



Media release

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African Children's Choir brings high energy concert performance to Brisbane

Three regional choirs will join the African Children's Choir on stage for a unique musical experience at the Brisbane Powerhouse on Sunday 28 June.

Brisbane's Voices of Birralee, Gold Coast Choir and Glennie School Choir from Toowoomba are coming together for the African Children's Choir final Under One Sky concert following its successful three-month tour.

Gold Coast based charity Kwaya Australia, which provides cross-cultural musical exchange opportunities for Australian singers, is sponsoring The African Children's Choir tour. The 18 children from Uganda have been sharing their spectacular concert performances with communities across Australia's east coast since April.

"The purpose of the tour is to raise awareness of Africa's vulnerable children and raise funds for continued development and support of the African Children's Choir educational programs," Kwaya Australia president Marsha Gusti said.

"When these kids perform, it's not just a concert. They share their stories on stage, stories of hope and joy. There are no stories of misery or heartache. It's all about enthusiasm, music, dancing, drumming and song.

"People leave wanting to embrace whatever is positive in their lives, just the way these kids do."

This final concert is also a tribute to the late Harley Mead who shared a bond with each of the performing choirs and was a strong supporter of cross cultural musical connections.

In 2011 Harley was the Musical Director for the inaugural Kwaya tour to Uganda, where the bond between Australian singers and The African Children's Choir was first cemented. Harley's enthusiasm and boundless energy was a winner with Kwaya members and the African children alike.

Harley was a close friend and colleague of Julie Christiansen OAM, Birralee Choir's Musical Director, and had a close association with the Glennie School and conducted its choirs in recent years during his role as Director of Performance for Toowoomba Grammar School.

Harley also conducted workshops with Gold Coast choirs and was a supporter of Anthony Phipps, Director of the Gold Coast Choir which is also performing at this special event.

"This concert will be a true reflection of Harley's dream to bring all children from around the world - from *Under One Sky* - together to sing with one voice," Mrs Gusti said.

One hundred percent of all money raised through the African Children's Choir tour will go towards their latest project: a new choir training academy in Uganda.

African Children's Choir Under One Sky concert

2pm – Sunday 28 June at Brisbane Powerhouse, 119 Lamington Street, New Farm.

Tickets: \$35 adults, \$20 students/concession. Book online at

<http://brisbanepowerhouse.org/events/2015/06/28/under-one-sky-the-african-childrens-choir-australia-tour/> or contact Marsha Gusti on 0433 134 773.

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About the African Children's Choir

The first Choir was formed in 1984, selected from orphaned and vulnerable children in Uganda's Kampala and Luwero areas. The children travelled among the North American church communities where they impressed audiences with their vibrancy, outstanding musical talent, and dancing abilities.

They quickly became ambassadors for the plight of the many thousands of vulnerable children like them in Uganda. The funds they earned through donations provided for their own support and education. Proceeds from that first tour also funded the building of a choir training academy in Kampala from which a second African Children's Choir was selected.

Over the last 30 years more than 52,000 children have been provided with quality education while more than 100,000 people have benefited from the organisation's relief and development efforts.

In 2012 the Choir sang the specially composed 'Sing' for the Queen's Jubilee. They count Matt Damon, Paul McCartney, Ellen De Generes and Bob Geldof amongst their fans.

www.africanchildrenschoir.com

Voices of Birralee

Artistic Director Julie Christiansen OAM founded this non-profit child and youth choral organisation in 1995 by. It now comprises seven ensembles, catering for around 300 young people aged between 5-30 years. The organisation believes in providing children and young people with a rewarding singing experience onstage and beyond the concert hall. Its activities focus on providing positive life experiences to allow them to move forward into adulthood as competent and confident human beings. www.birralee.org

Glennie Senior Years Choir

The Glennie School is a P-12 Anglican Day and Boarding School for Girls in Toowoomba. New in 2015, its Senior Years Choir celebrates the development of the female voice, incorporating singers from Years 10-12. Whilst varying in styles, performances usually consist of sacred, contemporary, Australian and concert works. www.glennie.qld.edu.au/about-glennie.html

Gold Coast Choir

The Gold Coast Choir was established in 2012 to give children an opportunity to extend their choral skills beyond the classroom and establish a specialist choir that entertains a wide range of audiences in many different performance settings. <http://goldcoastchoir.com.au>

About Kwaya Australia

KwaYa is a not for profit charity based on the Gold Coast, Queensland.

Kwaya made its first trip to Uganda in September 2011 with 35 volunteers, \$35,000 in donations and 300kg of baby goods, clothing and nappies. In 2012, 2013 and 2014, a further 130 volunteers raised more than \$280,000 and carried another 1000kg of donated goods.

Kwaya sponsored the African Children's Choir first visit to Australia In 2013 and is sponsoring its return visit in April-June 2015. More info: www.kwaya.org/underonesky.html