



Media interviews and appearance opportunities

7 April 2015

1000 singers to perform with the African Children's Choir and Kate Miller-Heidke in massed choir event in Wollongong

One thousand singers from 24 school and community choirs as well as individual singers from across Australia will join the African Children's Choir on stage for a spectacular massed choir concert in Wollongong on 17 May 2015.

The event also features Aria-winning singer/songwriter Kate Miller-Heidke and top Australian musical directors Dr Jonathon Welch AM (Choir of Hard Knocks), Lyn Williams OAM (Sydney Children's Choir and Gondwana Campbelltown Indigenous Children's Choir), Rachel Hore OAM (Big Sing in the Desert), Janet Swain (Song Dynasty Music) and Yvonne Corstorphin (Cool Harmonies).

Massed choir participants will sing three songs with the African Children's Choir and one song with Kate Miller-Heidke.

"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 tour.

The African Children's Choir is comprised of orphaned and vulnerable children from Uganda's disadvantaged Kampala and Luwero areas.

"The Wollongong concert is about bringing together different cultures through music, while helping to raise funds for vulnerable children in the slums of Africa to provide them with an education they would never otherwise have had," Mrs Gusti said.

One hundred percent of all money raised through the African Children's Choir tour will go towards the organisation's education initiatives.

Local community and school choirs will billet the 18 children and eight adults during their three-month tour visiting Geelong, Melbourne, Wodonga, Canberra, Wollongong, Sydney, Nowra, Laurieton, Port Macquarie, Taree, Bellingen, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and Brisbane.



African Children's Choir Under One Sky massed choir concert

Where: WIN Entertainment Centre, Wollongong

When: Sunday, 17 May 2015

Time: 2pm

The African Children's Choir starts its Australian tour on 10 April in Victoria and is available now for interviews while travelling or when in Sydney/Wollongong from 9-16 May. Interviews are available with the Choir's the musical director, children and Kwaya Australia President.

For media interviews please contact Marsha Gusti on 0433 134 773 or marsha.gusti@yahoo.com.au.

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 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.

For more information visit www.africanchildrenschoir.com

About Kwaya Australia

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

Its purpose is to provide opportunities for people from different cultures to perform and engage in cross cultural musical exchanges and participate in altruistic life-changing projects.

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.

In 2013, Kwaya sponsored the African Children's Choir first visit to Australia and is sponsoring its return visit from April-June 2015.

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