**MEDIA STATEMENT FOR RELEASE WITHOUT EMBARGO**

**ISSUED BY THE DRAKENSBERG BOYS CHOIR SCHOOL**

**THE DRAKENSBERG BOYS CHOIR WELCOMES THE 2023 FESTIVE SEASON WITH ITS POPULAR NOËL TOUR**

**JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA – The Drakensberg Boys Choir School (DBCS) is again going on tour with its famous annual Noël Tour this festive season. The tour runs from 24 November to 4 December 2023 at venues across Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. The Drakensberg Boys Choir School (DBCS) is a recognised South African treasure and brings music lovers the most beautiful music across classic choral, contemporary African and entertaining Afro-pop genres.**

"We are very excited after our recent successful tour in Mauritius and other highlight concerts this year, including the Music in the City 2023 concert festival at the Joburg Theatre, the recent performance at the invitation of the Thabo Mbeki Foundation to celebrate the former President's 81st birthday and the Music in the Mountains Festival earlier this year," says Dave Cato, Executive Head at Drakensberg Boys Choir School. "The boys are ready to close off a successful year with the Noël Tour that promises to be spectacular," he adds.

The internationally acclaimed but uniquely South African Drakensberg Boys Choir will kick off its traditional Noël Tour on 24 November 2023. The Noël Tour is a Christmas tour where the shows are usually 60 – 80 minutes, and a large part of the show is beautiful Christmas carols. The first official Noël Tour started over 40 years ago, with the first official tour in 1982. The tour includes eight performances, four **in Gauteng (24 to 28 November) and four in KwaZulu-Natal (30 November to 4 December)**.

"We offer a diversified programme catering for many tastes ranging from classical choral work to popular contemporary and energetic Afro-Pop works in our performances. On the Noël Tour, audiences can look forward to Christmas classics like Once in Royal David's City, Gloria, Carol of the Bells, Hark the Angels Sing, a special Drakie arrangement of Little Drummer Boy and hit isiZulu Drakie prayer Duduz' umoya wami and some uniquely composed works like Christmas in the Southern Hemisphere," says Vaughan Van Zyl, Artistic Director, Drakensberg Boys Choir School.

The Drakies always inspire and delight. Whether performing in front of international royalty, in a stadium packed to capacity or in the school's own Valley of Music auditorium, audiences can always expect to be delighted by their varied repertoire, ranging from world-famous classical choral pieces to Afro-Pop favourites. **The tour begins on 24 November 2023 in Johannesburg, Gauteng and concludes on 04 December in Durban.** Ticket sales are underway, so book yours now to avoid disappointment," Van Zyl says.

**Our Drakensberg Boys Choir Noël Tour programme is as follows:**

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| **GAUTENG** | **Date** | **Venue & location** |
| 24November | Newton House School, Randpark Ridge, Johannesburg |
| 25 November | Carols on the Piazza, Melrose Arch |
| 26 November  | Musaion, University of Pretoria, Pretoria |
| 28 November | Rosebank Union Church, Sandton |
| **KWAZULU-NATAL** | 30November  | Grace Church, Umhlanga |
| 2 December | Playhouse Performance Theatre, Durban |
| 3 December | Reddam House, Umhlanga |
| 4 December | Hillside Church, Hillcrest, Durban |

"At the special request and in addition to the Noël programme, we will also be performing our top-rated and vibrant Afro-Pop programme during the second half for the Melrose Arch performance in Gauteng and the Playhouse Performance Theatre concert in Durban, which will surely have these audiences on their feet dancing and singing along with us," explains Van Zyl.

In support of the tour, Khanyi Moyo, Marketing Manager of Melrose Arch, says: "After a spectacular sold-out performance in 2022, Melrose Arch is thrilled to announce the return of the renowned Drakensberg Boys Choir, bringing their unique brand of festive cheer to Johannesburg on Saturday, 25 November. This magical musical extravaganza – Carols on the Piazza – is set to kick off Melrose Arch's highly anticipated Destination Christmas festive season with a musical bang and proceeds benefitting SA Harvest and the Drakensberg Boys Choir."

