



2008

The Calder Game

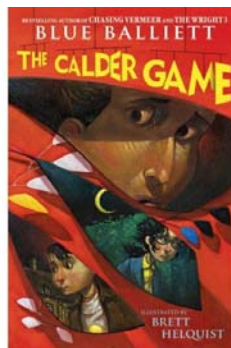
Gillian Streeter

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Streeter, Gillian (2008) "The Calder Game," *Children's Book and Media Review*: Vol. 29 : Iss. 3 , Article 5.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol29/iss3/5>

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Balliett, Blue. *The Calder Game*. Illustrated by Brett Helquist. Scholastic, 2008. ISBN 9780439852074. \$17.99. 400 p.

Reviewer: Gillian Streeter

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young adult

Rating: Outstanding

Genre: Detective and mystery stories; Fiction;

Subject: Calder, Alexander, 1898-1976--Juvenile fiction; Sculpture --Juvenile fiction; Missing persons --Juvenile fiction; Books--Reviews;

Calder Pillay and his father go overseas to England for a conference and are surprised to find a Calder statue (by the artist, not the boy). In the course of exploring Blenheim Park and the surrounding town of Woodstock, mysteries unfold, and both the statue and Calder Pillay disappear. Now Petra and Tommy, who still do not get along, and their friend Mrs. Sharpe must come to Woodstock to help find the boy and the statue.

The Calder Game is another surprising blend of puzzle, patterns, and art history from Balliett and Helquist, who have teamed up again to follow the adventures of Petra, Tommy, and Calder as they highlight yet another artist's work. The crew focuses on Alexander Calder, starting with an exhibit of mobiles in Chicago's Modern Art Museum. The book includes masterful artwork by Helquist, who again works puzzles into the illustrations, and complex, dreamlike text by Balliett that makes for an engaging read. This book moves a bit faster and is more plot-driven than the other books in the series, but readers of *Chasing Vermeer* and *The Wright 3* will know the characters well by now. The ending feels a bit hurried but remains in the artist's optimistic style. This book is a great jumping-off point for discussions and projects in classrooms or art-centered homes.

Volume 29, no.3 (January/February 2009)