**MEDIA STATEMENT FOR RELEASE WITHOUT EMBARGO**

**ISSUED BY THE DRAKENSBERG BOYS CHOIR SCHOOL**

**THE DRAKENSBERG BOYS CHOIR ARE READY TO KICK OFF THEIR UK TOUR
WITH SPECIAL GUEST INNOCENT MASUKU – ONLY TEN DAYS TO GO**

Drakies will showcase their musical talents to UK audiences for their **Hear Us Sing UK Tour!**

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**JOHANNESBURG & LONDON, 09 SEPTEMBER 2024 – The world-renowned Drakensberg Boys Choir's much-anticipated UK tour is only ten days away, and excitement is mounting as they prepare to deliver unforgettable performances in London and across England. The Drakensberg Boys Choir School (DBCS) kicks off their UK Tour Opening Concert 2024 on Sunday, 22 September, at St Paul's Knightsbridge. The Opening Concert will showcase a special guest, South African operatic star tenor and Britain's Got Talent sensation Innocent Masuku. His Excellency Jeremiah Nyamane Mamabolo, South African High Commissioner to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Mrs Mamabolo will attend the opening concert.**

*Britain's Got Talent* operatic sensation, South African operatic star tenor Innocent Masuku, will join the Drakensberg Boys Choir live on stage at the Drakensberg Boys Choir UK Tour 2024 Opening Concert. Innocent's opera career started in Cape Town and has steadily gained ground in the international stages of the UK. His viral star performance on *Britain's Got Talent* captivated audiences worldwide. It marked him as a significant addition to the show, promising an opening concert that sets a high standard for the rest of the tour.

"The anticipation is building, and we are ready to bring the magic of the Drakensberg Boys Choir to the United Kingdom! This tour will be an electrifying celebration of talent, culture, and music transcending borders," says Vaughan van Zyl, DBCS Artistic Director. "From soul-stirring classical pieces by Mozart and Carl Orff to the infectious energy of Afro-pop music from Miriam Makeba, Mango Groove and Johnny Clegg, our boys are set to deliver performances that will leave UK audiences spellbound and eager for more."

If you are in and around London, the Drakensberg Boys Choir invites you to join them for an evening of enchanting music and cultural celebration, supporting their mission to build resilience, grow relationships, and foster global ambassadors through the power of music. **More information on the opening concert is as follows:**

* **When:** Sunday, 22 September 2024, at 17:00 BST
* **Where:** St Paul's Knightsbridge, 32a Wilton Place, London, SW1X 8SH, United Kingdom
* **Tickets:** Tickets cost from £22.38 and are available on Eventbrite via [this link](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.eventbrite.co.uk%2Fe%2Fdrakensberg-boys-choir-in-london-st-pauls-knightsbridge-tickets-916263457667%3Faff%3Debdsoporgprofile&data=05%7C02%7CTaonga%40stone.consulting%7Cf8bc10d191dc4a03537f08dca7ffe8fd%7Cb46c02c4c01e4548b75b700759978c7e%7C0%7C0%7C638569964771132632%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=6wIEe8otp45vMZzzoYAaKn4UleabflW7TEs4Ui4DR4U%3D&reserved=0).
* **Special guests:** We are honoured to have His Excellency Jeremiah Nyamane Mamabolo, South African High Commissioner to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Mrs Mamabolo in attendance. *Britain's Got Talent* operatic sensation, South African operatic star tenor Innocent Masuku, will join the Drakensberg Boys Choir live on stage.

Adding to the excitement of our special guest, Innocent Masuku, it is an honour for the boys to perform at St Paul's Knightsbridge. St Paul's Knightsbridge is an Anglican Church in London's West End and lively 21st-century church of Anglo-Catholic tradition. Since 1843, it has been a place where God is encountered in 'the beauty of holiness', in the honesty of preaching and discussion, and in the lives of those trying to respond to God's call. St Paul's is a place for gatherings, formations, and missions - an ideal setting for the Drakie UK Tour Opening Concert 2024.