The choir has also been nominated for this year's South African Music Awards (SAMAs), which are held annually and celebrate the best music that South Africa has to offer. "The SAMAs are considered the highest music awards in South Africa, and just being nominated is a huge achievement. This year, we have been nominated in the Best Adult Contemporary Album for our 'Memories' album," states Van Zyl. It is not the choir's first SAMA nomination. "We have previously won the Best Choral Album at the SAMAs in 1997. It is a massive achievement for the choir. It has been such a long time since our previous nomination, and it shows us that through everything, the choir is still very relevant and has a strong voice of hope," he adds.

Cato highlights that the school's internationally acclaimed program combines the art of choral singing and performance with rigorous academic training. The boys who leave DBCS do so as well-adjusted young men who are adequately equipped to face the challenges of their late high school years and beyond. "Music is the ministry of the Drakensberg Boys Choir. DBCS builds character moulds and develops boys to harness the gift of music to bring hope, impact and positive change in South Africa and beyond. DBCS builds resilience, grows relationships, and fosters global ambassadors with music as the tool to spread its message of hope," states Cato.

"Attending this world-class choir school is often a life-long dream fulfilled for many of our talented boys. The blessing of talent does not only come to boys from families who can self-fund their children's unique schooling in the Drakensberg. It is sad if world-class talent cannot be harnessed due to financial constraints. The bursary fund plays a critical role in giving deserving boys the opportunity to make their bow on the world choir stage, an honour that they would not have had without generous donations into our bursary fund," explains Cato.

The DBCS mission is to prepare boys for life and leadership through excellence in music, academics, sport, and social enrichment in a Christian environment. The school firmly believes that every boy's physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being is paramount and is committed to upholding that as a priority.

"We are proud of the young men the school produces, and the benefits of choral music as part of the educational curriculum are well known. As evidence of this, our boys regularly win scholarships and are sought after by schools of a high calibre when they leave the school after grade nine. We are a middle school, ending in grade nine," Cato concludes.

**FIN** (1049 words)

**EDITORS' NOTES**

**Media release issued by Stone on behalf of Drakensberg Boys Choir**

**To purchase DBC concert tickets, visit** [www.webtickets.co.za](http://www.webtickets.co.za)

**Email address for block bookings during the Noël tour:** Noël@dbchoir.com

Visit the website: <http://www.dbchoir.com>

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**Book the choir for performance or enquire about enrolling at DBCS:**

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Drakensberg Boys Choir School

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**Contribute to the DBCS bursary fund:**

Tanya Wilby, DBCS Bursar

Drakensberg Boys Choir School

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**Drakie Old Boys have excelled not only in the music industry but also in the sports field and business. The calibre of our alumni speaks for themselves. To name but a few that made a name for themselves in the music and arts field alone:**

Deon van der Walt (tenor), Mark Behr (author), Deon Lotz (actor), Terence Bridgett (actor), Jacques Imbrailo (baritone), Dawid Kimberg (tenor), Clint Van Der Linde (countertenor), Willem Vogel (impresario), Vaughan van Zyl (conductor), Nicholas Nicolaidis (tenor), Zwai Bala (baritone), Hilton Marlton (tenor), Paul du Toit (author), Phelo Bala (baritone), Loyiso Bala (tenor), Dawid Boverhoff (musician), Jean-Philip Grobler (vocalist), Ferdinand Liebenberg (bass), Michael Barrett (conductor and lecturer), Gareth Dry (conductor), Ralf Schmidt (conductor), Xander Kritzinger (tenor), Walter Butt (conductor), Hugo Roodt (percussionist), Marshell Lombard (conductor) and Jurgen Hellberg (director/producer).

**More helpful website links for media reference:**

* The Drakensberg Boys Choir's latest album "Stimela" is out now on all streaming platforms. Please click the following link to download it: <https://linktr.ee/drakensbergboyschoir>
* SAMA has shortlisted Drakies for the SAMA 2023 awards in the category SAMA 2023 Best Adult Contemporary Song – see more at<https://share.stone.consulting/Drakies_SAMA2023_nomination>
* The photo page on the Facebook page gives a good view of the diversity, life and extraordinary talent of the boys at Drakensberg Boys Choir School – <https://www.facebook.com/dbchoir/photos>
* Visit these links for a glimpse of the world-renowned choir's international and local choral work, both in the classical and distinctly African genres – <https://www.youtube.com/user/DBCHOIR>, <https://youtu.be/C521O4XHO_I>, <https://www.facebook.com/dbchoir/videos/934329527988775/> and <https://dbchoir.com/web/videos/>