



DRAKENSBERG
BOYS CHOIR

Celebrating

45

Years



The Drakensberg Boys Choir extends warmest musical greetings to all its patrons and supporters. Through the medium of inspirational music and joyous singing, the Choir has reached and touched souls over the past 45 years - surely one of the purest expressions of musical delights in the world.

This CD contains the highlights of CDs that were produced between 1992 to 2008.



1. TAKE ME TO THE HIGHEST MOUNTAIN

Deon Roberts

Soloist: Rina Hugo 3:52

Take me to the Highest Mountain is a mixed style of Western and African sounds and text, and was especially composed for the production Rina Hugo & the Drakensberg Boys' Choir.

(from: Rina Hugo & the Drakensberg Boys' Choir CDEMCI 5895)

2. LAUDATE DOMINUM

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Soloist: Nicholas Grobbelaar 3:48

The *Laudate Dominum* is the second last of Mozart's Solemn Vespers. The piece is written for soprano soloist, choir and orchestra. The lilting accompaniment contributes to the piece's many pastoral qualities.

(from: *Circle of Life* CDDM 004)

3. HEIMWEE

S. Le Roux Marais (1896-1979)

arr.: Christian Ashley-Botha 2:46

In a time when the repertoire of Afrikaans art songs was limited, Marais' songs, such as *Heimwee* (J.R.L. van Bruggen) (1930), became instant hits. Few poems reflect a composer's spirit and approach to life as completely as this poem does.

(from: *Blouberg* CDDM 003)

4. EXSULTATE JUSTI

John Williams (b. 1932) 1:45

John Williams is well-known for his various movie scores, including super-hits such as *Star Wars*, *Harry Potter*, *ET*, *Indiana Jones and Jaws*. He composed *Exsultate Justi* for the movie *Empire of the Sun*, a 1987 war film directed by Steven Spielberg and starring Christian Bale, John Malkovich and Miranda Richardson. The movie score earned him a Grammy nomination.

(from: *The Very Best of the Drakensberg Boys Choir* CDDM 009)

5. REGINA COELI K. 127

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) 6:37

Mozart's *Regina Coeli*, K. 127, is a Marian antiphon, a type of liturgical chant common in the Gregorian repertory. Marian antiphons were written specifically to honor the Virgin Mary, and have been sung at the end of Compline, the final Office of the liturgical day, since the thirteenth century. There are four Marian antiphons, one for each season of the year. The *Regina Coeli*, Latin for "Rejoice Queen of Heaven," is sung from Easter Sunday through to the Saturday before Pentecost.

(from: *The Very Best of the Drakensberg Boys Choir* CDDM 009)

6. QUEEN OF THE NIGHT

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Soloist: Jacques Imbrailo

3:01

“Der Hölle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen” (“Hell’s vengeance boils in my heart”) is the second aria sung by the Queen of the Night, a soprano coloratura part, in Mozart’s opera *The Magic Flute* (*Die Zauberflöte*).

“Der Hölle Rache kocht in meinem Herzen”, commonly abbreviated “der Hölle Rache”, is often referred to as “the Queen of the Night Aria”, despite the fact that the Queen of the Night character sings another distinguished aria earlier in the opera, “O zittre nicht, mein lieber Sohn”. It is considered to be one of the most famous opera arias, highly memorable, fast paced and menacingly grandiose.

The aria forms part of the second act of the opera. It depicts a fit of vengeful rage, in which the Queen of the Night places a knife into the hand of her daughter Pamina and exhorts her to assassinate Sarastro, the Queen’s rival, on pain of denying and cursing Pamina if she does not comply.

(from: *Queen of the Night CDDM 001*)

7. SLAVES’ CHORUS

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

3:52

“Va, pensiero” (Va, pensiero, sull’ali dorate - Fly, thought, on wings of gold), also known as Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves, is a chorus from the third act of *Nabucco* (1842) by Giuseppe Verdi, with words by Temistocle Solera, inspired by Psalm 137. Known as Verdi’s “Jewish” work of art, it recollects the story of Jewish exiles from Judea after the loss of the First Temple in Jerusalem. The opera, with its powerful chorus, established Verdi as a major composer in 19th-century Italy.

(from: *Starlight Classics*)

8. IL BIANCO E DOLCE CIGNO

Jacob Arcadelt (c. 1507-1568)

2:28

This song helped to usher in the great age of Italian madrigal-writing in the first half of the sixteenth century. Its lyrics are the inspiration for the later English madrigal on the same topic, “The Silver Swan”.

(from: *Amazing Grace CDDM 008*)



9. AMAZING GRACE

arr.: John Bertalot

3:53

This famous hymn with words written by the English poet and clergyman John Newton (1725–1807), published in 1779 contains a message that forgiveness and redemption are possible regardless of sins committed and that the soul can be delivered from despair through the mercy of God.

