



Blue Mythologies: Reflections on a Colour

By Carol Mavor

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Blue Mythologies: Reflections on a Colour By Carol Mavor

The sea, the sky, the veins of your hands, the earth when photographed from space—blue sometimes seems to overwhelm all the other shades of our world in its all-encompassing presence.

The blues of *Blue Mythologies* include those present in the world's religions, eggs, science, slavery, gender, sex, art, the literary past, and contemporary film. Carol Mavor's engaging and elegiac readings in this beautifully illustrated book takes the reader from the blue of a newborn baby's eyes to Giotto's frescoes at Padua, and from the films of Derek Jarman and Krzysztof Kieślowski to the islands of Venice and Aran.

In each example Mavor unpicks meaning both above and below the surface of culture. In an echo of Roland Barthes' essays in *Mythologies*, blue is unleashed as our most familiar and most paradoxical color. At once historical, sociological, literary, and visual, *Blue Mythologies* gives us a fresh and contemplative look into the traditions, tales, and connotations of those somethings blue.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Carol Mavor’s work is the closest to that of Roland Barthes we are ever likely to have. What I like about it is that it is as ‘artistic’ as the art which is its subject matter. Carol Mavor not only studies ‘blue,’ she bleeds it.”

(Hayden V. White, *University of California, Santa Cruz*)

“Draws upon many artists and writers. . . . This fine, multidisciplinary work explores the color’s aesthetic and emotional resonances from a fresh perspective.”

(*Publishers Weekly*)

“Carol Mavor’s quirky *Blue Mythologies* reveals an inherently paradoxical color. . . . An exciting literary treasure hunt that maps out the color blue as a pathway to experience and memory.”

(*Shelf Awareness*)

“In *Blue Mythologies: Reflections on a Colour*, Carol Mavor moves between mediums and centuries, examining Paul Gauguin’s paintings, Marcel Proust’s writings, the films of French director Agnes Varda, and much more. Fifty-nine color plates add lush visuals and the blue ribbon marker is a nice touch.”

(*Boston Globe*)

“[An] evocative new book—a work which wanders at will over a world of blue. Mavor’s book could hardly be less constrained by its divided subject. Hers is a stream of consciousness, illustrated by a lavish wash of colour reproductions.”

(*Times Higher Education*)

“In *Blue Mythologies*, Carol Mavor provides her own ‘reflections’ on blue, as her subtitle reads, employing as a guide no discernible chronology but for the admirable compass of her own affective and intellectual sensibilities. . . . Mavor has developed a style that marries the erudition of scholarly writing with the intimacy of a diary . . . illustrated throughout by lavish reproductions of everything from 14th century frescoes to 21st century contemporary daguerreotypes, Mavor is at her somersaulting best, moving effortlessly between disciplines. . . . The success of her book is to coax us into having a less complacent attitude to our own contradictory investments, even when it comes to something as apparently innocuous as a color.”

(*Los Angeles Review of Books*)

"Mavor pushes her intuitions and interpretations further than they want to go, so that they come back breathless and bruised, with new tales to tell...*Blue Mythologies* is an act of enchantment—of author and reader alike."

(Brian Dillon, *Modern Painters*)

“Mavor offers an engaging and poetic exploration of the color blue. Like Joseph Cornell assembling one of his boxes, Mavor articulates this metaphorical exploration in a series of short chapters. As expected, the symbolic meanings and psychological effects of the color are introduced. Less expected is the wide range of media, including literature; music; poetry; film; objects; places; and individuals. Theory, notably that of Roland Barthes (whose *Mythologies* inspired the book’s structure), is integrated skillfully.”

(Choice)

“Describing a color is the challenge Carol Mavor takes up in *Blue Mythologies*, and more obliquely in *Black and Blue*, and she does it beautifully. These two books are the latest blossoms Mavor has cultivated, works that confirm the tenderness of her critical passions. She is a kissing cousin of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Susan Stewart, in her attention to touch and affect, in her sensitivity to her own emotions and sense perceptions in her apprehension of art.”

(Critical Quarterly)

About the Author

Carol Mavor is professor of art history and visual studies at the University of Manchester, UK. She is the author of *Black and Blue: The Bruising Passion of Camera Lucida*, *La Jetée*, *Sans soleil*, and *Hiroshima mon amour*.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Gerald James:

This Blue Mythologies: Reflections on a Colour book is not ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you will get by reading this book is actually information inside this book incredible fresh, you will get facts which is getting deeper a person read a lot of information you will get. This particular Blue Mythologies: Reflections on a Colour without we understand teach the one who examining it become critical in contemplating and analyzing. Don't be worry Blue Mythologies: Reflections on a Colour can bring if you are and not make your case space or bookshelves' come to be full because you can have it in your lovely laptop even cell phone. This Blue Mythologies: Reflections on a Colour having good arrangement in word and also layout, so you will not truly feel uninterested in reading.

Brady Witt:

Do you certainly one of people who can't read enjoyable if the sentence chained from the straightway, hold on guys this kind of aren't like that. This Blue Mythologies: Reflections on a Colour book is readable by simply you who hate those perfect word style. You will find the information here are arrange for enjoyable reading through experience without leaving perhaps decrease the knowledge that want to offer to you. The writer of Blue Mythologies: Reflections on a Colour content conveys thinking easily to understand by many people. The printed and e-book are not different in the content material but it just different available as it. So , do you nonetheless thinking Blue Mythologies: Reflections on a Colour is not loveable to be your top checklist reading book?

Don Gonzales:

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Charlie Attwood:

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