

# Foreword

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I had the pleasure of attending Laurent Cervoni's lecture at the International Magic Congress in San Marino in 2024. It was one of those rare moments when you feel you are witnessing something genuinely new: a blend of scientific rigor, intellectual curiosity, and mischievous humor. Laurent possesses a dual competence few can claim: he thinks like a researcher, yet speaks like a magician. And it is precisely this marriage of rational thought and the art of illusion that makes his work so stimulating.

His book, *Magic & AI: Artificial Intelligence Applied to the Art of Magic*, continues this reflection with flair. It opens with a historical reminder—an intriguing one—of two parallel births: that of AI, at Dartmouth in 1956, and that of a magic already mature, heir to Robert-Houdin and to the technology of its time. From there, Laurent explores, step by step, the paths along which the science of machines meets the art of prestidigitation.

He shows us how language models—those “LLMs” that have now become part of our everyday lives—can become companions in creation: to write a script, invent a presentation, build a dramaturgy, or simply to spark our imagination. And, with a critical sense that never dulls, he also points out their weaknesses: a lack of timing, of spatial perception, and—thankfully! —of artistic intuition. AI can help write a text, but it will never know how to look a spectator in the eyes at exactly the right moment.

This book is not confined to theory. It is brimming with concrete examples: prompts, exercises, applications, and routines devised in collaboration with the latest AIs. Laurent also addresses the technical, psychological, and even ethical aspects of this new frontier. One finds here the clear, generous pedagogy that marks the best teachers: to explain without oversimplifying, to inspire without imposing.

Some readers will certainly see this alliance between magic and artificial intelligence as a provocation of sorts: the machine in the service of the imagination! But after all, did not Robert-Houdin already use electricity to create illusion? What Laurent does here is to carry on that tradition: to place technology at the service of poetry.

I would like to thank Laurent Cervoni for this innovative contribution—at once original and necessary. He opens a door—or perhaps a digital portal—toward a future in which the conjuror will converse with the machine as with an invisible assistant. On behalf of the magical world, I offer him my heartfelt gratitude: his book helps our art move forward, while reminding us that no intelligence, artificial or otherwise, will ever surpass the magic of the human gaze.

And who knows? Perhaps tomorrow people will speak as much of Laurent Cervoni as of AI itself... That, after all, may well be the magic of the future.

*Roberto Giobbi — MuttENZ, 6th November 2025*