

A Hot Cup of Tea in a Show: *Hilda* by Luke Pearson
TV series by Netflix and Silvergate Media
Review by Kate Anderson



Image: <https://bit.ly/2OKRrD4>

In this delightful animated series, Hilda and her mother Johanna move from the magical Great Forest to the town of Trollberg after their home is destroyed by a wandering giant. While she is accompanied by her elf friend Alfur and her pet deerfox Twig, Hilda feels out of place and alone in the city. Thankfully for the spunky blue haired girl, the town has its own friends and adventures in store.

This series is based on the series of graphic novels by Luke Pearson, and set in a world where magic and reality coexist. Creatures and spirits from Nordic mythology feature heavily in many of the adventures; giants, tiny elves, house spirits, witches, and trolls among many others all show up throughout the series. The show is light, imaginative, and fun, full of diverse characters, intriguing mysteries, and exciting adventures. Many of the episodes are self-contained adventures, making the show consumable, and the muted colours and pastel shades used in the animation are relaxing. For me personally, it feels like a meditation as much as a show. It feels like a warm cup of tea on an autumn day; it is comforting and calming. It is suitable for all ages, although the various monsters that appear throughout the series may scare very young kids. However, the nonthreatening atmosphere of the show makes this less of a concern for young adults. The show has a diverse cast, including a wide range of BIPOC identities, personality types, and abilities that are endearing and relatable.

The one weakness I found in the show was the appropriation of the Thunderbird as a character without Indigenous context or consent— while the small raven who becomes a large magical creature was an endearing character, it did not account for the cultural and spiritual significance of the Thunderbird as a figure in Indigenous cultures. While I don't think this was a malicious choice, it is a problematic one, fixable by a small change of name that wouldn't impact the show.

For its clever integration of Nordic mythology, light-hearted humour, and imaginative concepts, I would highly recommend this show. While it could be considered a children's show, I feel that young adults will benefit and enjoy slipping into this world for a while.

Representation: Black main character, BIPOC side characters, single parent

Potential triggers: unintentional cultural appropriation (Thunderbird), fantasy action

Reference

Meuller, K., Pearson, L., Simpson, S., Eland, C., & Rosenthal, P. (Executive producers). (September 21 2018 – present). *Hilda* [TV series]. Netflix, Silvergate Media, Mercury Filmworks, Nobrow Press, & Atomic Cartoons.