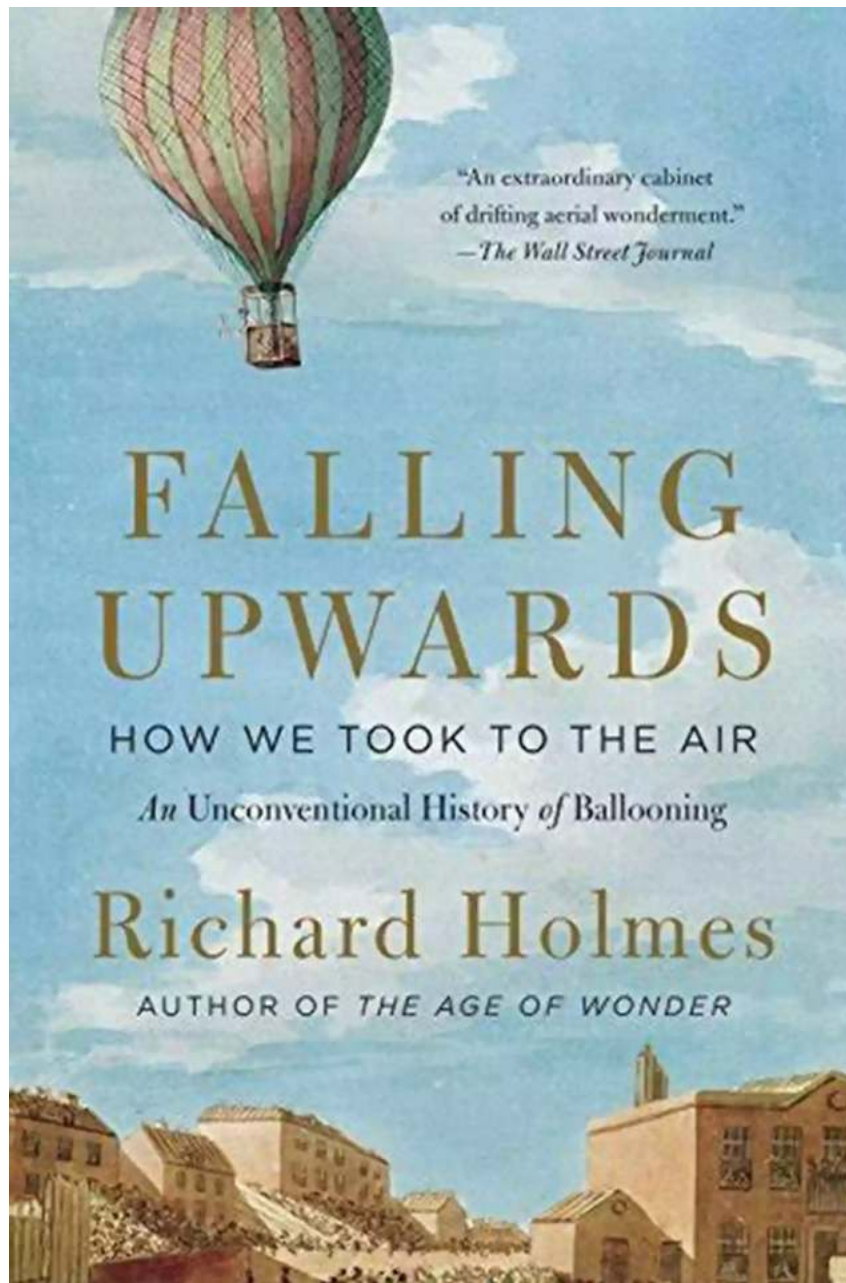


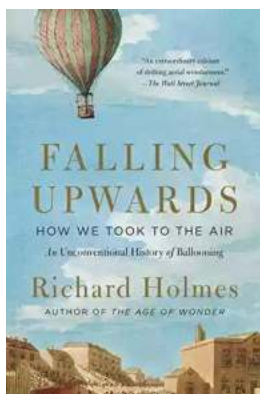
Falling Upwards: How We Took To The Air



Imagine soaring through the sky, feeling the gentle breeze against your face and witnessing the world from a whole new perspective. This is the exhilarating experience that awaits those who embark on the timeless adventure of flying. From the earliest dreams of mankind to the modern marvels of aviation, the journey of how we took to the air is nothing short of extraordinary.

Soaring Dreams of Ancient Civilizations

Long before the Wright brothers crafted the first successful airplane, the idea of flight captivated the minds of ancient civilizations. Ancient Egyptians, inspired by the graceful flight of birds, envisioned the mythical figure of Horus, often depicted with wings, soaring high above the land. Furthermore, the legendary Greek inventor Daedalus constructed wings made of feathers and wax, attempting to achieve human flight. Although these early attempts were unsuccessful, they laid the foundation for future explorations of the air.



