



Exploring World Art

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~~Not a Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

Belloli and her publisher have produced an attractive introduction to world art. It is less concerned with technique and chronology than with the meaning and purposes of a work of art, and the opportunity it offers to show different ways of looking at the world. Belloli gives each work a double page spread and groups them under five broad headings - the cosmos, the supernatural, the everyday, history and the environment. Within each heading, she offers exciting juxtapositions: an Aztec calendar stone follows a Persian pen box decorated with the signs of the Zodiac; a painting of Parisian high life in the 1700s is followed by a Polynesian fly whisk. In a few cases, the works of art demand more (or less) explanation than she has space available. We do not get to grips fully with Aboriginal dreamtime art, for instance; yet there appears to be only so much she can say about the fly whisk. But Belloli is enthusiastic, authoritative, with a strong direct voice; and her descriptions are engrossing. The book is splendidly produced with clear colour reproductions that allow the works to be fully appreciated; a map and time line show the works' provenance and there is a good index. The book is meant for children from 9 years old but may be a tough read for most children under 11. Belloli takes for granted some knowledge of techniques and terms and offers help only by context or in the glossary, which is extensive. The only thing missing is a further reading list.

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