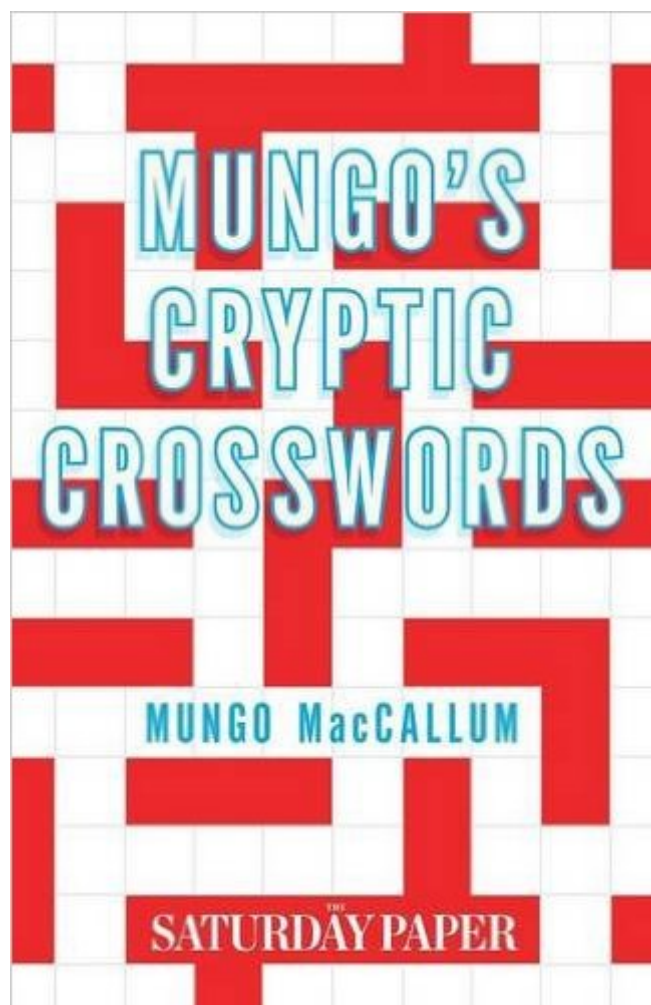


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Mungo's Cryptic Crosswords: From The Saturday Paper



Synopsis

Be delighted, be infuriated, be inspired - but above all be entertained! This is the ultimate puzzle book: a year's worth of Mungo MacCallum's cryptic crosswords from The Saturday Paper, plus a preface from the maestro himself. MUNGO MacCALLUM wrote cryptic crosswords for the Bulletin and the Weekly. He is the author of The Whitlam Mob and The Good, the Bad and the Unlikely: Australia's Prime Ministers. He has long been one of Australia's most influential and entertaining political journalists, in a career spanning more than four decades. He has worked with the Australian, the Age, the Financial Review, the Sydney Morning Herald and numerous magazines, as well as the ABC, SBS, Channel Nine and Channel Ten.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars See all reviews (7 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

I like these puzzles pretty much. As an American, I am occasionally unfamiliar with a reference as they are written by an Aussie for an Australian readership, but that is understandable. I am an experienced cryptic crossword puzzler, who does not like the puzzles with extra complexities. For me, these puzzles are about right in level of difficulty - I can solve about half of the puzzle pretty quickly and then have to work harder on the rest. This is precisely the level of difficulty I like. By way of comparison, these puzzles are comparable in both format and difficulty to the two that run in Games magazine every month. (Am I the only person who buys the magazine just for the two cryptic crosswords?). My one quarrel with these is that the solutions do not provide explanations. Most cryptics do, and they provide an insight into the author's thinking and his/her clue construction.

With MacCallum's puzzles here, I sometimes can figure out the right answer, but still do not understand the cryptic clue's relation to the correct answer. For this, I subtract one star.

I like them, though they're a bit easy for my taste. Compared to English cryptic crosswords, I'd rate them one step easier than the Telegraph and two steps easier than the Times. It helps to know a bit of Australia: ASIO is their internal security organization, Bob Carr was a recent foreign minister, that sort of thing. The words can also be a bit on what some might consider the bawdy side from time to time: "breast" as the first part of the clue for the artist Titian, "ball" as the non-cryptic part of the definition of "genital," etc. I found this refreshing and amusing, but those who are bothered by this sort of thing might want to look further.

A great little collection of easy-to-moderate cryptic crosswords. Only an occasional Australian name, so pretty accessible for this US solver, unlike the British newspaper puzzles. Mungo writes entertaining clues without "breaking the rules" that Americans are familiar with. A bit harder than GAMES or Dell puzzles, and easier than The Telegraph. Looking forward to Volume 2 and beyond!

Cryptics that make sense! There are some Australianisms, but on the whole these are challenging but not impossible.

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