



Trickster Makes This World: Mischief, Myth, and Art

By Lewis Hyde

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Trickster Makes This World solidifies Lewis Hyde's reputation as, in Robert Bly's words, "the most subtle, thorough, and brilliant mythologist we now have." In it, Hyde now brings to life the playful and disruptive side of human imagination as it is embodied in trickster mythology. He first revisits the old stories--Hermes in Greece, Eshu in West Africa, Krishna in India, Coyote in North America, among others--and then holds them up against the life and work of more recent creators: Picasso, Duchamp, Ginsberg, John Cage, and Frederick Douglass. Authoritative in its scholarship, loose-limbed in its style, *Trickster Makes This World* ranks among the great works of modern cultural criticism.

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Editorial Review

From Kirkus Reviews

A model of rangy, creative, but not far-fetched interpretation, in this case of a common mythological archetype, the shifty trickster. With often inspired readings of a variety of myths, including the Homeric Hymn to Hermes, North American tales of Raven and Coyote, myths of the Yoruba god Eshu and the Norse god Loki, Hyde (*Art and Politics/Kenyon Coll.*; *The Gift*, 1983) delineates some of their common themes: voracious appetite, ingenious theft, deceit, opportunism, and shamelessness. Through such themes trickster tales dramatize a mythic consciousness of accident and contingency (supplementing fate), moral ambiguity, foolishness, and transgression--in other words, the world as it is, rather than the way it may originally have been intended by the more senior gods. While careful to note that tricksters are heroes in a symbolic, imagined world and fixtures of wider polytheistic moral orders, Hyde ultimately identifies the trickster's crucial role as boundary-crosser with the provoking one often taken up by the artist in modern times. Without ever being heavy-handed about universal archetypes, Hyde uses such examples as Marcel Duchamp, Allen Ginsberg, and Maxine Hong Kingston, vividly illustrating the "trickster consciousness" as a vital component of human imagination. His choice of the fiery 19th-century African-American orator Frederick Douglass may at first seem puzzling in this regard. But in light of the real-life gravity of the "boundaries" Douglass crossed, and the ingenuity with which he did so, Hyde's example makes sense. Indeed, with his clever interpretive skills and his eye for the meaning-rich detail, Hyde brightly illuminates the ways in which his examples struggled to subvert such seemingly intractable elements as the definition of art or slavery and segregation. Eclectic and cunning in its own connections, Hyde's wandering journey through cultures shows him to be nearly as versatile and ingenious as that master trickster, Odysseus. (illustrations, not seen) --
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Review

"Persuasively celebrates the need for the kind of paintings, music, books and ideas that society initially finds unpleasant...[A] hymn to the gods of mischief, who are also the gods of artistic and cultural renewal."--
Michael Dirda, *The Washington Post*

"Hyde is one of our true superstars of nonfiction."--*David Foster Wallace*

"Brilliant...By the time he is done he has folded language, culture, and the very habit of being human into his ken."--*The New Yorker*

"A major work of scholarship that is also a major work of art."--Sacvan Bercovitch, Harvard University

"[*Trickster*] should be ready by anyone interested in the grand and squalid matter of all things human..."--
Margaret Atwood, *Los Angeles Times*

About the Author

Lewis Hyde is the author of *The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property* and a book of poems, *This Error Is the Sign of Love*. A MacArthur Fellow and former director of creative writing at Harvard, he is currently Luce Professor of Art and Politics at Kenyon College and lives with his wife in Gambier, Ohio, and Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Elizabeth Wiggins:

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Alicia Gentry:

Reading a book tends to be new life style on this era globalization. With examining you can get a lot of information that can give you benefit in your life. Together with book everyone in this world can certainly share their idea. Guides can also inspire a lot of people. Many author can inspire their very own reader with their story or perhaps their experience. Not only the storyplot that share in the publications. But also they write about the knowledge about something that you need example. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your children, there are many kinds of book which exist now. The authors on this planet always try to improve their ability in writing, they also doing some research before they write to the book. One of them is this Trickster Makes This World: Mischief, Myth, and Art.

Karen Ofarrell:

Precisely why? Because this Trickster Makes This World: Mischief, Myth, and Art is an unordinary book that the inside of the publication waiting for you to snap this but latter it will zap you with the secret it inside. Reading this book next to it was fantastic author who else write the book in such awesome way makes the content inside easier to understand, entertaining approach but still convey the meaning thoroughly. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this ever again or you going to regret it. This unique book will give you a lot of gains than the other book have got such as help improving your ability and your critical thinking technique. So , still want to hold up having that book? If I had been you I will go to the book store hurriedly.

Jessie Adams:

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