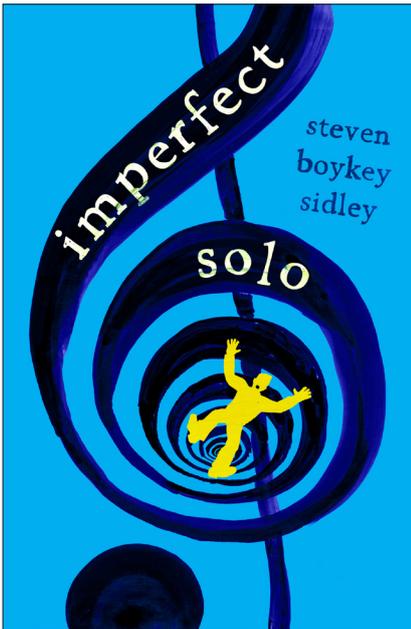


PRESS RELEASE



# imperfect solo

Steven Boykey Sidley

“A chiselled novel you won’t put down.”

– *Marie Claire*

“If you like Philip Roth you will like  
Steven Boykey Sidley.” – *Elle*

Published by Blue Mark Books on 15 September 2016 in  
B-Format Paperback, £8.99 ISBN 978-1-910369-13-5

A dark comedy of random misfortune....

MEYER is filled with dread. His fading musical aspirations, his tyrannical CEO, his ex-wives, his exiting girlfriend, his ageing father, his beloved and troublesome children and his confused and bewildered life all bear witness to the sky that he is convinced will soon fall on his head.

And then it does... This is the story of a man adrift in anxiety, ill-fortune and comic mishap, buffeted by both the existential and prosaic concerns that modern life in Los Angeles inflicts. Forty years old, caught in the netherworld between the reckless optimism of youth and the resignation of age, Meyer tries to find handrails and ballast. Funny, intellectually probing and poignant, the story follows the flailing and hapless Meyer seeking hope and redemption as his world unravels around him.

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Award-winning and multi-shortlisted novelist **STEVEN BOYKEY SIDLEY** was once a software engineer and can often be seen playing saxophone in bands around town. He lived most of his adult life in the Hollywood depicted in this book. He currently lives in Johannesburg with his wife, Kate, and their two children.

*Imperfect Solo* is his third novel previously published in South Africa (Picador Africa) and France (Belfond, and a forthcoming edition by Editions 10-15) to high critical acclaim and reviews. This is the first time he has been published in the UK.



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Steven Boykey Sidley’s accolades:

- 2013 - Winner of UJ Debut Fiction Award for *Entanglement*
- 2013 - Shortlisted for Sunday Times Fiction Prize and MNet Literary Award for *Entanglement*
- 2014 - Shortlisted for UJ Main Fiction Award for *Stepping Out*
- 2015 - Longlisted for Sunday Times Fiction Prize for *Imperfect Solo*
- 2015 - *Imperfect Solo* selected for Le Grand Livre du Mois, France’s most prestigious national literary book club



BLUE MARK BOOKS

# imperfect solo

## Praise for Steven Boykey Sidley:

“A chiselled novel you won’t put down.”

– Marie Claire

“If you like Philip Roth you will like Steven Boykey Sidley. They both created a middle class hero, average in everything, loud mouthed, funny and desperate. Meyer appeals to us as if we were sitting in the first row of a club listening to him with emotion, at times carried away by his joy, other times touched by the melancholy of his chant. Life is but a jazz solo, ephemeral and intoxicating, and this book is a real success.”

– Elle

“Three books into an astonishing career, Sidley’s *modus operandi* came fully formed out of the box: make ‘em laugh a lot, make ‘em cry a little, and make them think all the way through. Big hearted, whip smart and his best yet, *Imperfect Solo* invites us to celebrate the coinage of an adjective: Sidley-esque.”

– RICHARD POPLAK, *Daily Maverick*

“*Imperfect Solo* is a near perfect commercial novel. Not only does it entertain, but it provokes, intrigues and captures the good, the bad and the ugly so vicariously that it reads effortlessly.”

– SIYABONGA SITHOLE, *City Press*

“Sidley plays with parody, engaging his reader at a deep level, while frequently causing gales of laughter even amidst the saddest moments.”

– JENNIFER CROCKER, *Cape Times*

“*Imperfect Solo* is Steven Boykey Sidley’s first novel translated in French, in which humour and melancholy are shaken up into a metaphysical cocktail. Absurd and hilarious... yet, in the second part, a profound melancholy is added to the humour... and while still playing the laughter card, the author reminds us that his hero is so emotional that he can cry. The ending is an agonizingly beautiful concert.”

– Figaro Litteraire

“A hilarious novel which is philosophical, totally crazy and crammed with forceful dialogues. It signs the coming on the literary scene of a new troublemaker. Smashing!”

– Madame Figaro

“With a subjectivity similar to that of the paranoiac in *Catch 22* by Joseph Heller, Steven Boykey Sidley carries us into his hero’s imaginary and real tribulations. A little jewel of Jewish depressive humour.”

– Livres Hebdo

“Unlikely as it may seem, the southern tip of Africa has given rise to a male narrative voice, the precise timbre of which has not been heard since Portnoy. This is not to say that Sidley’s books are derivative. They aren’t. They are an original product of the 21st century and as such ring with authenticity.”

– FIONA SNYCKERS, *The Times*

“Steven Boykey Sidley perfectly handles the art of blending the right amounts of humour, provocation, and even philosophy and metaphysics.”

– Le Dauphine

“*Imperfect Solo* is a lucid insight about anguish, yet the humorous treatment in the writing makes it a remarkable novel.”

– La Principaute

“Reading a Boykey Sidley novel is to experience vicariously a life lived to the full, with all of the excitement, tension, mishaps and intellectual stimulation one wishes for but rarely gets. Sidley has the knack of expressing ideas most of us merely fumble at – and he does so acutely, fascinatingly, viscerally. Full of unflagging energy, verve and surprise, *Imperfect Solo* is a rare aesthetic delight.”

– CRAIG MACKENZIE, *professor of English, University of Johannesburg and UJ Award judge*

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For more information or to request a review copy please contact

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