Falling Upwards: How We Took to the Air

by Alyn G. McFarland (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 30213 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 441 pages



The Renaissance: Da Vinci's Musings

During the Renaissance, the great Leonardo da Vinci devoted significant time and effort to understanding the principles of flight. Through his meticulous observations and detailed sketches, Da Vinci envisioned intricate flying machines, including ornithopters – contraptions that imitated the flapping wings of birds. While his designs were never fully realized during his lifetime, they became vital inspirations for future aviation pioneers.

The Wright Brothers and the Birth of Powered Flight

In the early 20th century, the Wright brothers, Orville and Wilbur, made history by successfully designing, building, and flying the world's first powered aircraft. Their remarkable achievement on December 17, 1903, in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, forever changed the course of human transportation. By combining their knowledge of aerodynamics, engineering ingenuity, and unwavering determination, the Wright brothers paved the way for modern aviation and ignited a worldwide fascination with flight.

Advancements in Commercial Aviation

Throughout the 20th century, aviation underwent significant advancements, leading to the birth of commercial air travel. Innovations such as jet engines, pressurized cabins, and larger aircraft allowed for longer, faster, and more comfortable journeys. The of commercial airlines revolutionized global transportation, connecting people from different corners of the world in unprecedented ways and opening up a new era of exploration and adventure.

Inspiration from Nature: Hot Air Balloons

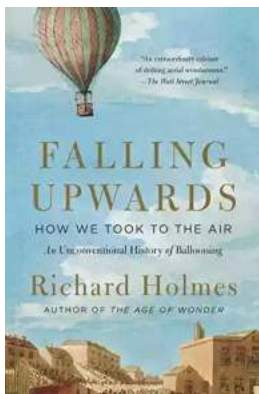
While airplanes dominated the skies, another form of flight emerged in the late 18th century – hot air balloons. With the discovery that heated air becomes lighter than the surrounding cool air, the idea of floating through the atmosphere became a reality. The Montgolfier brothers, Joseph-Michel and Jacques-Étienne, successfully launched the first manned hot air balloon in 1783, forever shaping the history of aerial exploration. Today, hot air balloons provide a unique and enchanting way of taking to the air, offering breathtaking views and a serene journey above the world below.

Modern Aviation: Pushing Boundaries

In the present day, aviation has evolved into a multifaceted industry. From supersonic jets that break the sound barrier to unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs)

that perform complex tasks, the possibilities seem limitless. Exploration of space has also become a reality, expanding humanity's understanding of the universe. As technology advances and passion for flight persists, the next chapter of aviation promises even more remarkable achievements.

"Falling Upwards: How We Took To The Air" chronicles the rich history of human flight, from ancient dreams to modern marvels. It celebrates the relentless pursuit of innovation, the unyielding ambition of visionaries, and the awe-inspiring wonders of the skies. The journey of flight has forever changed the course of human evolution, connecting us across continents and enabling us to explore the unreachable. So next time you gaze up at the vast expanse above, remember the remarkable journey of how we took to the air.



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****Kirkus Best Books of the Year (2013)****

****Time Magazine 10 Top Nonfiction Books of 2013****

****The New Republic Best Books of 2013****

In this heart-lifting chronicle, Richard Holmes, author of the best-selling *The Age*

of Wonder, follows the pioneer generation of balloon aeronauts, the daring and enigmatic men and women who risked their lives to take to the air (or fall into the sky). Why they did it, what their contemporaries thought of them, and how their flights revealed the secrets of our planet is a compelling adventure that only Holmes could tell.

His accounts of the early Anglo-French balloon rivalries, the crazy firework flights of the beautiful Sophie Blanchard, the long-distance voyages of the American entrepreneur John Wise and French photographer Felix Nadar are dramatic and exhilarating. Holmes documents as well the balloons used to observe the horrors of modern battle during the Civil War (including a flight taken by George Armstrong Custer); the legendary tale of at least sixty-seven manned balloons that escaped from Paris (the first successful civilian airlift in history) during the Prussian siege of 1870-71; the high-altitude exploits of James Glaisher (who rose) seven miles above the earth without oxygen, helping to establish the new science of meteorology); and how Mary Shelley, Edgar Allan Poe, and Jules Verne felt the imaginative impact of flight and allowed it to soar in their work.

A seamless fusion of history, art, science, biography, and the metaphysics of flights, *Falling Upwards* explores the interplay between technology and imagination. And through the strange allure of these great balloonists, it offers a masterly portrait of human endeavor, recklessness, and vision.

(With 24 pages of color illustrations, and black-and-white illustrations throughout.)



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