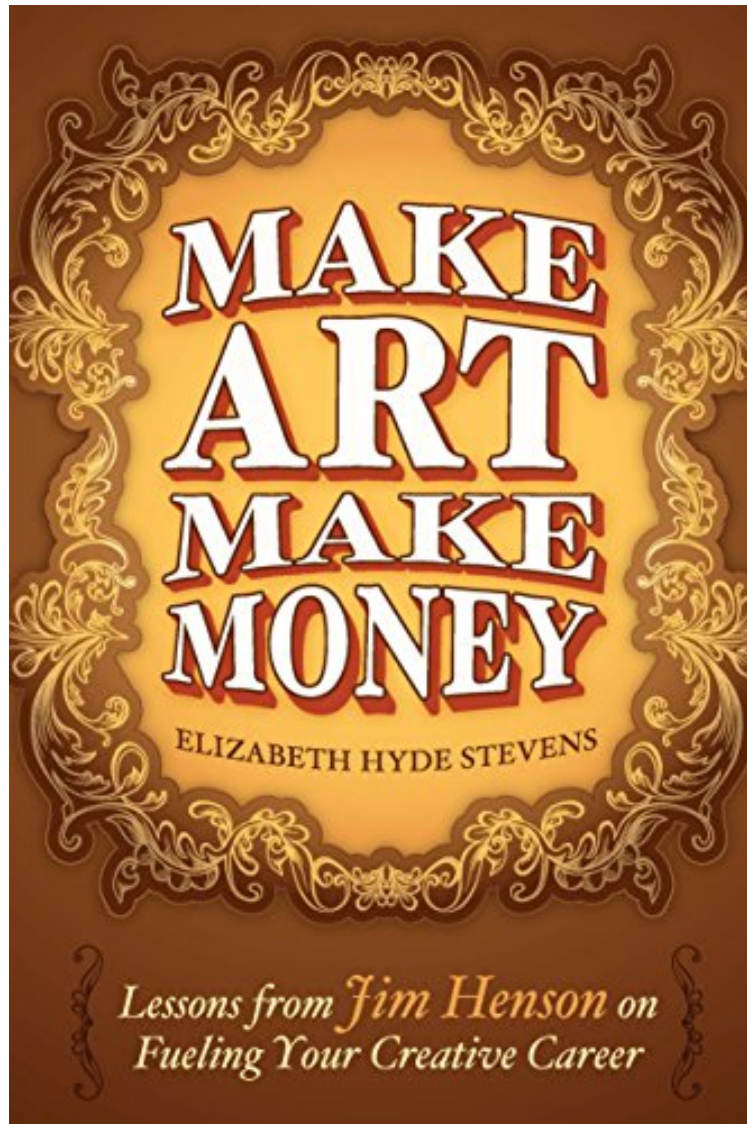


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## Make Art Make Money: Lessons from Jim Henson on Fueling Your Creative Career

*Elizabeth Hyde Stevens*

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**Elizabeth Hyde Stevens : Make Art Make Money: Lessons from Jim Henson on Fueling Your Creative Career** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Make Art Make Money: Lessons from Jim Henson on Fueling Your Creative Career:

31 of 32 people found the following review helpful. Creative artists: everything you know about business is wrong By Barbara R. Saunders Two competing, discouraging messages dominate the conversation about how to make a living while making art. The first: "Keep your day job." Do your art on the side (whatever that means) and hope

that someday, somehow, something will take off. The second: Rush to monetize whatever it is you do; turn your art into a business. The life of Muppet creator Jim Henson provides an alternative example. The author patiently illustrates the reality of how artists are "different"; why neither of those two mainstream messages work for us. Rather than aiming to earn more money in order to work less, artists ultimately pursue money in order to work more — to fund our projects and to minimize the distractions and time constraints that paid work introduces into our lives. Henson put it front-and-center. He worked hard and constantly. He combined business and friendship. He did not relegate his art to his "freed" time or subject it prematurely to a world where its worth was equivalent to its price. Once given life, his characters and creations reflected dual value. To audiences they were priceless gifts; to business men, sources for generating money. Copyrights in hand, Henson could enter the world of business on its own terms without compromising himself. The book will leave you feeling like you can do that, too.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Refreshing reassurance that nice artists can be successful!

By Mark Toonery

As an avid Fan of both the Muppets and their creator Jim Henson, I was keenly curious to read more about the artistic career of the gentle genius. Elizabeth Hyde Stevens did not disappoint me with her in-depth analysis of Jim Henson's rise to fame with Sesame Street and The Muppet Show. But don't mistake this book for another mere biography or history, as the focus here is how Henson managed to "sell his art without selling out," a precarious tightrope that all artists must manage to survive. Henson's secret seemed to be that he retained OWNERSHIP of his characters up to nearly the very (and regrettably premature) end. This, along with his cautious merchandising (with few exceptions) of these characters provided means for his surprisingly small organization to produce less commercial projects like The Dark Crystal (which I held in reverent awe as even a 12-year old) and The Storyteller. I also enjoyed the author's comparisons between Walt Disney and Jim Henson. Walt was an avid perfectionist, while Henson was more of an advocate of believability over realism. As an animation instructor, freelance cartoonist and part-time puppeteer, I've already highly recommended this valuable resource to my students. Furthermore, I believe it should be required reading for all would-be/could-be freelance artists and performers.

