

## MEDIA RELEASE

Level 5, 10 Hickson Road The Rocks  
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Phone 61 2 8248 6500 Fax 61 2 8248 6599  
sydneyfestival.org.au



# Prize Fighter

La Boite Theatre Company & Brisbane Festival, Australia



Photo: Dylan Evans

*"The most perfectly structured, brilliantly produced and best-acted new play...Stunning blow from one-time boy soldier"*

**The Australian**

*"The cast is superb, generating an electrifying physical energy that catches fire in the audience, who cheer throughout, just as they might in a stadium, unless they are rendered absolutely silent by one of its moments of theatrical beauty."*

**ABC News**

The much lauded, four-time Helpmann Award nominated *Prize Fighter* from Brisbane's La Boite Theatre Company will transform the upstairs theatre at Belvoir into a boxing ring for an immersive and visceral theatrical experience.

**Future D. Fidel's** *Prize Fighter* tells a story similar to his own, of Isa, a Congolese boy who comes to Australia as a refugee escaping a brutal civil war and unspeakable horrors. Settling in Brisbane, he finds a passion and discipline in boxing.

With **Pacharo Mzembe** bringing his own hard-earned boxing skills to the role of Isa, *Prize Fighter* is adrenaline-pumping, full-contact theatre at its best. On the line is a national title and the promise of fame and riches beyond Isa's wildest dreams. Gearing up for the fight, he soon discovers it's not just his opponents he has to outdo, but the demons from his tortuous past as a boy soldier.

*Prize Fighter* is the debut play of Fidel, a refugee who was forced to flee the DRC as a child following the civil war in 1996. After eight years in a Tanzanian refugee camp, Fidel and his siblings were granted refugee status in Australia. *Prize Fighter* is inspired by his own story and those of people he has known.

Pacharo Mzembe (*The Mountaintop, Underbelly, Gwen in Purgatory*) performs alongside his brother, **Gideon Mzembe**. At a young age, the two brothers and their parents came to Australia as refugees from Malawi, southeast of the Congo. Both brothers have sporting backgrounds with Pacharo bringing years of boxing training to the stage and Gideon previously being a professional rugby player with the Brisbane Broncos & Manly Sea Eagles.

Directed by La Boite's Artistic Director, **Todd MacDonald**, *Prize Fighter* was a stand-out production at the 2015 Brisbane Festival, moving audiences and garnering rave reviews.

*This production is co-presented with Belvoir Theatre Company*

Where Belvoir Theatre, Upstairs

When 6 – 22 January

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Duration            70mins

Tickets             Preview \$40  
                          A Reserve \$72  
                          + Booking Fee

Bookings           Sydney Festival on 1300 856 876  
                          [sydneyfestival.org.au/prize](http://sydneyfestival.org.au/prize)

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**For interviews and further information contact:**

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