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With the same adroit scrutiny that enabled him to recognize a heroine in the Wicked Witch of the West, Gregory Maguire, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Wicked*, reconsiders the oeuvre of the incomparable Maurice Sendak (*Where the Wild Things Are*). *Making Mischief* pays tribute to the visionary author and illustrator, his profound understanding of children, and his stunningly imaginative and groundbreaking work that carried the picture book so much higher and farther than it had ever flown. A beautifully designed, endlessly fascinating volume, *Making Mischief* is one master mythmaker's heartfelt appreciation of another.

Making Mischief: A Maurice Sendak Appreciation Details

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Author : Gregory Maguire

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From Reader Review Making Mischief: A Maurice Sendak Appreciation for online ebook

Linda says

Maguire has thoroughly researched Sendak's work and makes the artist's influences apparent while sounding mildly pretentious.

Esmeralda says

The first thing about this book that caught my eye was the illustrations on the cover and then all of the artwork on the inside of the book. I read this book fast and got a lot out of it. I learned more about the author of *Where The Wild Things Are* and have more respect for the illustrations by Sendak. Went to Target yesterday and saw they had a *Where The Wild Things Are* board game with great little character game pieces. Long story short, this book was a very well done appreciation of the artwork and stories of Sendak.

Andrea says

Full of advanced vocabulary, this look at Maurice Sendak's body of work over 50 years is a visual masterpiece and an incredible read!

Allie says

This book was recommended to me by a silent librarian, someone who truly followed her own sermons! The book is beautiful; it's sweet, serious, funny, a true love letter from one friend to another. Maguire writes about his own bias in the beginning, how can we really criticize a friend? I don't care if it's biased, I think it's sweet! A wonderful read for every adult child.

Antoine says

This remarkable volume is the first book received for Christmas 2009 that I finished reading. Despite a nominal length of 198 pp, this is a one-sitting kind of read. Maguire's conceit is that Sendak's entire body of work should (or at least can) be viewed as a single artistic whole, welded together by themes that run through fifty years of nominally heterogeneous work, ranging from his own picture books, but also including illustrations for authors as diverse as Tony Kushner, Ruth Krauss, Herman Melville, Sesyle Johnson, E.T.A. Hoffman, the Grimms, and Randall Jarrell.

Perhaps the crowning moment of the book, is the final section, where the text of Sendak's first Masterpiece, *Where the Wild Things Are* is illustrated with apt drawings taken from across the breadth and depth of the illustrator's career. Like a Sendak book, Maguire's analysis leaves you hungry for more.

Jgrace says

Making Mischief: A Maurice Sendak Appreciation – Gregory Maguire

3 stars

This is a coffee table art book based on material presented at a 2003 symposium of Sendak's work. In addition to being an obvious Sendak fan, Maguire has a deep understanding of the artist, his background and the many aesthetic influences on Sendak's work. Unfortunately, the text reads like a power point presentation. There are no captions on the various plates and pictures so it's sometimes difficult to be sure which illustration the text refers to.

Nevertheless, I enjoyed perusing the art work. In one section, Maguire selects the ten prints of Sendak's original art that he would rescue in a disaster. I might disagree with some of his choices, but it was fun to think about. The last section of the book was the best. Maguire selected other Sendak works to illustrate the text of *Where the Wild Things Are*; including ten different choices for the line. "And it was still hot." This was a very whimsical and effective way to illustrate recurring themes and motifs in Sendak's work. The next time I read one of Sendak's picture books, I'll have a new appreciation for his genius.

SmarterLilac says

A stunning critical and artistic review of the majesty of Maurice Sendak. Made me think I need to reread everything MS every wrote, and that he might be the most underrated writer of my childhood.

(Of Where the Wild Things Are) 'What Sendak has contributed here, before, during and since the wild things, is a child's grammar of narrative and image, sturdy enough to convey the anxiety and adventure, the danger and potential reward of the mortal world--a grammar that can be deciphered by a child too young to read.'

(Of In the Night Kitchen) '(C)onsider that the environment of a city at night, a city as built by a child out of kitchen implements, household ordinances, is also a clever model of how a child--anyone--invents with what is at hand.'

