



## Shakespeare's Erotic Mythology and Ovidian Renaissance Culture

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# Shakespeare's Erotic Mythology and Ovidian Renaissance Culture

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Taking cross-disciplinary and comparative approaches to the volume's subject, this exciting collection of essays offers a reassessment of Shakespeare's erotic and Ovidian mythology within classical and continental aesthetic contexts. Through extensive examination of mythological visual and textual material, scholars explore the transmission and reinvention of Ovidian eroticism in Shakespeare's plays to show how early modern artists and audiences collectively engaged in redefining ways of thinking pleasure. Within the collection's broad-ranging investigation of erotic mythology in Renaissance culture, each chapter analyses specific instances of textual and pictorial transmission, reception, and adaptation. Through various critical strategies, contributors trace Shakespeare's use of erotic material to map out the politics and aesthetics of pleasure, unravelling the ways in which mythology informs artistic creation. Received acceptions of neo-platonic love and the Petrarchan tensions of unattainable love are revisited, with a focus on parodic and darker strains of erotic desire, such as Priapic and Dionysian energies, lustful fantasy and violent eros. The dynamics of interacting tales is explored through their structural ability to adapt to the stage. Myth in Renaissance culture ultimately emerges not merely as near-inexhaustible source material for the Elizabethan and Jacobean arts, but as a creative process in and of itself.

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