

Soweto Gospel Choir

****Program subject to change****

Musical Directors	David Mulovhedzi (1948-2009), Vusimuzi Shabalala
Performers	Jabulile Dladla, Jeho Fata, Shimmy Jiyane, Bongani Khumalo, Thembisa Khuzwayo, Vusumuzi Madondo, Sibongile Makgathe, Lungisani Mhlongo, Mandla Modawu, Mary Motselele, Original Msimango, Mulalo Mulovhedzi, Bongani Ncube, Melusi Ndawonde, Maserame Ndindwa, Gregory Ndou, Siphon Ngcamu, Zanele Ngcamu, Linda Nxumalo, Sipokazi Nxumalo, Rebecca Nyamane, Vusimuzi Shabalala, Portia Skosana, Kevin Williams
Producers:	Andrew Kay and David Vigo
Executive Producer /Director	Beverly Bryer
Associate Producers	Margot Teele & Toni Rudov
Company Manager:	Jimmy Mulovhedzi
Choreographer/Choir Master	Shimmy Jiyane
Costume Designer	Lyn Leventhorpe
Record Producer	Robin Hogarth & Zwai Bala (Grace album)
Tour Manager	Toni Rudov
Production Manager	David Membery
Lighting Operator	Andrew Ride
Sound Operator	Helge Schlosser



www.sowetogospelchoir.com



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Soweto Gospel Choir's recordings "Voices From Heaven", "Blessed", "African Spirit", "Soweto Gospel Choir - Live in Concert" and "Grace" are available on the Shanachie Entertainment label. For more information:

Shanachie Entertainment Corporation., 37 East Clinton Street, Newton, NJ 07860. www.shanachie.com Phone: 973-579-7763

Soweto Gospel Choir

AFRICAN GRACE

Jesu Ngowethu	Traditional
Ziyama'umelusi	Traditional
Kae Le Kae	Traditional Arr: V. Jiyane/F.Sidumo
Thula Mama	Traditional
Mangisondele Nkosi Yam	Traditional Arr: M. Mulovhedzi/L.Mhlongo
Emlanjeni/Yelele	Trad Arranger: J. Mulovhedzi
Avulekile Amasango/One Love	A.Shabalala/B.Marley
Calvary	Traditional Arr: B. Ncube
Bridge Over Troubled Water	P. Simon/A. Garfunkel
Meadowlands	S. Vilakazi
This Little Light of Mine/M'Lilo Vutha Mathanjeni/If You Ever Needed the Lord	Traditional/C. Nicks
Nomalanga	M. Shabalala
Mazola	M Masilela
Emarabeni/Nkomo Ka Baba	Traditional
Many Rivers to Cross/Swing Low	Jimmy Cliff/Traditional Arr: Jimmy Mulovhedzi
Shosholoza	Traditional Arr: L. Bok/V. Msimango
Umoya We Nkosi	Traditional
Njalo	Traditional
Arms of an Angel	Sarah Maclachlan
Ziphinkomo	C Semenya
Eli	Z Bala/V Shabalala/S Nxumalo/R Nyamane
Pata Pata	Makeba/Ragovoy

