

## Art in Focus: Half Term is Here!



Gordon Barker, *Let the Children Play*

Thinking about art, the nursery room usually doesn't immediately come to mind, but there are artists who love to focus on the especially joyful part of life, childhood.

This small painting called *Let the Children Play* by Gordon Barker is full of fun and joy. The London bus and a crowd of colourful children at play is a synonym with many parks and open places in London. Although recent news have placed London at the top of the worst places to raise a child in UK, London is also one of the greenest capital cities which definitely helps.

If you are looking to enliven a child's room or perhaps you are a big child yourself, this might be one for you. Looking back at childhood doesn't have to be nostalgic. Childhood is filled exploration and asking questions, something that we shouldn't forget and sometimes need a reminder of.

Many artists who worked with children, in children's books illustration for example, are still

fondly remembered. Beatrix Potter might spring to mind with her delightful drawings. Her scientific background might be forgotten, but shows in her clear line.

Gordon Barker works with abstraction as well as naïve art and is successful within both. If the coming summer is reminding you of the carefree ways you used to spend sunny days, this or one of his other paintings might help you enliven and relive those times.

Naïve art might bring to mind children's work but in a way that is its point. The playfulness of form and colour, where figures have no bodies just long legs and arms and everyone has three hairs. Why would an artist choose this medium? Perhaps exactly for the same reasons a patron might be considering it, to animate a memory or to simply brighten a day.

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