(Of the portrait of Bill and Hillary Clinton checking into the White House) '...a fresh faced president who, in 1993, briefly gave us reason to hope that to be grow-up might not always mean to have to take up permanent residence in limbo.'

Jeanne says

I feel bad not giving this book more stars. It's gorgeous for what it is: an overview of Sendak's work. I wish I knew enough to get more out of it.

I found the chapter on Sendak's influences interesting but I am not familiar enough with the other artists' works. Maguire kindly provides pictures. Much of the book is subjective (Maguire's "top ten", for example), and I find it choppy. Even Maguire confesses that trying to pick only a few "themes" from the Sendak

panoply is difficult, but he does so. He concludes the book with his own telling of *Where the Wild Things Are* as a key to Sendak's art, illustrating the story with elements from other works.

I leave the book with a much greater appreciation of Sendak's artistry, which is the point.

ck says

Advance copy courtesy the publisher and the Amazon Vine program

"And it was still hot"

The safe feeling of sitting on my mom's lap, feeling and hearing her voice as she read aloud to me, is one of my fondest memories. *Where The Wild Things Are* came into my life before kindergarten, with its roars of terrible roars and gnashing of terrible teeth, and the ritual hug my mom gave me at the end of each reading. Too lively for a bedtime story, it was an after-dinner, before you brush your teeth kind of book. And I can't imagine childhood without it.

Maurice Sendak has dedicated more than a half-century of his life to weaving tales for children, honoring his audiences and his muses alike by crafting works that stoically stand up to the passage of time, and bring delight to his readers the 10th or 100th time through.

While some serious or highly regarded writers and illustrators may shy away from writing for children, much less choose to devote their careers to this niche, Sendak has been one who had faith in his generations of youthful readers and felt that they deserved the best stories he could provide. He also accords his audience the respect of recognizing the reality of their lives, not sugar-coating or minimizing -- or thinking that they wouldn't appreciate the classic lines of earlier art. Truly, even though he realized that his younger readers would not recognize these sources of inspiration, he obviously thought they would feel the emotion and elemental forces of such works.

This is why members of my generation, who grew up with his works, savor the comfort of visiting old friends and half-forgotten dreams when reading these stories to the next generation, even as we recognize nuances, artistic echoes and homages our young minds hadn't yet learned as children.

In *Making Mischief* Gregory Maguire mixes a childlike perspective with a scholarly look at Maurice Sendak's array of work, teasing out details that show the depth of this man's knowledge and abilities. This is a book to savor. It stands the test of being read and re-read. Each time through, no matter how thorough you were the last time, you'll spot something new, whether it's yet another example of Sendak's skill, or perhaps Maguire's careful mirroring of Sendak's enthralling phrasing and cadence as he seeks to celebrate an element of Sendak's work.

As Maguire puts it: "More fundamental to Sendak's work ... is his trust in the validity of the emotions of children. It is in this area that he has demonstrated his widest range." I'd simply add that if Sendak's work was part of your childhood, this book will bring thoughts, memories, hopes and dreams rushing back.

Truly, don't we all want to be where someone loves us best of all?

Linda says

In his tribute to the art of Maurice Sendak, Gregory Maguire has captured beautifully the mischievous, imaginative and fantasy world of this fascinating artist/author whose work spans five decades.

Ella Fitzgerald once said, "I stole everything I ever heard, but mostly I stole from the horns." The words remind me of Sendak as well. I think it is interesting to see how Sendak's genius was inspired by the works of artists before him: Albrecht Durer, Randolph Caldecott, William Blake, Hans Tegner, Winslow Homer. It is interesting to see another person's work and where/how the transformation into making something one's own takes place. In the same way, Sendak's work becomes an inspiration for others.