Soweto Gospel Choir

Company Biography

- Soweto Gospel Choir was formed in November, 2002
- In December, 2002 their first album "Voices of Heaven" was recorded and went on to reach the No. 1 spot on Billboard's World Music Chart within 3 weeks of its release in the US
- In 2003 the choir won its first award, a Helpmann Award, Australia's prestigious Performing Arts Award, for "Best Contemporary Music Concert"
- This success was followed when they won a 2003 American Gospel Music Award for "Best Choir"
- In the same year, they won an American Gospel Music Award for "Best International Choir"
- They performed for President Bill Clinton at a corporate function in Little Rock, Arkansas
- In October 2006, the choir performed as invited guests for their Patron, Archbishop Desmond Tutu's 75th Birthday Celebrations, in front of an illustrious audience which included former President Nelson Mandela, Mrs Zanele Mbeki, Tokyo Sexwale, Samuel L Jackson, Alfre Woodard and Carlos Santana
- They featured on a guest appearance with Diana Ross, Deborah Cox and Danny K for the "Unite of the Stars" Gala Banquet in South Africa in November 2006
- They were invited guests on NBC's "Today Show" as well as on "Late Night with Conan O'Brien"
- The choir have also made a guest appearance on 'The Tonight Show with Jay Leno'
- In December 2006 they performed at Sun City, South Africa, for Oprah Winfrey and 200 of her V.I.P. guests, including Mariah Carey, Mary J Blige, Tina Turner, Patti Labelle, Sydney Poitier and Quincy Jones
- On 11 February 2007, Soweto Gospel Choir received its greatest accolade, a Grammy Award for their second CD "Blessed", in the category "Best Traditional World Music"
- At the same time, they were nominated for the 26th International Reggae and World Music Awards, held at the Apollo Theatre, Harlem, on 5 May, in the category "Contribution to World Music", alongside Jimmy Cliff, Salif Keita, Youssou N'Dour and Ziggy Marley
- In May 2007, the choir won a SAMA Award (South African Music Association Award) in the Category "Best Live Performance DVD"
- In June 2007 Soweto Gospel Choir was the support act for the Red Hot Chilli Peppers at their concerts in Germany
- To add to their string of national and international awards, in November 2007 Soweto Gospel Choir won a Metro FM Music Award for Best Gospel Album for "African Spirit", based on nominations submitted by the radio station's listeners, and the public
- In February 2008, the choir was awarded a second Grammy Award for their third album "African Spirit", in the "Best Traditional World Music" category
- Also in February 2008, the choir was honoured with the PanSALB Award for Multilingualism and Nation Building, for "Album of the Decade"
- They performed with Celine Dion during her "Taking Chances" tour of South Africa
- The choir has had the honour of performing with gospel legends Bebe Winans and Kirk Franklin
- While in New Orleans, they recorded a track with rock legend Robert Plant, which was included on a Fats Domino tribute album, with proceeds going to the victims of Hurricane Katrina
- Their 46664 London performance of "Weeping", with Josh Groban and Vusi Mahlasela, is featured on Josh's latest album "Collection"
- The choir has toured the world extensively, performing at prestigious venues like Carnegie Hall, Sydney Opera House, the Nelson Mandela Theatre and Royal Festival Hall in London
- They have performed at high profile festivals such as the Edinburgh Festival, the Adelaide Festival, the Hong Kong Festival, and the London Festival, always to huge acclaim
- Soweto Gospel Choir received its third Grammy nomination in December 2008, this time in the category Best Contemporary World Music, for their album, "Live at the Nelson Mandela Theatre"
- The song "Down To Earth" from the blockbuster Wall-E movie, their collaboration with Peter Gabriel, won a Grammy in the Best Movie Song category
- In February 2009, the choir became the first South African artist to perform at the Academy Awards, when they sang "Down To Earth", the Gabriel/Newman Oscar-nominated song, with John Legend
- In March 2009, they were nominated for three SAMAs (South African Music Awards), for their cd and dvd, "Live At the Nelson Mandela Theatre", winning the Award for "Best Duo or Group"
- In May 2009, the choir was invited to perform at the Inauguration of South Africa's new President

- In November, members of Soweto Gospel Choir were flown to Los Angeles to take part in a major Pepsi advertising campaign, alongside Akon and Keri Hilson
- The choir was one of three featured African artists for the FIFA World Cup Draw held in Cape Town in December 2009
- In April 2010, Soweto Gospel Choir was honoured with the inaugural International Achievement Award, at the South African Music Awards held at Sun City.
- Also in April, the choir was invited to perform at the Opening Ceremony of the 2010 World Trade Expo, held in Shanghai, as the African representative.
- The choir collaborated with U2, as the featured South African artist, on the songs “Streets Have No Name”, “Magnificent” and “Boots” for ESPN’s promotional campaign for the 2010 World Cup. Excitingly, the campaign paid dividends, as along with ESPN and U2, Soweto Gospel Choir received a Sports Emmy Award as winners of the Outstanding Music Composition/Direction/Lyrics category on 2 May 2011.
- They can then add an Emmy to their two Grammys, three ‘associated’ Grammys, three SAMAS and one Oscar nomination – an amazing achievement
- The choir has also been featured in several prestigious magazines and books including in Time magazine and in Andrew Zuckerman’s “Music”, alongside such music heavyweights as Russell Simmons, Herbie Hancock, Ozzy Osborne, John Legend and Mark Knopfler
- They performed at the FIFA World Cup Kick-Off Concert in Soweto, the night before the the opening of the World Cup in June, with a international and African line-up including the Black-Eyed Peas, Shakira, Angelique Kidjo and John Legend.
- In December 2010, Soweto Gospel Choir received its fourth Grammy nomination, in the Best Traditional World Music category, for its album “Grace”. The choir was featured alongside the London Philharmonic Orchestra in the song “Baba Yetu” and on the album “Calling All Dawns”, both of which won Grammys in February 2011
- From May – July 2011, members of the choir toured Australia, New Zealand and Fiji, to rave reviews, while others performed in Guadeloupe , French Caribbean
- In July 2011, eighteen choir members performed six concerts in Maastricht, Holland, with top selling classical violinist, Andre Rieu. They joined the Harlem Gospel Choir on stage as a first time collaboration between these world famous choirs.
- At the request of Clarence House, Soweto Gospel Choir was honoured to sing for Prince Charles and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, during their Royal visit to South Africa in November 2011
- The choir is an Ambassador for Nelson Mandela’s 46664 campaign and has performed at the Cape Town, Johannesburg, London and New York concerts with artists such as Peter Gabriel, Bono, Queen, Jimmy Cliff, Johnny Clegg, Eddie Grant Amy Winehouse, Queen Latifah, Wyclef Jean, Aretha Franklin and Stevie Wonder
- Soweto Gospel Choir has founded its own AIDS orphans foundation, Nkosi’s Haven Vukani, to assist organisations that receive little or no funding. To date, the choir has collected over R4million for their foundation. In South Africa, the choir performs for a variety of charitable organisations.
- Soweto Gospel Choir joined Archbishop Desmond Tutu and his guests for his 80th birthday celebrations, held in Cape Town in October. They performed at the launch of his new book, and backed Bono on “I Still Haven’t Found What I’m Looking For”, as a surprise for the Arch. They also sang with other artists at both the cathedral service and the private luncheon for their patron. Bono described them as “brilliant”!
- By special request from Clarence House, Soweto Gospel Choir was given the honour of singing for Prince Charles and Camilla, the Duchess of Cornwall, during their royal visit to South Africa in November 2011.

