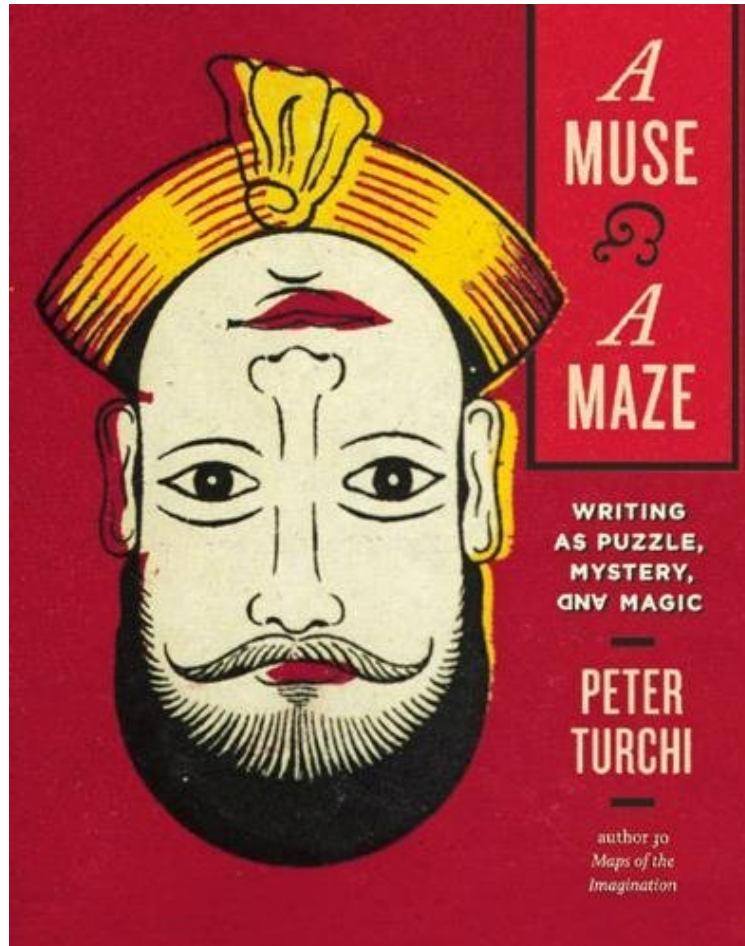


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A Muse and a Maze: Writing as Puzzle, Mystery, and Magic

Peter Turchi

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Maze delights as ...By MCBeautifully illustrated, *A Muse and A Maze* delights as it demystifies the craft of writing, likening it to puzzles of all kinds. This has been my go-to writing book as I near the end of a first draft of my own book. Turchi's brilliance enables both writers and readers to glimpse the wizard behind the curtain.

With his characteristic talent for finding connections between writing and the stuff of our lives, Peter Turchi ventures into new and even more surprising territory. In *A Muse and a Maze*, Turchi draws out the similarities between writing and puzzle-making and its flip-side, puzzle-solving. As he teases out how mystery lies at the heart of all storytelling, he uncovers the magicthe creation of credible illusionthat writers share with the likes of Houdini and master magicians. In Turchi's associative narrative, we learn about the history of puzzles, their obsessive quality, and that Benjamin Franklin was a devotee of an ancient precursor of sudoku called Magic Squares. Applying this rich backdrop to the requirements of writing, Turchi reveals as much about the human psyche as he does about the literary imagination and the creative process.

Turchi invites us to think about books as mysteries unfolding in time, giving us clues that we piece together. *Washington Post*One of the country's foremost thinkers on the art of writing....Turchi argues that writers are like magicians who aim to lead us to a state of wonder. *Houston Chronicle*"Although Turchi's knack for drawing connections can seem like a sleight of hand in itself, his writing is consistently engaging, lively, and thought provoking. The interactive element is also a delight, as there are actual puzzles scattered throughout (answers are provided in the back) to demonstrate the challenges and rewards offered by puzzlesand by good writing. And though Turchi's volume seems most tailored to writers, readers and puzzle lovers should find much of value as well." *Publishers Weekly*"Altogether stimulating." *Brain Pickings*"Full of lush illustrations, embedded puzzles, and notes on Harry Houdini, Alison Bechdel, tangrams, labyrinths, and sudoku." *Fiction Advocate*"The wide-ranging connections he draws are convincing, provocative, and not infrequently funny, drawing the reader into a labyrinth of reflection where each turn brings a new surprise." *Santa Fe New Mexican*"Informed and informative....thoughtful and thought provoking." *Midwest Book* "Turchi combines puzzles and discussions of magic tricks as well as conventional literary analysis to show how arranging information to deepen the sense of mystery can make writing more interesting." *Chicago Reader*A MUSE AND A MAZE is my favorite book about literature. The prose is engaging, and the mind behind is filled with insight, depth and a great sense of play. Anyone who likes books should read it. Chris Offutt, author of *No Heroes: A Memoir of Coming Home*"Hes done it again. Peter Turchi, the best-selling author who inspires artists, designers, and anyone trying to understand how to capture an audiences imagination through storytelling, has written a book that aligns the art of literature with puzzle creation and illusions." *World Literature Today*"The tension between these conceptspuzzle and mysteryforms the center of Turchi's learned, funny, and uncategorizable book, part writing guide, part literary criticism, and part playful compendium of tricks, games, and problems." *Colorado*