(from: *Amazing Grace CDDM 008*)

10. SCANDINAVIAN SHUFFLE

Svend Asmussen (b. 1916)

arr.: Jens Johansen

Soloist: Jean Grobler

1:52

Swe-Danes (Alice Babs, Svend Asmussen and Ulrik Neumann) performed many times in the USA. During one of their tours they recorded this album, *Scandinavian Shuffle*, in 1959 at Warner Bros. Studios, Hollywood.

Swe-Danes had a short but successful career from 1959 - 1961. Their music leans towards jazz and their vocal arrangements are of a very high class.

(from: *Circle of Life CDDM 004*)

11. FAITH

George Michael (b.1963)

arr.: Unknown

Soloist: Kagiso Zwane

2:37

Faith was written and performed in 1987 by George Michael and was released as a single by Columbia Records. According to Billboard magazine, it was the top-selling single of the year in the United States in 1988.

(from: *Tønet CDDM 016*)

12. RIVER OF DREAMS

Billy Joel (b. 1949)

arr.: Rudolf de Beer

Soloist: Prosper Nyawuza

3:09

River of Dreams is the 12th studio album by Billy Joel, released in 1993. This was the last pop album made by Joel and, as a whole presented a much more serious tone.

(from: *Sing Freedom CDDM 011*)



13. GLORIA

(from: MISSA CRIOLA)

Ariel Ramirez (1921-2010)

5:40

The Missa, a mass for either male or female soloists, chorus and orchestra, is based on folk genres such as chacarera, carnavalito and estilo pampeano, with Andean influences and instruments. Ramirez wrote the piece in 1963–1964 and it was not publicly performed until 1967 in Düsseldorf, Germany, during a European tour which eventually brought Ariel Ramirez before Pope Paul VI.

(from: Amazing Grace CDDM 008)

14. LOCH LOMOND

Traditional Scottish folk song

arr.: David Overton

Soloist: Dylan Martin

2:42

The Bonnie Banks o' Loch Lomond, or simply Loch Lomond, is a well-known traditional Scottish song. It was first published in 1841 in *Vocal Melodies of Scotland*.

Loch Lomond is a large Scottish loch located between the counties of Dunbartonshire and Stirlingshire. *The Bonnie Banks o' Loch Lomond* is often the final piece of music played during an evening of revelry (a disco or dinner, etc.) in Scotland, a tradition not seen in other parts of the United Kingdom.

(from: Circle of Life CDDM 004)

15. OP BLOUBERG SE STRAND

Udo Jürgens/ Thomas Christen

Arr.: Christian Ashley-Botha

3:21

When somebody gave famous Afrikaans singer Laurika Rauch a cassette recording of the music of the German Udo Jürgens, she didn't listen to it at first, choosing to focus on original Afrikaans material rather than translating foreign songs. Torr, her songwriter husband, began listening to the German songs and without knowing what the German meant, wrote Afrikaans words for one of the songs which was eventually recorded and released as one of Rauch's greatest hits – *Op Blouberg se strand*. Torr still provides much of Rauch's most successful material.

(from: Blouberg CDDM 003)

16. DIS 'IE LINNE/DAAR KOM DIE ALIBAMA

Traditional South African folksongs

arr.: Chris Lamprecht

1:58

Two delightful Afrikaans folk songs displaying the inherent joy of the Afrikaans speaking population of South Africa.

(from: Blouberg CDDM 003)

17. THE CLICK SONG

Traditional South African (isiXhosa)

arr.: Christian Ashley-Botha

2:50

Qongqothwane is a traditional song of the Xhosa people of South Africa. It is sung at weddings to bring good fortune. In the western world it is mainly known as *The Click Song*, a nickname given to the song by European colonialists who could not pronounce its Xhosa title, which has many click consonants in it. The Xhosa title literally means “knock-knock beetle”, which is a popular name for various species of darkling beetles that make a distinctive knocking sound by tapping their abdomens on the ground. These beetles are believed by the Xhosa to bring good luck and rain.

The song is known world-wide thanks to the interpretation by South African singer Miriam Makeba (herself a Xhosa). In her discography the song appears in several versions, both with title *Qongqothwane* and as *The Click Song*.
(from: The Very Best of the Drakensberg Boys Choir CDDM 009)

18. NEANDERDALMAN

Anton Goosen (b. 1945)

arr.: Alna Smit

2:34

Anton Goosen composed this catchy song, made famous by Laurika Rauch.

