

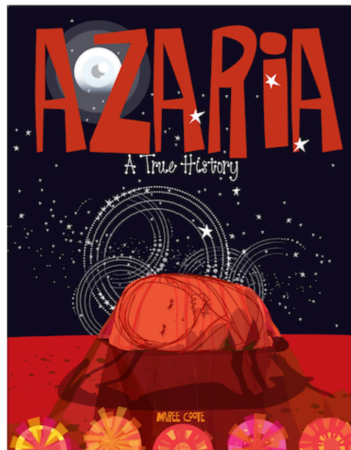


THE CHILDREN'S  
BOOK COUNCIL  
OF AUSTRALIA  
VIC BRANCH

CBCA VIC Branch Newsletter

March 2020

## Book Launch: Azaria: A true history by Maree Coote



***"Things are not always as they seem."***

This was a strong and memorable statement made at the recent launch of *Azaria: A true history* by Maree Coote Published by Melbournestyle Books.

The Honourable Justice Lex Lasry, AM launched the book, encouraging us to share with children the important story about the effect of media on the justice system. As he said, "children are never too young to learn the consequences of injustice," and to be wary of being swayed by opinions of friends and others without basis.

Illustrated with Coote's trademark and arresting graphic style which is perfectly reflective of the era, the story depicts the truth behind the fateful event from 40 years ago which engaged the nation: when a dingo took a baby but the mother was found guilty and jailed, to be later released. The text is beautifully written, the narrative economical but sensitive, and the result is an absorbing and thought-provoking literary experience. (Cont.)



At the launch Maree Coote explained her purpose in claiming back the narrative of this touchstone in history. An event where mistakes made by ignoring local knowledge, and arrogance left unchecked led to misunderstanding with tragic consequences. At the launch the book was described as the archetypal fairy tale – "a wolf in the forest, a cruel king and angry townsfolk," reflecting the lyrical nature of the work and the unique perspective of retelling the event for children.

The book has a stunning design, leaving a lasting impression of the story and our responsibility to always foster an open and enquiring mind in a child.



*Lindy Chamberlain-Creighton with author Maree Coote*

Teaching notes are available at the back of the book and more extensive ones are available online.

An exhibition of prints, drawings and mixed media from the book is being held until 27th March at Melbournestyle Gallery, Upstairs, 155 Clarendon Street, South Melbourne.