My introduction to Maurice Sendak was in the 70's and 80's as I read his illustrated children's books to my own children. A highlight was traveling to Seattle in December 1983 to attend Tchaikovsky's holiday ballet The Nutcracker, set and costume design by Sendak. His work is a fixture in my household - I bought Maguire's tribute to Sendak as a Christmas gift for one of my children but then the book promptly disappeared when gift-wrapping time came around. Recently rediscovered in plain sight, the gift-giving will have to wait for another Christmas to roll around ... and in the meantime I will enjoy the fantastical, sometimes scary world of this incredible artist.

Joseph says

This book tries to do too many things and fails at most of them. It's too expensive just to be a movie tie in, too shallow for any real revelations; to filled with hero worship to reveal the real Sendak.

The one thing it does well is retell story "Where the Wild Things Are." That was an appreciation. The rest was just pseudo-academic speak and filler text.

Also, I reviewed this book for Green Man Reviews. My full review will be coming out near the end of November. It can be found on the Green Man Review website after 29 November 2009.

Candy says

Published while Sendak was still living, this brilliant book reveals a genius who quietly referenced more famous and unknown 19th Century art, 20th Century graphic art, cartoons, poets, and shtetl residents in his illustrations than I had thought possible for a children's writer/artist.

Improves the reader's appreciation for the cultural understanding of the author (Maguire, who wrote Wicked) but sends Sendak fans soaring and wishing for even greater analysis--which begins at a brusque canter but trails away after the first few chapters while sample artworks and illustrations increase.

Lindsay says

I came across this book while helping a patron find something at my old job at the local public library. Since

I was also working in the children's department and grew up reading Sendak's books, I took this coffee table book home to learn a little behind the man's work.

The author notes that the book is meant to serve as a gloss of the artists that influenced Sendak as an author-artist; it is not meant to serve as a comprehensive book. Sendak's influences include Beatrix Potter, Wilhelm Busch, William Nicholson, and George MacDonald. It was very interesting to see the comparisons between Sendak's work and that of his influences. For example, Nicholson's and Sendak's pirate twins have similar pacing and both have food at the end.

What I also enjoy is that the book demonstrates, through Sendak's world, that children's stories and elements of fairy tale are not merely child's play. Playing dress up, make believe, and role playing helps children make sense of the world around them, and children's stories work similarly. "What Sendak has contributed, before, during, and since the wild things, is a child's grammar of narrative and image sturdy enough to convey the anxiety and adventure, the danger and potential reward of the mortal world—a grammar that can be deciphered by a child too young to read (p. 67)."

This book makes one want to find other, heftier books on Sendak, which is exactly what books should do--inspire one to learn more.

Christine Starkey says

A quick coffee table read about the mischievous, imaginative world of Maurice Sendak. Gregory Maguire gives critical and artistic review based on material presented at a 2003 symposium of Sendak's work that has spanned five decades. I wish it was a bigger book, as it covers many topics over a short amount of pages, but the illustrations and their inspirations are explained beautifully. As quoted by Maguire in the book, "With this book, let me suggest that you can either choose to read it through as a kind of appreciative salute, or you can relax into your chair and turn the pages as slowly as you like, back and forth as new apprehensions strike you, letting the images speak to you as well as the words." It's a joyful, intelligent celebration of a one-of-a-kind artist/author.

Gloriamarie says

Gregory Maguire is the author of *Wicked*, is an unabashed fan and friend, recounting his fortuitous first meeting with Sendak in 1977. Maguire arranges a bounty of illustrations into five playful essays. While constructing a "palace of muses" who influence Sendak, he offers wonderful side-by-side comparisons of Sendak's work and pieces with those of William Blake, Randolph Caldecott and Reginald Birch (a 1900 sketch of a boy in a wolf suit prefigures the artist's wild children).

Maguire situates Sendak in children's literature history, revisiting figures profiled in Sendak's *Caldecott & Co.* In the spirit of Sendak's "graphic anarchy" and theatrical composition of "the page as a stage," Maguire also takes creative license. He groups the materials thematically rather than chronologically, lists ten absolute must-haves to "drag from a burning museum," and recasts the familiar text of *Where the Wild Things Are* with alternative Sendak illustrations. This fitting and witty homage gives ample evidence for Maguire's contention that "the word genius isn't grade inflation."