If you cannot attend the opening concert, there is no need to worry that you may miss out. There are other dates and venues that you can still attend! **The Tour Schedule is as follows**:

* St Paul's Knightsbridge, London: Sunday, 22 September 2024
* New College Chapel, Oxford: Monday, 23 September 2024
* Southwark Cathedral, London: Tuesday, 24 September 2024
* Wells Cathedral, Wells: Wednesday, 25 September 2024
* Worcester Cathedral, Worcester: 27 September 2024
* Barnsley Youth Choir, Barnsley: Saturday, 28 and 29 September 2024

British audiences can look forward to experiencing a captivating blend of classical masterpieces and infectious pop hits. The repertoire will range from the timeless compositions of Carl Orff and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart to the vibrant rhythms of Afro-pop and traditional African contemporary works, promising to enchant audiences of all tastes. The melodic genius of Ola Gjeilo, Knut Nystedt, and other celebrated composers will be offered during the tour.

"To make the tour a reality, additional funding is required to cover costs such as flights, UK ground travel, accommodation, and subsistence. Brand South Africa has already pledged a year-long partnership with Drakies and supported the UK tour. The Brand South Africa collaboration recognises the Choir's iconic status and Drakies' ability to inspire, empower, and celebrate active South African diversity through art," states DBCS Executive Head Hendrik Bekker.

Africa-wide broadcast house Multichoice and communication firm Stone are among the other brand supporters who have provided services or funding for the tour. "We welcome additional funding partners to support our boys as they represent the nation. Partners will receive brand exposure before, during, and after this high-exposure tour in recognition of their contributions in proportion to their value," says Bekker.

The school is a Christian institution dedicated to nurturing young men of exemplary character through music, academics, sports, and social enrichment. Recognised as a South African national asset, the choir is celebrated for its premium music brand and international acclaim. "Drakies is blessed and fortunate to bring choral and music lovers across the globe the most beautiful and entertaining music, either through live performances, streaming or recordings of their outstanding work. Music is our ministry, and we look forward to bringing this message of hope abroad to English audiences," Bekker adds. "The school's internationally recognised programme combines choral singing and performance with rigorous academic training, sports, and outdoor activities. The boys graduate from DBCS Middle School in South Africa's majestic Drakensberg mountains as well-adjusted young men ready to face the challenges of late high school and beyond," he says.

"For many of our talented boys, attending this world-class choir school is a long-held dream come true. The blessing of talent does not only come to boys from families that can afford to pay for their children's unique education in the Drakensberg. Unfortunately, a boy's world-class talent cannot be realised due to a lack of funding. As a result, the Drakies bursary fund is critical in providing deserving boys with the opportunity to perform on the world choir stage, an honour that they would not have had without generous donations to our bursary fund," explains Terence Sibiya, Chairperson of the Drakensberg Boys Choir School Board of Directors.

England offers an unparalleled experience with its rich history, culture, and charm. The Drakie boys will visit iconic landmarks during the tour in addition to their packed concert programme. Drakies has a strong tradition of international tours, having performed in St. Peter's Square, where Pope John Paul II invited them in 1983, and for Nelson Mandela in Drakensberg, a South African world heritage site. The choir was the first South African cultural group to perform behind the Iron Curtain in 1985. They also performed at the American Choral Directors' Association Congress in 2007.

For further details about the other concert venues and ticket purchases, please visit the Eventbrite website or contact the concert organisers at <https://share.stone.consulting/Drakies_UK_24>.

**FIN**

**(1143 words)**

**EDITORS' NOTES**

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

**To purchase DBC UK Tour 2024 concert tickets, visit** <https://share.stone.consulting/Drakies_UK_24>

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

**Media contact for further media information or interview requests:**

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

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**Contribute to the DBCS bursary fund:**

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Drakensberg Boys Choir School

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

* Please visit the Facebook page for views of the sold-out performances and activity during the four-day Music in the Mountains festival that took place on the Freedom Day long weekend and more information on the choir – <https://www.facebook.com/dbchoir>
* 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/>