

“Punch and Judy”

A Subversive symbol from Commedia Del’Arte to the Present Day

Mr Punch – the most famous puppet character of all time. His comic irreverence gave “Punch” magazine its title. His anarchic vitality has inspired opera, ballet and punk rock and his enduring popularity has seen his likeness on goods ranging from Victorian silverware to computer video games. Appearing in England in 1662, Punch is descended from the Italian Clown Pulcinella of the 15th C Commedia Del’Arte tradition. Even today This Lord of Misrule uses his slapstick to dispense with oppressive authority, be it politicians, political Correctness or the devil, while proclaiming his notorious refrain; ‘That’s the way to do it!’



‘Punch’ or ‘Mayday’ by Benjamin Robert Haydon 1829