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It's just enough information to inspire you to see (if not try) magic, and yet not enough to spoil or expose most modern routines. Hiding the Elephant deftly blends the history of magic's illusions, the history of the magicians who created them, and the methods and philosophy of magic itself.

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Harry Houdini was the greatest escape artist in history, yet known to his contemporaries as a terrible stage magician. Nevertheless, in 1917 he performed a single illusion that has been hotly debated ever since: Under the bright spotlights of New York's Theatre Hippodrome, he made a live elephant disappear. Where did he learn this amazing trick and how did it work?

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In elegant, captivating prose, Hiding the Elephant chronicles the ingenuity and passion that characterized the Golden Age of conjuring and, through this persuasive account of the intricacies and innovations at the heart of a great illusion, ultimately substantiates magic's claim to art status.

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Jim Steinmeyer is the ultimate authority on the history of magic. In this book he offers a peak behind the curtain of one of the most beloved acts of magic, all while maintaining a respect for the magician's code. A fascinating and entertaining read, especially if you are interested in magic.

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HIDING THE ELEPHANT. How Magicians Invented the. Impossible and Learned to Disappear. By Jim Steinmeyer. Illustrated. 362 pp. New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers. \$26.

#### Now You See It . . . - The New York Times

The result is an engaging and accessible (as far as possible given that some of the tricks are pretty mind-bending) guide showing "How magicians invented the impossible" – or at least gave the impression they had, which is truly magic. Hiding the Elephant: How Magicians Invented the Impossible, by Jim Steinmeyer, London: William ...

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