

October 25, 2022

During my last semester in college I went to a magical illusion show with some friends from our Campus Crusade for Christ student group. When speaking with them after the show, one of the discussion topics was how the magician included an illustrated gospel message as part of the show. I stayed around afterwards to talk with the performer and confided in him that after graduation, instead of pursuing employment in the area of my degree I was considering following my real passion of entertaining with magical effects. This gentleman informed me that he would be needing another assistant to travel with his show starting that summer and asked if I might consider doing that. My first thought was disbelief that I could actually have the chance to work with this man whom I considered, along with most of his peers, to be an elite *magician's-magician*. Well, as you may already have figured out, that was the start of my three-and-a-half decades of ministry with André Kole.



It is now, with both a sad and joyous heart, that I want to inform you of Andre's passing. Here is the official obituary.

On October 17th, 2022 Robert J. Gurtler passed away peacefully in his sleep after a long and valiant battle with Alzheimer's.

A native of Mesa Arizona, he had just recently turned 86. Professionally known as André Kole, he became world renowned as not only a performer, but one of the foremost creators of magical effects. His genius was utilized by stage and television stars David Copperfield, Siegfried & Roy, Doug Henning, as well as countless other magicians throughout the world.

At seven years old one of his fathers business associates showed the young Bob Gurtler a coin trick, which sparked his interest. By fourteen he created The Gurtler Magic Company.

The pivotal moment of his life came when at twenty five he was challenged to investigate the miracles of Christ from the point of view of an illusionist. This led to the next fifty plus years touring his show, 'André Kole's World of Illusion' in all fifty states as well as eighty countries under the banner of Campus Crusade for Christ International.

He not only presented a full evening magic and illusion show, but audiences were given the opportunity (if they wished) to hear and witness through a unique presentation, why he believed Jesus Christ was exactly who he claimed to be. Robert (André) shared the Gospel with an estimated ten million people in live

(Obituary continued)

performances, with approximately a million of those indicating their choice to follow Christ via comment cards.

There is currently a full length documentary and a limited docu-series being produced with Robert (André) as the central character focusing on another aspect of his career, investigating and debunking supernatural phenomena and paranormal activity.

Robert is survived by his wife Kathryne, daughters Robyn and Stacey, his son Tim, and his grandchildren Dustin, Dillon, Colin, Camden, and Skyler. As well as his brother Dr. Richard Gurtler and his family. Loved by thousands around the world, Robert will always be remembered as the Magic Warrior for Christ.



As you might expect, André was more than a boss to me, and working beside him afforded me 35 years of wonderful and meaningful memories in a novel and most effective outreach ministry. He will be missed.

With loving memories,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Craig".

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