



Fantastic Metamorphoses, Other Worlds: Ways of Telling the Self

Marina Warner

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Metamorphosis is a dynamic principle of creation, vital to natural processes of generation and evolution, growth and decay, yet it also threatens personal identity if human beings are subject to a continual process of bodily transformation. Shape-shifting also belongs in the landscape of magic, witchcraft, and wonder, and enlivens classical mythology, early modern fairy tales and uncanny fictions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In *Fantastic Metamorphoses, Other Worlds*, acclaimed novelist and critic Marina Warner explores the metaphorical power of metamorphoses in the evocation of human personality. Beginning with Ovid's great poem, *The Metamorphoses*, as the founding text of the metamorphic tradition, she takes us on a journey of exploration, into the fantastic art of Hieronymous Bosch, the legends of the Taino people, the life cycle of the butterfly, the myth of Leda and the Swan, the genealogy of the Zombie, the pantomime of Aladdin, the haunting of doppelgangers, the coming of photography, and the late fiction of Lewis Carroll. Beautifully illustrated and elegantly written, *Fantastic Metamorphoses, Other Worlds* is sure to appeal to all readers interested in mythology, art, and literature.

Fantastic Metamorphoses, Other Worlds: Ways of Telling the Self Details

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From Reader Review Fantastic Metamorphoses, Other Worlds: Ways of Telling the Self for online ebook

Mira says

The author explores the process of metamorphosis in the fantastical painter Hieronymus Bosch, native legends of the Taino people, butterflies, Zombies, Lewis Carroll and other cultural and natural oddities and wonders. Some brilliant ideas here but the academia-speak is a little tedious at times. Still, an often intriguing read.

Heidi Garrett says

This is a fascinating, truly fascinating, analysis of the metamorphic trends in literature, and how those trends are used in fiction to "tell" the self. It's divided into four parts. The first three: Mutating, Hatching, and Splitting covered a lot of new ground for me. The fourth section: Doubling, not so much. Mutating addressed the cross-pollination of ideas between cultures. Hatching dove more into issues of identity. Splitting provided an in-depth look at how Zombies came to be. Doubling covered a lot of ground with images and photography. It was the hardest section to read, and the least interesting. I've always viewed transformation as a positive thing. I came away from this study with the new understanding that many cultures/religions have found transformation to be threatening.

Old-Barbarossa says

Not as good as other stuff I've read of her's.
Interesting but heavy on the academic language, 4 words when 1 would do, and at times it seems very obvious that it was cobbled together from a few lectures.
Good illustrations and introduction.

Leah says

Utterly fascinating--this book touches on topics ranging from butterflies to Bosch, from zombies to New World exploration, from Phillip Pullman to slavery to Ovid to cinema and Alice in Wonderland, all of which are bound up in the mysterious presentation of the self, and in the metamorphosis of the perception of the self over the last two thousand years.

April says

My thoughts:

<http://www.greenmanreview.com/book/bo...>

Ash says

I can't give this the full five because there are still various tics and quirks of lit theory that drive me up the wall, but this is definitely in the better group, of its type. Warner's almost always fascinating, and she's got both depth and breadth. I learned several new things, as well as new ways to think about aspects of existence, the way metamorphoses in all their forms are built into our lives. I don't know what else you can ask from some nonfiction like this.

Tara Calaby says

This was a very surprising book to find in my local library, as opposed to a university library. It's written in quite an academic manner, so I doubt there would be much of an audience for it among town library patrons. (Then again, *I* borrowed it!) I was disappointed in the fact that it didn't delve much into the idea of emotional/mental metamorphoses, but there's some interesting stuff in here, especially for zombie aficionados ;)

Chris says

A wonderful overview of change in literature and art. Warner focuses on how society is concerned with changed. She even deals with the rise of zombine literature. It is a rather interesting book.