(from: Blouberg CDDM 003)

19. STAND BY ME

Ben E. King (b. 1938)/Jerry Leiber (1933–2011)/

Mike Stoller (b. 1933) arr.: Mac Huff

Soloist: Clive Burton-Moore, Jared Rossouw 2:31

Stand by Me is a song originally performed by Ben E. King and written by King, Jerry Leiber, and Mike Stoller, inspired by the spiritual “Lord Stand by Me,” and two lines rooted in Psalms 46:2–3. There are over 400 recorded versions of the song.
(from: Circle of Life CDDM 004)

20. MY HEART WILL GO ON

James Horner (b. 1953)

arr.: Christian Ashley-Botha

Soloist: Ignus Vermaak

4:55

My Heart Will Go On is the main theme song to the 1997 blockbuster film *Titanic*. With music by James Horner, lyrics by Will Jennings, and production by Simon Franglen, James Horner and Walter Afanasieff, it was recorded by Céline Dion. Originally released in 1997 on the *Titanic* soundtrack album and Dion’s album *Let’s Talk About Love*, the song went to number 1 all over the world, including the United States, Ireland, United Kingdom and Australia. *My Heart Will Go On* was released in Australia and Germany on December 8, 1997, and in the rest of the world in January and February 1998. It became Dion’s biggest hit, and one of the best-selling singles of all time. It was also the world’s best-selling single of 1998.
(from: Circle of Life CDDM 004)

21. I'M A TRAIN

*Albert Hammond (b. 1944) /
Mike Hazelwood (1941-2001)*
arr.: Peter Knight

1:50

Albert Hammond (writer, recording artist): "I'm a train - I think was written in 1965 or 66, something like that, and we lived in England and caught trains all the time, you know, so we wrote a song about a train" (Albert on the telephone with Reto).

(from: *Circle of Life CDDM 004*)

22. SEASIDE RENDEZVOUS

Freddie Mercury (1946-1991) arr.: Paul Hart
Soloist: Jean Grobler

2:38

This song has an old-time feel, with a ragtime sound and lyrics that could easily have come from the 1930s ("Be My Clementine"). In the days before television, many people would go to the beach (the "Seaside") to relax on weekends.

(from: *Circle of Life CDDM 004*)

23. MUSIC IN THE MOUNTAINS (TE DEUM LAUDAMUS)

C. Cindano
Soloist: Rina Hugo

3:50

Music in the Mountains (Te Deum Laudamus) embodies life as a Drakensberg Boys Choir chorister, and has as subtitle the school's motto: To God be the glory!

(from: *Rina Hugo & the Drakensberg Boys' Choir CDEM CJ 5895*)

24. O FORTUNA

Carl Orff (1895-1982) 2:32

O Fortuna, the opening chorus of Carl Orff's secular cantata, *Carmina Burana*, is one of the most performed extended works in the choral world today. Its driving rhythm and dramatic percussion has enthralled audiences around the world. It is only logical that the 2005 Drakensberg Boys Choir's DVD and CD recording of the full staged work remains a bestseller to this day.

(from: *Starlight Classics*)

TOTAL DURATION: 1:17:29





THE DRAKENSBERG BOYS CHOIR

The Drakensberg Boys Choir School is situated in the Champagne Valley of the Central Drakensberg Mountains. In its 45 year history, the school has grown considerably in both its student body and its facilities. The school was officially established in 1967 by the Tungay family with John Tungay as first conductor.

Since its establishment, the school has seen many different conductors and produced a number of successful musicians from the boys that have passed through the school. Conductors of the Drakensberg Boys Choir (in chronological order) of the past 45 years are: John Tungay, Desmond Wright, Edward Aitchison, Louis van der Westhuizen, Eberhard Künkel, Lionel van Zyl, Charles Denholm, David Matheson, Susan Reid, Hannes Loubser, Daniël Baard, Christian Ashley-Botha, Juan Burgers, Benjamin Oosthuizen, Gerhard du Toit, Botes Gresse, Vaughan van Zyl, Rudolf de Beer, Deon Lamprecht, Bernard Kruger, Jaco Goosen, Rykie Boeke, Bragi Þór Vals-son and Johann van der Sandt.

The school consists of approximately 100 boys from Grade four to nine who have been selected through auditions held across the country. The boys have six academic periods, two music periods in the form of aural training and theory as well as two hours of choir rehearsal every day. The choir performs an average of 60 concerts a year, which includes the weekly Wednesday concerts held at the school.

The choir tours at least twice a year, both nationally and internationally. The countries they have visited include Israel, the United States of America, Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom, Austria, Hungary, Switzerland, Greece, Turkey, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Italy, Budapest, Portugal, Spain, France, Taiwan, Poland, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Egypt and Botswana. One of the early tour highlights was an invitation in 1983 from Pope John Paul II to perform in St. Peter's Square. They were the first South African cultural group to perform behind the Iron Curtain in 1985, and were also invited to perform at a congress of the American Choral Directors' Association in 2007. Their most recent tour to the USA in May 2011 was greeted with accolades like "The Drakies never fail to leave the audience gasping in admiration. Not a shy boy in the lot." - Douglas Neslund: The Classical Voice, Los Angeles. The choir was also privileged to have sung with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir during a live broadcast of "The Spoken Word" in the Mormon Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Utah. 2012 brought a variety of performances for the choir, from being guest artists and supporting vocalists for the South African Idols, to performing with celebrated South African vocalist, Chris Chameleon in a unique production, *Dreams*. This production was awarded the prize for the biggest artistic contribution at the InniBos National Arts Festival.



