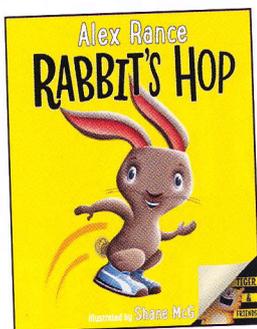


ple can be seen inside their homes, the city's lights can be seen in the distance, while a street light surrounds Lulu on the front and back covers. Murphy's interest in architecture and suburban design is obvious. Lulu has had quite a night: exploring, making a new friend and using her wits to escape the fox. Readers will thrill with her adventures, take delight in the wonderfully executed suburban streets and laugh with the rabbit as she finds her way back home.

Fran Knight



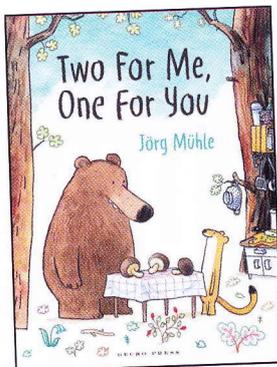
Rabbit's Hop (2019)

Alex Rance, ill. Shane McG, Allen & Unwin, 32pp. 978 1 76054 444 9 \$19.99 Hb



In his second picture book collaboration Alex Rance, AFL premiership player with the Richmond Tigers, highlights one of the main characters from **Tiger's Roar**, Jack Rabbit, to explore themes of self-determination, resilience and caring for one another. Inspired by one of Rance's famous teammates, Jack Rabbit is a champion hopper, carrot-chomper and almost-the-best 'zigzagger' on the small island where he lives with his rabbit friends. While Jack encourages the little rabbits to *work hard, be kind and enjoy yourself* he needs to be reminded of his words of advice by friend Zigga Rabbit as he dreams of taking the life-changing 'hop' to Big Island. Vibrant digital cartoon-style illustrations complement the story's optimistic and encouraging message. Rabbit's energy and constant movement towards his goal is evident on each full-bleed page. A double page illustration of mountainous, breaking waves towering over and blocking Rabbit on his journey reveals the scale of Rabbit's quest and the persistence required to achieve his goal. Environmental and conservation themes are also touched on when Rabbit comes to the aid of a trapped whale. The closing pages strongly suggest that Rabbit and other friends of Tiger will be back in further adventures. An affirming read-aloud or read alone for preschool and lower primary readers.

Nola Allen



Two For Me, One For You (2019)

Jorg Muhle, Gecko Press, 30pp. 978 1 77657 240 3 \$19.95 Pb

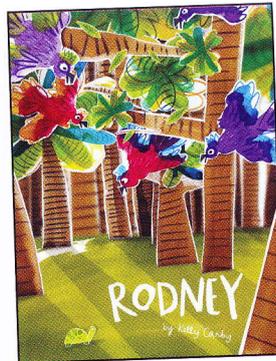
It can be difficult when three items need to be shared between two people. Bear and Weasel learn this after Bear finds three mushrooms on her way home and Weasel cleans and cooks them. Bear assumes that she will have two mushrooms because she is bigger but Weasel thinks that he needs extra to help him grow. They each think they deserve the third mushroom and give reasons to justify their belief. Both are greedy and selfish and their argument escalates. Neither notice something sneaky happening in the background. Eventually Bear and Weasel enjoy their mushrooms but a final subtle twist when dessert is served suggests that they may not have learned their lesson. **Two For Me, One For You** was originally published in German. It is a quality production with illustrations executed in coloured pencil and water-colour. Most of the scenes could seem static, with Bear and Weasel sitting at an outside table, but animation is added by the surprising inclusion of dining and lounge furniture and a well-equipped kitchen set up outside in the forest, and other details. The characters' body language and facial expressions, as well as the antics of the third character, also project liveliness.

