

Bob Graham

Rose Meets Mr Wintergarten

Australia (1992)

TAGS: [Cerberus](#) [Hades](#) [Katabasis](#) [Persephone](#) [Seasons](#)



We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Rose Meets Mr Wintergarten
Country of the First Edition	Australia
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	1992
First Edition Details	Bob Graham, <i>Rose Meets Mr Wintergarten</i> . Ringwood, Victoria: Viking, 1992, 25 pp.
ISBN	0670843733
Awards	1993 – Children’s Book Council of Australia Picture Book of the Year; 1993 – Children’s Peace Literature Award (joint winner); 1993 – Human Rights Children’s Fiction Award (Australia).
Genre	Illustrated works, Picture books
Target Audience	Children
Author of the Entry	Elizabeth Hale, University of New England, ehale@une.edu.au
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Creators



Bob Graham , b. 1942 (Author, Illustrator)

Bob Graham was born October 20, 1942 in Sydney, Australia. He left school aged 17, and worked for Qantas, before attending the Julia Ashton Art School in Sydney (1964-7), then working as a graphic artist. His first picture book was *Pete and Roland* (1981), about his son Pete, and a budgie. He is a prolific writer and illustrator of children's books, and has won many awards. His stories "reflect his attitudes of tolerance and a love of humanity," and also of dogs. As well as picture books, he has illustrated educational materials and a monthly comic strip for the French children's magazine, *Les Belles Histoires*. He works mainly in pen and ink, watercolour and chalks.

Sources:

Dossier, *Nomination to IBBY Hans Christian Andersen Awards 2012*.
Country of Nomination: Australia; Illustrator Candidate: Bob Graham.

Lees Stella, & Macinture, Pam, *The Oxford Companion to Australian Children's Literature*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1993.

"Graham, Bob 1942 - " *Seomthing about the Author*, Vol 101, Detroit: Gale Research, 1999, 64-69.

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Additional information

Translation Dutch: *De Boze*, trans. Buurman, Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Ploegsma, 1992.

Slovenian: *Cvetka obišče gospoda Zimo*, tran. Janko Dolinšek, Ljubljana: Epta, 2003.

Summary

In *Rose Meets Mr Wintergarten*, a modern recasting of the Persephone myth, Rose Summers (Persephone) moves into a small, colourful house with her family (her mother, and her sisters, Faith and Blossom). Next door is a large, grey mansion, which the "sun never touched", in which monstrously large plants "bristle" over the fence. The children in the street tell stories about the inhabitant, Mr Wintergarten (Hades), who is "mean", and "horrible." "If your ball ever goes over" the fence into Mr Wintergarten's property, "forget it." Rose's ball goes over the fence. Her mother suggests they go and "ask" Mr Wintergarten for the ball back. "We'll take him some hot cakes ... and maybe some flowers." Rose and her mother (wearing a Grecian dress and sandals) enter the garden, throw a cake to his guard dog. After knocking, Rose enters Mr Wintergarten's house and asks for her ball back. "No," growls Mr Wintergarten. "Clear off." But when Rose goes, Mr Wintergarten opens his curtains, goes into the garden, pats his dog, shares a cake, and kicks the ball over the fence, with movements "that made his coat-tails fly in the sun." The closing image is of Mr Wintergarten's fence coming down, his bristly garden being cleared, and him playing football with Rose and Mrs Summers.

Analysis

Rose Meets Mr Wintergarten never directly mentions the Persephone myth. However, the elements of the myth: the preparation of cakes, the guard-dog, the entry into the "underworld" of a scary old man next door, the relation between summer (as represented by Rose and her mother) and winter (Mr Wintergarten) show a correlation between the myth and Graham's adaptation. The illustrations, as much as the written text, make allusions to Greece (Rose's mother's dress and sandals). The overall message of the book, which involves tolerance, understanding, the relation between different parts of society (e.g. the very young and the very old), are key motifs in Graham's work. Further



parallels, between *Rose Meets Mr Wintergarten*, and Oscar Wilde's *The Selfish Giant*, can be traced.

Classical, Mythological,
Traditional Motifs,
Characters, and
Concepts

[Cerberus](#) [Hades](#) [Katabasis](#) [Persephone](#) [Seasons](#)

Other Motifs, Figures,
and Concepts Relevant
for Children and Youth
Culture

[Child, children](#) [Diversity](#) [Family](#) [Old age \(Old people\)](#) [Relationships](#)
[Values](#)

Further Reading

Hourihan, Margery, *Deconstructing the Hero: Literary Theory and Children's Literature*, New York: Routledge, 2005.

