



Media interview and appearance opportunities

9 April 2015

African Children's Choir brings cultural exchange workshops and high energy concert performances to Melbourne

Melbourne residents will be treated to a unique musical experience with the African Children's Choir during its Australian tour which kicks off in Victoria this week.

Sharing their cultural exchange workshops and spectacular concert performances with Melbourne communities, the African children will be joined on stage for a joint finale song by local school and community choirs.

Students at Goonawarra Primary School (Sunbury) and Firkbank Grammar School (Melbourne) will also be treated to a private singing and dancing workshop while hosting the visiting Choir.

"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 is all about enthusiasm, music and song," Kwaya Australia president Marsha Gusti said.

"People don't walk away feeling pity in any way. They leave wanting to embrace whatever is positive in their lives, just the way the kids do."

The African Children's Choir has returned to Australia following the success of its inaugural visit in 2013, sponsored by Gold Coast based charity Kwaya Australia which provides cross-cultural musical exchange opportunities for Australian singers.

During the past four years, 165 volunteers (aged from 13-75) have travelled to Uganda with KwaYa Australia raising more than \$310,000 in funds and donating 1300kg of goods.

During each visit, volunteers work on crucial African Children's Choir Music for Life projects in the slums, including building fences and facilities at schools, City Yange clean-up projects, painting classrooms and dormitories, planting crops to feed the school children, providing daily supplies at orphanages, running Australian art and culture workshops for school children.

As a result, lifelong bonds blossom between the African Children's Choir and Kwaya travellers, many of them returning to Uganda two or three times, as well as hosting the African children during their Australian visit.

"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," 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.

Host families in Sunbury and Melbourne will host the 18 representatives and eight chaperones from the Uganda-based choir as they travel through Victoria as part of a three-month tour of Australia's east coast.

Queenscliff charity Cottage by the Sea has been hosting the African Children's Choir from 4-10 April as it prepares to kick-start the Australian tour.

For ticket prices and bookings visit www.kwaya.org/ACCConcertsandWshops2015.html or contact Rachel on 0412 785 102.

- ENDS -

Under One Sky

African Children's Choir Tour - Australia



The choir will perform concerts and cultural exchange workshops around Melbourne from 12-19 April and is available for interviews and on air performances. For media interviews and images please contact Marsha Gusti on 0433 134 773 or marsha.gusti@yahoo.com.au.

Melbourne tour program

School workshop

9.15am and 11am - Tuesday, 14 April - Goonawarra Primary School, Sunbury

Church Concert "A taste of African Children's Choir" with School Choir

7pm - Tuesday 14 April - Sunbury Baptist Church, 207 Gap Rd Sunbury

Public workshop

10am and 1pm – Thursday 16 April - The Edge Federation Square, Cnr of Swanston and Flinders Sts, Melbourne CBD

Public concert

2pm - Saturday 18 April - Anglican Parish Church of Saint Andrew, Cnr New Street and Church Street, Brighton

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.

In 2012 the choir sang the specially composed 'Sing' for the Queen's Jubilee. They have performed for US Presidents, Nobel Prize winners and graced the stages of Carnegie Hall and the London Palladium. They count Matt Damon, Paul McCartney, Ellen De Generes and Bob Geldof amongst their fans. www.africanchildrenschoir.com

Meet the kids preparing for their tour to Australia: <http://vimeo.com/98395905>

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: <http://www.kwaya.org/underonesky.html>