Joy Lawn

Rodney (2019)

Kelly Canby, Fremantle Press, 32pp. 978 1 9258 1532 0 \$24.99 Hb

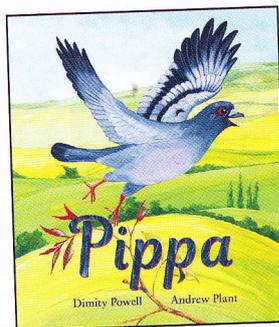
Rodney is a gentle story about finding one's place in the world. Rodney is a small tortoise who wishes he could have a life *high among the treetops*. Monkeys and birds and giraffes and frogs all invite him into their world, but although he tries, he *simply wasn't built for climbing*. Bats and sloths and koalas also call to him to share in their world, but he can't *nap on a branch or catch flies with the frogs or see that chameleon*. When he realises that he can't do any of these



things, things he's wanted his whole life, he is devastated: *Rodney had never felt so small*.

So Rodney leaves the world of the tree-dwellers and, slowly, as he sees the world that is actually in front of him, the world he is part of, things change. He starts to feel enormous. As he enjoys the world filled with caterpillars and praying mantises and ladybugs, he realises he's in the right place. It's all about perspective. Rodney stops comparing his real life to the imagined life of others and understands that his world is the right one for him, and it's not too shabby either. Canby's vibrant ink and pencil drawings (which she builds into 3D collages) give Rodney a real personality and the illustrations have such depth that they burst from the pages with flair and energy. Rodney is sure to delight little ones and generate discussions among families.

Marie Alafaci



Pippa (2019)

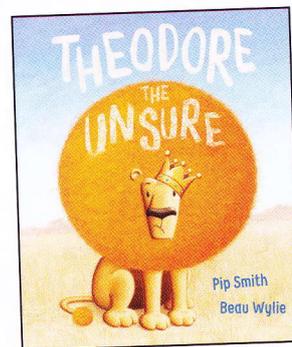
Dimity Powell, ill. Andrew Plant, Ford Street Publishing, 30pp. 978 1 925804 27 0 \$24.95 Hb



Pippa the pigeon is loved by her protective parents who don't want her venturing from their home. When they are out looking for food, however, Pippa takes her chances and flies off, having much fun, but then is hunted by a falcon. Taking shelter in a barn, she feels safe until confronted by another predator, so she must fly off into the darkening sky, looking for the safety and shelter of home. This is a lovely story of family love and belonging, wanting to explore but

also needing to be careful. The use of colour, viewpoint and perspective are very well done, positioning the viewer as Pippa on many occasions. A variety of framing techniques are also used to effect, influencing the pace of the story. The well written narrative flows nicely and would make a good read aloud for any occasion. Highly recommended.

Liz Derouet



Theodore the Unsure (2019)

Pip Smith, ill. Beau Wylie, Scholastic Press, 978 1 76066 186 1 \$17.99 Hb

Out on the African veldt young Theodore the lion has been crowned King of the Whole Animal Kingdom. The trouble is that he is a foppish dandy whose lack of self-confidence denies him any inclination to leadership. He simply cannot make a decision, whether it be to have camel milk or ostrich eggs for breakfast or to wear his pink socks or his blue socks. He is afraid he might make the wrong decision. Echoing Bill Peet's popular classic, **Hubert's Hair-Raising Adventure** (1960), as Theodore grows, his mane grows exponentially out of control. *What to do? Should I cut my mane?* His avian advisor flies around the world seeking advice from such varied creatures as penguins, polar bears, snakes and cockatoos. Subsequently, Theodore makes a decision. In a surprising gesture of pragmatism and altruism he finally demonstrates leadership.

In a simple story wanting for tighter narrative and visual focus, there is a lot going on; so much for little readers to take in from the background scenes and the sequenced vignettes; some animals behaving naturally and others especially human in their activities. All the while Theodore's big vivid orange Afro ball of a mane grows to fill the pages. While Theodore's hair is driving him to distraction, the amusement of his dilemma carries the reader to his moment of regal glory.

Kevin Steinberger