

BOOKRAPT™

THE BAY OF PLENTY CHILDREN'S LITERATURE ASSOCIATION INC
www.bookrapt.org.nz info@bookrapt.org.nz



I Spy NZ Art - Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki

Published by Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki, 2011, generously supported by the Chartwell Trust.

I Spy NZ Art is a delightfully challenging little book for all ages.

Designed to interest children in many aspects of New Zealand art, to show them the various forms art can take and to educate them in art terminology, this book could equally be a stocking-filler for any adult interested in art.

It is disarmingly simple in its format. This A to Z of New Zealand art works from the collection of the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki is a selection that focuses on each letter of the alphabet. To 'play' *I Spy*, the pages lead the viewer of each piece from the obvious to the hidden to art terms with which the viewer may or may not be familiar.

I worked my way through from A to Z. The letter of my first name 'C' showed a detail from the Portrait of Betty Curnow by Rita Agnus. Curnow, chair, cactus, collar (but no, I don't think there is one, just the two brown buttons), cloth (in her hands), were the items I spotted quickly that began with 'c'. The list of suggestions at the back of the book included another half dozen that opened my eyes to just what this book is all about – looking at art works more closely, at their composition as well as their topic or theme, at the parts that add up to the whole, at the methods and genre of each artist.

Would I recommend it? Yes. In fact I intend to include a copy in each of the Christmas boxes I make up for my siblings and spouses, their offspring and the growing third generation.

For any child showing an artistic inclination and for any parent or grandparent wishing to foster this interest, this little book (only 18cm sq. with curved corners and a fun cutout cover) will enhance visits to the local gallery. There is plenty to puzzle over, discuss and debate. This is a book that can be returned to, dipped in to and enjoyed.

Reviewed by children's book author, Jean Bennett.



Promoting the enjoyment of children's literature.