

PRESSQUOTES

Njabulo Madlala

BARITONE

Zodzetrick / Treemonisha / Grimeborn Opera Festival / 2019
Cond. Mathew Lynch / Dir. Cecilia Stinton

"...the grandly resonant Njabulo Madlala (Zodzetrick)"
(Opera / Yehuda Shapiro)

"Zodzetrick was sung with power by Njabulo Madlala, his voice adding a touch of real menace..."
(Opera Today / Claire Seymour)

"Njabulo Madlala's Zodzetrick boasted vocal weight that was lacking elsewhere and made for a persuasive villain."
(The Guardian / Flora Willson)

"Njabulo Madlala feels like true luxury casting for Zodzetrick, the conjuror whose spurious trade in "bags o' luck" earns him Treemonisha's displeasure at the outset, Madlala's well-rounded baritone effortlessly filling the Arcola."
(theatreCat / Charlotte Valori)

Aeneas / Dido/ English National Opera & Unicorn Theatre / 2019
Cond. Valentina Peleggi / Dir. Purni Morell

"The best of the principals is South African baritone Njabulo Madlala, his vocalism nuanced and his diction sharply defined"
(The Stage / George Hall)

"Heading the cast, Rachael Lloyd and Njabulo Madlala showed how excellent voices expressing love or sorrow can touch the soul..."
(The Observer / Fiona Maddocks)

"Njabulo Madlala a rich-voiced, more comprehensible Aeneas..."
(British Theatre Guide / Howard Loxton)

"Njabulo Madlala, who sang Jim in ENO's recent Porgy and Bess, gave a strong account of the underwritten Aeneas..."
(Bachtrack / Mark Valencia)

"Njabulo Madlala's Aeneas... warm, generous baritone..."
(Opera / Alexandra Coghlan)

Jim / Porgy and Bess / English National Opera / 2018
Cond. John Wilson / Dir. James Robinson

"It's worth pointing out that South African singers took no fewer than five character parts, and they all excelled – whether Nozuko Teto's strawberry seller or Njabulo Madlala's Jim."
(The Arts Desk / Boyd Tonkin)

"Nozuko Teto — gorgeous as the Strawberry Woman — and Njabulo Madlala, take noticeable cameo roles."
(The Sunday Times / Hugh Canning)

Mendelssohn *Elijah* / The City of London Choir & Royal Philharmonic Orchestra / 2018
Cond. Hilary Davan Wetton

"Of the soloists, the star was undoubtedly the South African baritone Njabulo Madlala, singing Elijah, whose voice has a wonderful consistency through its register – even for the floated top notes. It is authoritative yet warm, and it imparted a special tingle to Elijah's more introspective arias..."
(MusicOMH / Barry Creasy)

Aswini Twin / Sukanya / Royal Opera House & London Philharmonic Orchestra / 2017
Cond. David Murphy / Dir. Suba Das

"There's fine work, too, from Njabulo Madlala and Michel de Souza as the Twins..."
(WhatsOnStage / Mark Valencia)

"...Njabulo Madlala and Michel de Souza, as the unscrupulous Aswini Twins, provided some much-needed mischief and lightness."
(Opera Today / Claire Seymour)

Schaunard / La bohème / English Touring Opera / 2015
Cond. Michael Rosewell / Dir. James Conway

"Madlala's Schaunard and Matthew Stiff's Colline are outstanding."
(The Independent / Michael Church)

"With a fine Schaunard and Colline from Njabulo Madlala and Matthew Stiff"
(Opera / Peter Reed)

"Njabulo Madlala made for a convivial and dapper Schaunard. Madlala has natural stage presence and engaging style..."
(Bachtrack / Charlote Valori)

"There is excellent support too from the other Bohemians, Matthew Stiff as Colline and Njabulo Madlala as Schaunard."

(The Express / Claire Colvin) *"Njabulo Madlala offered fine support"*
(Bouzelian)

Bartolomeo / Il furioso all'isola di San Domingo / English Touring Opera / 2015
Cond. Jeremy Silver / Iqbal Khan

"Njabulo Madlala sang strongly as Bartolomeo"
(Mark Ronan Theatre Reviews)

"Njabulo Madlala displayed a lyrical, steady baritone that belied the cruelty implied in his readiness to use the whip to control his slaves. His contribution to the opening of the Act 1 finale added depth to the character..."
(Opera Britannia / Liÿr Carvana)

"Njabulo Madlala cracked his whip enthusiastically and was touching in the Act One finale as he draws out from Cardenio the cause of his descent into madness."
(Classicalsource / Peter Reed)

