Zwakele Tshabalala

Tenor

#### Possessing a ‘ringing tenor’ (*The Times*) voice and a huge personality to match South African Zwakele Tshabala is poised to become an important artist of the next generation. From Sportin’ Life in Matthew Wild’s new production of *Porgy and Bess* for Theater an der Wien, to Hot Biscuit Slim in English National Opera’s iconic production of *Paul Bunyan* at Alexandra Palace, London, Zwakele has delighted audiences and critics alike with his magnetic charisma and full-bodied voice.

Born in South Africa, Zwakele joined the Drakensberg Boys Choir at a young age and was then a member of the South African Youth Choir. An invitation to join the South African College of Music followed, where he studied for a performance diploma in opera under the supervision of Virginia Davids and Khamal Khan. Zwakele made his operatic debut at the opera school, as Giuseppe in *La traviata* and in 2016 was the winner of The Schock Foundation Prize for Singing at the University of Cape Town. In 2019 Zwakele was awarded a full scholarship to study at The Royal College of Music, London where he coaches with Tim-Evans Jones. During this time Zwakele made his company debut at Theater an der Wien as well as joining Marin Alsop for Beethoven’s Symphony No.9 at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

Highlights this season include Zwakele’s company debut with the Dutch National Opera as the title role in the world premiere of Neo Muyanga’s *Anansi* conducted by Maarten van Hinte. Elsewhere he sings Dominique You in Amy Beach’s chamber opera *Cabildo* at Wilton’s Music Hall, London, directed by Emma Jude Harris.