15 of 16 people found the following review helpful. Delightful read, ready for the next episode

By Customer

What a delight to read Ms. Steven's first installment in her series on the life of Jim Henson, entrepreneur! I will certainly be tuning in for the next episode based on this insightful and meticulously researched introduction into the unseen life of Jim Henson. I love that I grew up with the Muppets and their creator, but have never thought about his life in the context of his struggle and ultimate success in finding a balance between capitalism and creativity. Ms. Stevens reminds us that this iconic artistic genius was also a businessman, in fact started out doing commercials. But he didn't lose his integrity... how did he do that? Well I won't give away too much, except she starts with toys and I want to know more.

Is Ms. Hyde Stevens related to Lewis Hyde? She shows the same insightful eloquence as Mr. Hyde in his great book, *The Gift: Creativity and the Artist in the Modern World*, and if they are not blood relatives, then they are certainly kindred spirits in laying out the artist's dilemma and posing elegant (and entertaining) solutions.

I thank Elizabeth Stevens for her gift to the struggling artist in all of us. We all strive to balance our real world needs with the desire to be unique and creative. I can't wait to read the next episode of this intriguing series.

In our culture, artistic genius and poverty seem inevitably linked, but does it have to be that way? Jim Henson didn't think so. An iconic creator and savvy businessman, Henson is a model for artists everywhere: without sacrificing his creative vision, Henson built an empire of lovable Muppets that continues to educate and inspire — and a business that was worth \$150 million at the time of his death. How did he ever pull it off? And how can other creators follow in his path? In *Make Art Make Money: Lessons from Jim Henson on Fueling Your Creative Career*, journalist and educator Elizabeth Hyde Stevens presents ten principles of Henson's art and business practices that will inspire artists everywhere. Part manifesto, part history, part cultural criticism, part self-help, *Make Art Make Money* is a new kind of business book for creative professionals: a guide for creating and succeeding thanks to lessons from the Muppet Master himself. This book was initially released in episodes as a Kindle Serial. All episodes are now available for immediate download as a complete book.

"Stevens captures [Jim Henson's] legacy — 'clearly one of benevolence, art, and giving' — beautifully, suggesting it's a model for creative entrepreneurship in just about any medium or domain of art. Though certainly full of practical insights, *Make Art Make Money* is above all a reminder — a manifesto, were the word not so tragically worn by now — that you don't need to survive on lettuce soup in order for your art to be authentic." — Maria Popova, *Brain Pickings*

"Elizabeth Stevens, through her deep expertise on all things Muppets, offers up a fascinating study of the art, business and magic of Jim Henson — with lessons for anyone who wants a more creative work life." — Mark Armstrong, founder of Longreads

"Lovers of Muppets, lovers of art, and all those who aspire to make a creative living will take pleasure in Stevens's wise and entertaining book." — CJ Hauser, writer

"When someone asks me who would I have dinner with if I could choose any person, dead or alive, my answer is always Jim Henson. Unfortunately, that's never going to happen. This book feels like it is the next best thing. Liz Stevens has done a remarkable job at deconstructing the life and work of Henson in a way that thoroughly explains

what made him a successful artist. Just like a meal spent with Henson would be life-changing, this book opens up the reader to ways of acting and thinking, as modeled by Henson, that will surely aid in the growth of one's artistic goals. Stevens impressively points out threads that appear all the way through Henson's entire body of work illustrating the struggle that exists between art and business...and more importantly, how the two can live in harmony." mdash;CT, Nerd Lunch" There are plenty of books out there about how to make money from your art. This is a book about how to make money SERVE your art." mdash;Jeremy Meyers, DeeperContext.com" Make Art Make Money is a sublimely strange book worthy of its subject, the life and work of Jim Henson." mdash;Maria Bustillos, author of Dorkismo and Act Like a Gentleman, Think Like a Woman" Thank god someone is finally willing to explode the myths that artists can't make money and that 'selling out' is something you want to avoid. The goal, as Stevens so clearly lays out here, is to find a way to sell out that adds to your work, rather than distracts from it. As a writer, her suggestions really resonated. Any working artist could benefit from this bookmdash;I know I have!" mdash;Jilly Gagnon, humorist and YA writer About the Author Elizabeth Hyde Stevens created the Muppets, Mickey, and Money research course at Boston University. Her analysis of Jim Henson's career has appeared online at The Awl, The Millions, Electric Literature, and Rolling Stone. In 2011, her essay "Weekend at Kermi's" was viewed over 160,000 times. Called "a long, brilliant thinkpiece" on Twitter, it was praised by Internet curators Brain Pickings, Mother Jones, Longreads, Longform, Wired, IMDB, IFC, Readers' Digest, and Kurt Loder. Stevens attended public school in North Andover, Massachusetts, and went on to study art semiotics at Brown University and creative writing at the Brooklyn College MFA program. She is a member of the Brooklyn writers' collective The Kilgore Trout Home for Wayward Writers and teaches fiction at Gotham Writers' Workshop. Her writing has earned the Himan Brown Award and the Somerville Arts Council Fellowship for Literature. Everything she knows about business she learned from watching Sesame Street.