"His rich authoritative tones were impressive and he has the makings of a first class singer."
(Limelight Magazine / Howard Shepherdson)

"Njabulo Madlala a poised Bartolomeo."
(The Financial Times / Hannah Nepil)

"Njabulo Madlala's plantation boss has a sinister authority"
(The Evening Standard / Nick Kimberly)

"excellent support from Njabulo Madlala"
(Broadway World / Gary Naylor)

"Njabulo Madlala had considerable poise as Bartolomeo..."
(Opera Today/ Claire Seymour)

Soloist / Stemmer (Voices & Votes) / Bergen National Opera / 2014
Cond. Charles Hazelwood / Dir. Olivia Fuchs

"baritone Njabulo Madlala, (who) superbly recounted Nelson Mandela's long walk to freedom in South Africa."
(The Financial Times / Susan Nickalls)

"Njabulo Madlala in the South Africa section is a revelation."
(Bergens Avisen / Nils Olav Sæverås)

Songs of Home (Champs Hill Records) / 2013
William Vann (pf)

"...it's all gorgeous"
(The Times / Richard Morrison / 4 stars)

"This is a slightly unlikely, but highly imaginative disc. The different songs on it are linked by Madlala's personality, commitment, beautiful voice and the finely intelligent performances."
(Planet Hugill)

"Njabulo Madlala's Songs of Home on Champs Hill Records is a refined and sophisticated debut album which blends South African and Western cultures and languages into a seamless program... We heartily recommend it"
(Africlassical / William J. Zick)

Aeneas / Dido & Aeneas / Wimbledon International Music Festival / 2012
Cond. Andrew Edwards

"Madlala used his beautiful voice to maximum effect, his caressing of the music in his solo at the end of act 2 was especially notable and gave us a real sense of Aeneas's strong feelings."
(Planet Hugill)

"Njabulo Madlala was fabulous with a rich voice that easily filled the venue."
(Bachtrack / Billie Hylton)

Opera Highlights Tour / Scottish Opera / 2011

"The show is a delight, from start to finish... It is the quality of performance that makes this show special. A tiny venue has no hiding place, and this format demands singers who are versatile, detail-perfect and listenable at much less than full throttle... the creamy baritone of South African Njabulo Madlala was the gem of the evening."

(Daily Express)

Don Fernando / Fidelio / Opera Holland Park / 2010 Cond. Peter Robinson / Dir. Olivia Fuchs

"...Njabulo Madlala gave Don Fernando a benign and noble bearing."

(Opera Magazine)

"...Njabulo Madlala's preening, elegantly sung Don Fernando..."

(WhatsOnStage)

Kathleen Ferrier Competition / Wigmore Hall / 2010

"Njabulo Madlala also opened with Bellini, and he clearly had the richest, most distinctive voice"

(Opera Now)

"That moment of rapt silence and attention, when an audience is entirely transfixed by a musician's artistry, is rare at the best of times — let alone in the middle of a competition. But it happened in the finals of this year's Kathleen Ferrier Awards, when the South African baritone, Njabulo Madlala, riveted every listener in the hall with his musical storytelling in Schumann's dramatic ballad, Belsazar. The 28-year-old's imagination created a gripping and growing sense of menace; and when he cried "Ich bin der König von Babylon", the walls of the Wigmore Hall shook with terror. He would have taken first prize for this alone. But there was more. Madlala was equally at home in Butterworth's Bredon Hill and in an aria from Bellini's I Puritani that revealed the rich velvet plush of his fearless voice, its inner warmth and its flexibility."

(The Times)

"His voice was the only one of the six contestants that sounded mature with all the registers balanced and he made a warm sound... His musicianship was impeccable and he didn't make the mistake that other contestants had made, of singing too loud, and he had 'the gift to be simple'. He was a winner whose name is worthy to be placed alongside previous winners, who include some of the finest singers of recent times."

(Musical Opinion)

Mahler *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* / London Philharmonic Orchestra / 2010 Cond. Vladimir Jurowski

"The chamber-sized version of Mahler's Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen was much more rewarding, not least because of the eloquently restrained sadness in baritone Njabulo Madlala's performance."

(The Times)

Schaunard / La bohème / Opera Holland Park / 2009 Cond. Robert Dean / Dir. Elaine Kidd

"Tim Mirfin's self-mocking Colline and Njabulo Madlala's expansive Schaunard are warmly drawn."

(The Independent)

"...there's a notable Schaunard from Njabulo Madlala..."

(WhatsOnStage)