United States Library of Congress. He has been named Magician of the Century and Magician of the Millennium. His face graces the postage stamps of six different countries, making him the only living magician to receive this honor. He's won over 21 Emmy awards for his groundbreaking television specials. Year after year he continues to tour sold-out arenas throughout the world. He holds 11 Guinness World Records and has sold more tickets than any other solo entertainer in history, with ticket sales in the billions—more than Frank Sinatra, more than Michael Jackson, more than Elvis.

Sound impossible? David Copperfield built a reputation on making the impossible look easy. He singlehandedly redefined his art, and remains the most emulated illusionist in the history of magic.

#### EARLY LIFE AND CAREER

An only child, David was born on September 16, 1956 as David Kotkin in Metuchen, New Jersey. His father, Hy, owned Korby's Men's shop. His mother, Rebecca, worked in the insurance business. A shy kid who overcame his insecurity with the help of magic, David was already an accomplished conjurer by the age of 12, when he was invited to join the Society of American Magicians—its youngest member ever. At 16, David was an adjunct professor at New York University, where he taught a course called "the Art of Magic." At 18 David was cast as the lead in "The Magic Man," a new musical comedy created by the producers of "Grease." The show opened in Chicago to rave reviews. It went on to become the longest running musical in Chicago's history, and gave David the invaluable experience of performing daily in front of a live audience, allowing him to develop the spontaneity and love of live performance that has

him performing up to four shows a day, and doing over 500 performances every year.

#### COPPERFIELD ON TELEVISION

When The Magic Man closed David returned to New York. He continued to develop his singular approach to magic, which was strongly influenced by his love of classic MGM musicals, the dramatic storytelling exemplified by Orson Welles and Walt Disney (two of David's heroes) and the lyrical, muscular romanticism of a Sinatra ballad. As host of "The Magic of ABC, Starring David Copperfield", he achieved top ratings and shared his unique style magic with millions of viewers. CBS immediately put David under contract for a series of yearly TV specials, which became known as "The Magic of David Copperfield". In each special he presented new illusions on a scale never before imagined or attempted—and always in front of a live audience, without the use of camera tricks. In his fourth TV special, he "Vanished a Jet Airplane." In his fifth special he presented "The Illusion of the Century — the Disappearance of the Statue of Liberty" in front of a live audience on Liberty Island, and to millions of astonished television viewers.

For the next two decades David continued to break new ground with his annual top-rated, Emmy Award winning television specials, on which he continued to outdo himself by "Walking Through the Great Wall of China," escaping from chains and shackles just before he was plunged over Niagara Falls, surviving being locked in a safe inside an imploding building, making a daring "Escape from Alcatraz" prison, levitating and "Vanishing a 45 ton Orient Express Train Car" while surrounded by a ring of spectators, escaping while hanging upside down from burning ropes in a straight jacket 10 stories above flaming steel spikes, testing his endurance by surviving the deadly heat standing in the center of a 2000 degree "Tornado of Fire", and flying through the air in "Flying."

## BROADWAY

In 1996 David realized a life long dream of performing on Broadway. Collaborating with Francis Ford Coppola, David created “Dreams and Nightmares”, which still holds the Broadway record for most tickets sold in a week—more than Cats, The Lion King, and The Producers.

The International Museum and Library of the Conjuring Arts  
A historian of his art, Copperfield founded The International Museum and Library of the Conjuring Arts, which houses the world’s largest collection of historically significant magic memorabilia, posters, books, props and artifacts. The museum comprises of approximately 80,000 items of magic history, including Houdini’s Water Torture Cell and his Metamorphosis Trunk, Orson Welles’ Buzz Saw Illusion and automata created by Robert-Houdin, who is considered the father of modern magic. The museum also includes the only known recording of Houdini’s voice—preserved on the original Edison wax cylinders.

## LITERATURE, PRESS AND POPULAR CULTURE

On the literary front, Copperfield joined forces with Dean Koontz, Joyce Carol Oates, Ray Bradbury and others for “David Copperfield’s Tales of the Impossible,” an anthology of original fiction set in the world of magic and illusion. This collection was so well received that a second volume was published, “David Copperfield’s Beyond Imagination.”

David has been featured on the cover of Vanity Fair, Esquire, Forbes, and Architectural Digest. The word “Copperfield” has become a part of popular culture, in a manner quite apart from anything envisioned by Dickens. In today’s literature and media, to “do a David Copperfield” or to “be the David Copperfield of” something has come to mean doing something magical or achieving the impossible.

## MUSHA CAY AND THE ISLANDS OF COPPERFIELD BAY

Recently, Copperfield found a unique platform on which to create his newest wonders – “Musha Cay and The Islands of Copperfield Bay”. Recognized by many as the most beautiful and spectacular destination in the world, Musha Cay is the ultimate private island paradise. Located in the Exumas, Bahamas, these 11 private islands have over 700 acres of lush natural beauty, 40 sugar sand beaches and a 2 mile long sandbar – truly paradise on earth. David has been developing unique magical adventures for island guests including: Dave’s Drive-in, where a giant silver screen “appears” on the beach, a custom designed magical Treasure Hunt adventure, and the Secret Village - a hidden sanctuary of enchanted monkeys accessed only by entering beneath a giant rising statue and journeying through an ancient, underground passage.

## PROJECT MAGIC

David’s proudest achievement, however, is Project Magic, a program that uses magic as therapy in a thousand hospitals in 30 countries worldwide. This medically-certified program motivates patients to regain their dexterity, coordination and cognitive skills by learning simple magic and sleight of hand.

## THE MAGIC

“It takes at least 2 years to develop illusions and some of them take even longer,” says David. “I love to challenge my team and myself by pushing the envelope and working on new methods and ideas. I don’t always take the easiest route. Sometimes, the ultimate solution requires months of brainstorming, miniatures and mock-ups, and testing just to make an idea a reality.”

Oprah Winfrey calls David Copperfield, “The greatest illusionist of our time”. He has forever changed the future of his art and shown that there are no limits- that magic is as vast as the imagination.