

# [PDF] Chasing Vermeer

## Brett Helquist, Blue Balliett - pdf download free book

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### Books Details:

Title: Chasing Vermeer  
Author: Brett Helquist, Blue Balliett  
Released: 0000-00-00  
Language:  
Pages: 254  
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### Description:

In the classic tradition of E.L. Konigsburg's , debut author Blue Balliett introduces readers to another pair of precocious kids on an artful quest full of patterns, puzzles, and the power of blue M&Ms. Eleven year old Petra and Calder may be in the same sixth grade class, but they barely know each other. It's only after a near collision during a museum field trip that they discover their shared worship of art, their teacher Ms. Hussey, and the blue candy that doesn't melt in your hands. Their burgeoning friendship is strengthened when a creative thief steals a valuable Vermeer painting en route to Chicago, their home town. When the thief leaves a trail of public clues via the newspaper, Petra and Calder decide to try and recover the painting themselves. But tracking down the Vermeer isn't easy, as Calder and Petra try to figure out what a set of pentominos (mathematical puzzle pieces), a mysterious book about unexplainable phenomena and a suddenly very nervous Ms. Hussey have to do with a centuries old artwork. When the thief ups the ante by declaring that he or she may very well destroy the painting, the two friends know they have to make the pieces of the puzzle fit

before it's too late!

Already being heralded as for kids, *Chasing Vermeer* will have middle grade readers scrutinizing art books as they try to solve the mystery along with Calder and Petra. In an added bonus, artist Brett Helquist has also hidden a secret pentomino message in several of the book's illustrations for readers to decode. An auspicious and wonderfully satisfying debut that will leave no young detective clueless. --*Jennifer Hubert* --This text refers to the edition.

**From** \*Starred Review\* Gr. 5-8. *The Westing Game, The Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*--how exciting to find a book that conjures up these innovative, well-loved titles. That's exactly what Balliett does in her debut novel, which mixes mystery, puzzles, possibilities, and art. The story is set in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood at the University of Chicago's Lab School, where Balliett was a teacher. There, outsiders Petra and Calder become friends as they try to find out what happened to a missing Vermeer painting. That's really all the plot one needs to know. More important are Balliett's purpose in writing and the way she has structured her story. The former seems to be to get to children to think--about relationships, connections, coincidences, and the subtle language of artwork. To accomplish this, she peppers her story with seemingly random events that eventually come together in a startling, delightful pattern. The novel isn't perfect. It glides over a few nitty-gritty details (how *did* the thief nab the picture), and occasionally the coincidences seem more silly than serendipitous. However, these are quibbles for a book that offers children something new upon each reading. Adults who understand the links between children's reading and their developing minds and imaginations will see this as special, too. Helquist, who has illustrated the Lemony Snickett books, outdoes himself here, providing an interactive mystery in his pictures. *Ilene Cooper*  
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