

### **Dimpho Di Kopane**

Dimpho Di Kopane is a theatre and film ensemble company consisting of thirty fantastically talented South Africa actors and singers. The name Dimpho Di Kopane means “combined talents” in Sotho, one of South Africa’s eleven official languages. The name aptly describes the way in which the company works, relying on every member’s unique skills as well as their collective focus and energy to create work of the highest caliber.

DDK began in late 2000 when Mark Dornford-May and Charles Hazlewood, then Artistic and Music Directors of Broomhill Opera in London, were asked to form an ensemble company in Cape Town. They began recruiting performers through an unprecedented audition process in which over two thousand auditions were held throughout rural and urban South Africa.

In its first four years, Dimpho Di Kopane has achieved phenomenal success. In 2001 *Carmen* and *Yimimangaliso The Mysteries* played at Wilton’s Music Hall in London where both productions had to be extended due to demand for tickets. The productions were listed for six weeks running as the most important music and theatre events in London. The company then went on tour to the US, Australia, Canada, Turkey and the UK.

April and May 2004, in association with Spier Films and Nando’s, DDK made their first feature film *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*, which won the Golden Bear at the Berlin International Film Festival 2005.

Went on to do a five week residency in New York City as part of Season South Africa where they presented four of their productions in repertoire: *Carmen*, *Yimimangaliso The Mysteries*, *Ibali looTsotsi The Beggar’s Opera* and the company’s newest work *IKumkanikazi yeKhephu The Snow Queen*.

### **Mark Dornford-May, director/producer**

Mark Dornford-May worked in theater in England for 25 years and founded Broomhill Opera. Mesmerized by the talent he had witnessed in South Africa, he returned in 2000 with Charles Hazlewood to create a new theatre company in Cape Town. That troupe would become Dimpho Di Kompane

*U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*, Dornford-May’s first film, won the Golden Bear for Best Film at the Berlin International Film Festival 2005.

*Son of Man* is Dornford-May’s second film

### **Andile Kosi (Jesus)**

Kosi comes from King Williams Town in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. Inspired by his classmates, he joined the choir Unlimited Voices in 1991 and fell in love with opera.

Kosi was working as an office clerk when he went for auditions for DDK in 2000. His stage roles include Jesus/God in DDK’s hugely successful stage production *Yimimangaliso The Mysteries*, Crook-fingered Jack in *Ibali looTsotsi The Beggars Opera*

and Kaya in *IKumkanikazi yeKhephu The Snow Queen*. Kosi played Sergeant Kosi in *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*.

**Andries Mbali (Satan)**

A native of Johannesburg, Andries's love of the performing arts led him to join the Sibikwa theatre in 1995 where he obtained his Diploma. He has performed in various theatres in South Africa, Swaziland, Botswana, the United States, and Germany. In 2000 he joined DDK. His roles include Lucifer in *Yimimangaliso The Mysteries*, Liliast Pastia in *Carmen*, Jack Filch in *Ibali looTsotsi The Beggars Opera*, Action in *West Side Story*, Riff Raff in *The Rocky Horror Show* and Bra Nkomo in the film *U-Carmen eKhayelitsha*. Mbali has facilitated workshops nationally and internationally and was involved in a cultural exchange program with a theatre company from Amsterdam, the De Nuwe Theatre.

**Pauline Malefane, Associate producer/co-writer/translator, (Mary)**

Malefane grew up in Khayelitsha. She sang in local choirs from an early age and was first exposed to the world of opera during a high school outing to *Don Giovanni*. Pauline enrolled at the University of Cape Town College of Music to study a Performers Diploma in Music.

Malefane joined Dimpho Di Kopane in 2000 where she was selected to perform the lead role in Bizet's opera *U-Carmen*. Replacing the current lead with only three weeks to prepare the role, Malefane rose to the occasion and went on to achieve tremendous international acclaim, being described in *The Observer*, London as "the Carmen by which others should be measured".

**Thandiwe Mesele, Associate producer (Andi)**

*Mesele was born in 1982 in Khayelitsha, Cape Town. She sang in both Primary and High School and was a member of the local choir, Heavenly Voices. In 1998 and 1999 Mesele studied in the United States and performed in Germany and Austria. Mesele joined DDK in 2003. Her roles with the company include Janet in The Rocky Horror Show, Lizzy Ludgate in Ibali looTsotsi The Beggar's Opera and Fatty, a cigarette girl, in U-Carmen eKhayelitsha.*

**Charles Hazlewood, composer**

Charles Hazlewood is the dynamic young British conductor already well known as the "face of classical music" (*The Daily Telegraph*) of the BBC, for whom he has authored and conducted many groundbreaking TV programs. Hazlewood won first prize at the European Broadcasting Union conducting competition in Lisbon in 1995. He regularly conducts the BBC orchestras, and has guest conducted with many of the leading orchestras across the UK. In June 2003, he made his Carnegie Hall debut conducting the Orchestra of St. Luke's. He is curating and conducting a major Mozart festival with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra in January 2006. His passion to explore music of all varieties with the widest possible audience has led him to work with some of the most celebrated contemporary composers; in the past six years he has conducted over fifty world premieres, worked with the rawest new South African vocal talent, and explored artists at the cutting edge of the popular music scene in the UK