



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 read 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:

Margaret Burton:

The guide untitled Trickster Makes This World: Mischief, Myth, and Art is the guide that recommended to you to see. You can see the quality of the book content that will be shown to anyone. The language that author use to explained their way of doing something is easily to understand. The author was did a lot of research when write the book, hence the information that they share to you is absolutely accurate. You also can get the e-book of Trickster Makes This World: Mischief, Myth, and Art from the publisher to make you considerably more enjoy free time.

Ernest Keeler:

Trickster Makes This World: Mischief, Myth, and Art can be one of your beginner books that are good idea. Many of us recommend that straight away because this book has good vocabulary that will increase your knowledge in words, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nonetheless delivering the information. The article author giving his/her effort to set every word into joy arrangement in writing Trickster Makes This World: Mischief, Myth, and Art however doesn't forget the main level, giving the reader the hottest and based confirm resource details that maybe you can be one among it. This great information can easily drawn you into brand-new stage of crucial pondering.

Audrey Stockman:

Your reading sixth sense will not betray anyone, why because this Trickster Makes This World: Mischief, Myth, and Art reserve written by well-known writer we are excited for well how to make book that may be understand by anyone who else read the book. Written throughout good manner for you, still dripping wet every ideas and composing skill only for eliminate your own personal hunger then you still skepticism Trickster Makes This World: Mischief, Myth, and Art as good book but not only by the cover but also by the content. This is one guide that can break don't ascertain book by its cover, so do you still needing yet another sixth sense to pick this specific!?! Oh come on your reading sixth sense already said so why you have to listening to yet another sixth sense.

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