

Queensland Theatre Company presents

BRISBANE

A beautiful, heartaching love letter to our city and its transformation during World War II
* world premiere season *

by **Matthew Ryan**

11 April to 2 May at the Playhouse, QPAC

Director – Iain Sinclair Designer – Stephen Curtis
Lighting Designer – David Walters Composer/Sound Designer – Guy Webster

Cast – Matthew Backer, Conrad Coleby, Harriet Dyer, Lucy Goleby, Dash Kruck, Daniel Murphy, Veronica Neave, Hugh Parker and Hayden Spencer

A Queensland Theatre Company world premiere drawing on true stories from the leafy streets of Brisbane in the middle of wartime, Matthew Ryan's *Brisbane* is a life-affirming coming-of-age tale, with moments of sublime comedy amid a heartfelt tale of a family fragmented by tragedy. A living, breathing picture postcard from a time that could have been the making or breaking of a city.

In 1942, Brisbane changed forever. Between 1942 and 1945, Queensland became a support base for the war effort in the South West Pacific with many American troops coming to the area. Although the direct horror of World War II did not reach as far as Brisbane, there were major advances from Japanese forces close to home and the subsequent bombing of Darwin and Townsville on home soil.

As a result, the people of Brisbane and its stationed troops, including those from America, were pressured to prepare for the worst. This pressure was inevitably felt more so by those most vulnerable, the children, with many undoubtedly enduring a premature coming of age.

Queensland Theatre Company's world premiere of *Brisbane* by Queensland playwright **Matthew Ryan**, explores this, and the relationship between the Australian and American troops through the eyes of one 14-year-old boy, Danny Fisher.

Brisbane, 1942: a big country town jumping at shadows, never knowing if that buzz in the air is a cicada or a squadron of merciless Japanese Zeroes. World War II took the city's innocence, and that of 14-year-old Danny Fisher.

Danny's dashing pilot brother has been killed in the Bombing of Darwin. As Danny's devastated family unravels, the teen finds a surrogate sibling in Andy, one of the Americans stationed in Brisbane. The American pilot takes Danny under his wing, and as the tension begins to rise between the Yank and Aussie servicemen, Danny hatches a reckless revenge plan against those who took his brother.

"During 1942 the Australian and the American troops didn't get along very well at all. There was a lot of resentment from both sides. The Australian soldiers were made to feel like second-best in their own country and the Americans felt unappreciated for defending our country," says *Brisbane* writer Matthew Ryan. "That tension built to a very ugly event in the middle of the city they were all supposed to be defending."



“1942 was a coming-of-age for our city. What better way to explore that than through the eyes of a 14-year-old kid?” he says.

Tickets are available at queenslandtheatre.com.au or by calling 136 246.

For interviews, imagery and more, please contact Kath Rose & Associates on 07 3357 9054 or mobile 0416 291 493 or email kath@kathrose.com