

In hindsight, it was fairly stupid of me not to have looked up the original review before volunteering to re-review anything, because this one was a Big Picture and it was written by Roger Sutton, who clearly applied his signature dry panache with heaps of relish. What can I possibly say about the book and Roger's review that he would not say better and with more wit himself? Because, over twenty years later (in fact nearly thirty), *The Stinky Cheese Man* is still a darn good time. It's both sly and overt, sometimes subtle and sometimes about as subtle as a table of contents being dropped from the sky (which happens a few pages in). I find the book's design and composition almost more striking than the irresistible, made-for-storytime text (to the extent that it's possible to separate them). I'm not the art aficionado Roger is as he points out a then-new wave of weird, postmodern picture books, but it seems to me that the kind of prestige individual fairy tale picture books that *Stinky Cheese Man* disrupted have tapered off; we're more likely now to see luscious collections of global fairy tales, folklore, and mythology. I can't help wondering how Smith, a known proponent of the physical book (cheekily memorialized in *It's a Book*), would have handled the compositional pressures the e-book market puts on the picture book format, given how much of *Stinky Cheese Man's* humor and suspense relies on interaction with the physical book. Upside-down text is useless when your device automatically re-orientes the screen, and there's no page to turn. In physical form, the duo don't so much break the fourth wall as strap dynamite to it and run. When you think "postmodern picturebook," you think this one. When you think "deconstructed fairy tales," you think this one. Readers today are likely to be familiar with the fractured fairy tale, thanks to movies like *Shrek*, but the overturning of conventional stories, the sheer audacity of the fault lines, still have power to deliver laughs.

- Fiona Hartley-Kroeger, Reviewer

