Framework for Analysing Book Covers

Look carefully at least two of the Speculative Fiction book covers. Using the table below, compare what you can see. Then, interpret the covers, considering:

- What are the clues that each story can be regarded as Speculative fiction?
- What are the novels likely to be about?
- Who are the authors? What do you know about them, if anything?
- How do you feel about the characters? What 'feeling' do you get about the stories?
- What are your expectations about the type of language that will be used?
- Do these seem like books you will enjoy? Why or why not?
- How is Speculative Fiction represented, e.g. as something exotic and strange, mysterious and perplexing, dystopic and frightening…?

Feature: What I'm looking for	Observations: What I see Book 1:	Observations: What I see Book 2:
Depicting the world of the book		
What can you see on the cover: • people and/or animals • objects • words?		
What are the people and animals doing?		
Conveying relationships & emotions		
Based on shot types, how close are the main people shown, e.g. • close (close up & filling the cover) • short distance away (mid shot) • far away (long shot)?		
Are the main people, objects etc shown front on or from an angle?		
Are the main people, objects etc shown as if the viewer is looking up or down at them?		

Feature: What I'm looking for	Observations: What I see Book 1:	Observations: What I see Book 2:
Are people or animals looking directly at or away from the viewer?		
Do facial expressions on people and animals depict then as: happy, sad, surprised, angry, scared…something else?		
What are the predominant colours, i.e. • warm (red, orange, yellow) • cool (blue, green aqua)?		
Do the images contain: • lots of colour, fairly intense (suggesting familiarity with the time, place, characters etc) • little or no colour (suggesting the viewer is more removed)?		
Organising the image		
How is the cover organised overall? For example: • a main central image (or words) surrounded by other images (or words) • mainly vertically – something in the top and bottom halves • mainly horizontally – something on the left & right hand sides of the cover • a combination of the above? something else?		