WHAT THEY’RE SAYING ABOUT SOWETO GOSPEL CHOIR

“There is simply no flaw here”

Evening News, Scotland

“When they open their mouths, the sense of texture is flawless...here is energy and passion in song”

Business Day, Johannesburg

“The public will be blown away”

Daily Sun, Johannesburg

“These absolutely thrilling singers need nothing but their voices to make dazzling music”

Billboard

“Simply the best”

The Star Tonight, Johannesburg

"This is a tour de musical force...Soweto Gospel Choir is a slice of musical heaven"
Australian Stage, Melbourne

"A singularly joyful sound"
O Magazine, USA

"Occasionally, a diamond of such brilliance is unearthed that you find yourself compelled to develop a near-fanatical enthusiasm for it"
Manchester News

"The crowd was held in sway by the sheen and spectacle of a masterful performance"
Seattle News"

"Meticulous and unstoppable...spirited and spectacular"
The New York Times

"I was left awestruck by the choir's majestic and moving performance. There is no equal to their passion and power"
Three Weeks, Edinburgh

"Soweto Gospel Choir mesmerised the captive audience"
The Sowetan, Johannesburg

"You can't fake those smiles...nor can you fake the sheer joy in just being alive which seemed to govern every move by these colourfully clad singers, dancers and instrumentalists".
The West Australian, May 2011

"An explosion of colour, music, dance and rhythm, and a full dose of life. When they sing, they mean it; when they dance, they mean it; when they smile, they mean it. From the first blast of harmonies, we were under the spell of Soweto Gospel Choir".
InDaily, Adelaide, June 2011

"African Grace is a celebration of the supreme joy of music, life, and love, and the beauty of human voices, movement and collaboration. The energy of Soweto Gospel Choir is truly amazing. The whirlpool of talent leaves you gobsmacked"
Australian Stage, June 2011

"Soweto Gospel Choir's performance at the Cairns Civic Theatre was nothing short of magnificent"
The Cairns Post, June 2011

"Soweto Gospel Choir worked their magic on the audience last night.....the audience knew they have been blessed with a powerful and very remarkable performance"
Taranaki Daily News, New Zealand July 2011-07-04

Latest Album "Grace" reviews:

"Soweto Gospel Choir's latest album "Grace", is easily as exuberant and inspired as any of its past efforts. The aptly titled 19-song set is a creative blending of traditional South African gospel numbers with elegantly conceived arrangements of contemporary tunes. The choir's performance is a sustained display of individual and ensemble virtuosity, underwritten by its deep spiritual sensibility."
Billboard, February 2010

"Beautiful voices, pristine musical arrangements and tremendous instrumentation permeate the 19 tunes on Grace. These singers bring real grace, human and divine, to this elegant, soulful album".
Arkansas Gazette, February 2010

"If you have only 1 hour and 10 minutes, feed your soul with "Grace". The 26 member troupe proves that joy is nondenominational"

The Oprah Magazine, USA, January 2010

"The 19 selection CD is certainly another award winning album. The harmony is almost perfect – if there is such a thing".
Baltimore Times, February 2010