

Fablice Manirakiza

2016 Young Victorian Achiever of the Year & Powerful Keynote Speaker

Fablice Manirakiza grew up as a child soldier in war-torn Burundi. In 2007, he escaped his country, arriving in Australia as a refugee to build his life in music. Now a rap icon among Australian youth, he has performed at concerts and workshops across Australia, East Timor and Africa. Fablice was named the 2016 Victorian Young Achiever of the Year. In 2019, the Australian Council for the Arts recognised his work in community arts and cultural development with the Kirk Robson Award.

A powerful keynote speaker, Fablice Manirakiza's story of freedom and hope for former refugees living in Australia is filled with struggle, heartbreak and inspiration. He has told it to diverse groups around Australia and South East Asia and delivered workshops to school and community groups. Whether he is talking to school students or world leaders, Fablice inspires and connects with his audiences to deliver a message of resilience and hope for our future, always inspired to change the world one song at a time.

Since arriving in Australia in 2007, Fablice has established himself as an artist of influence in Melbourne's cultural landscape, working as a hip hop artist, presenter, actor, festival producer and curator. Fablice often appears on national television and radio around Australia and in New Zealand, including a starring role in episode nine of the thirteen-part ABC TV series *MY:24*.

A rap icon amongst Australian youth, Fablice has performed at concerts and workshops across Australia, East Timor and Africa. In 2015 he released the EP *Light of Peace*. In 2013 he released his debut single *Child Soldier*, a collaboration with legendary Australian songwriter Paul Kelly, and his debut album *Just Passing Through* in 2012. Fablice has performed alongside Paul Kelly, Xavier Rudd, Angie Hart, Blue King Brown, Painters And Dockers, Ella & Jesse Hooper (Killing Heidi), Diafrix, Briggs, Killer Queens and Black Roots.

Fablice has served as President of the Australian Burundian Community in Victoria since 2013. A proud ambassador of his community and his people, he delivered a heartfelt TEDx talk, entitled *The Power of Education*. He continues to study a Bachelor of Criminology and Justice as part of his efforts to bring peace to his home of Burundi and beyond.

In 2015 Fablice toured East Timor to spread his message of hope to communities throughout the country, performing at concerts and workshops, appearing on national television and speaking in



front of former president, UN Special Representative and Nobel Peace Prize winner Jose Ramos Horta. Fablice also regularly returns to Africa to work, perform and promote peace on the continent.

For five years Fablice was an Ambassador of Action Aid and Love of Language. He was the Recipient of Multicultural Arts Victoria's (MAV) inaugural Arts and Cultural Development Scholarship for Refugee Youth; host of 'I Love Africa Day' and 'Black Harmony Day' (funded by MAV and the City of Yarra).

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