Thursday, November 17, 2022, 7:30 PM

Soweto Gospel Choir

Hope: It’s Been a Long Time Coming

Moss Arts Center
Street and Davis Performance Hall
Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre
Sat., Dec. 3, 4 PM
Roanoke Symphony Orchestra
*Holiday Pops Spectacular*

Thurs., Jan. 19, 7:30 PM
Concerto Budapest Symphony Orchestra
András Keller, chief conductor
Zoltan Fejérvári, piano

Tues., Jan. 24, 7:30 PM
*An Evening with Kevin Young*

Fri., Jan. 27, 7:30 PM
Machine de Cirque
*La Galerie*

Sat., Feb. 11, 7:30 PM
*PUBLIQuartet*

Tues., Feb. 14, 7:30 PM
*Broadway in Blacksburg Hair* 

Fri., Feb. 17, 7:30 PM
Sat., Feb. 18, 2 and 7:30 PM
*Akutagawa*
Co-created by Koryū Nishikawa V and Tom Lee

Tues., Feb. 28-Wed., March 1, 7:30 PM
Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Thurs., March 16, 7:30 PM
*An Evening with Viet Thanh Nguyen*

Fri., March 24, 7:30 PM
*Book of Mountains and Seas*
Composer and librettist: Huang Ruo
Director and production design: Basil Twist

Thursday, March 30-
Friday, March 31, 2023, 7:30 PM
Rissi Palmer

Friday, April 7, 2023, 7:30 PM
*Shirlette Ammons*

Tickets are available now at the box office and online. See the complete schedule of performances, exhibitions, and engagement activities at artscenter.vt.edu.
Andrew Kay presents

Soweto Gospel Choir

Hope: It's Been a Long Time Coming

Hope: It's Been a Long Time Coming was commissioned by the University of Iowa Hancher Auditorium.

The Choir
Nobuhle Dlamini • Philisiwe Faya • Phello Jiyane • Shimmy Jiyane • Bongani Mabaso
Warren Mahlangu • Victor Makhathini • Jeanette Mazibuko • Siyabolela Mkefa
Thabang Mkhwanazi • Nersia Mofokeng • Jabulile Mola • Zinhle Mpofu • Hlengiwe Msomi
Mary Mulovhedzi • Bongani Ncube • Magdeline Ndindwa • Diniloxolo Ndakuse • Sipho Ngcamu
Zanele Ngwenya • Phumlali Nkhumeleni • Xholani Ntombela • Fanizile Nzuza • Linda Sambo • Hlamarisa Sidum

Choir Master
Shimmy Jiyane

Musical Director
Diniloxolo Ndlakuse

Management
Mary Mulovhedz • Shimmy Jiyane • Bongani Ncube

Production Manager/Stage Manager
Allan Maguire

Tour Managers
Toni Rudov • Madge Fletcher

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Zachary Ciaburri

Audio Engineer
Chet Nordskog

Lighting Designer
Zach Ciaburri

Lighting Operator
Tyler Goddard

Senior Producer/Company Manager
Toni Rudov

Executive Producer
Andrew Kay

Tour Marketing and PR
SoloShoe Communications, LLC

Co-sponsored by the Black Cultural Center
This performance is supported in part by gifts from Clem and Georgia Carter and David and Judie Reemsnyder.

Mid Atlantic Arts
This engagement of Soweto Gospel Choir is made possible in part through the ArtsCONNECT program of Mid Atlantic Arts with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.
Program

Melodies       Traditional
Nonkonyane Kandaba Wathint’ abangasokufa, Wathinta thina
Umandela       Welcome Duru
Bawo Xandilahlekyo Traditional
Judgement Day   Sipho Gumede
Litshonile Lilanga Traditional
Pasopa Verwoerd Vuyisile Mini
Joh Lefifi      Traditional
Sechaba         Mbongeni, Hugh Masekela, and Stanley Myers
Umhlaba Wonke   Traditional
Mbayi Mbayi     R. Khemose, S. Khemose, C. Khemose, M. Muguni, and O. Beggs
Jikijela        Traditional

INTERMISSION

Opening Dance and Chant Traditional
Amen Curtis Mayfield and Johnny Pate
A Change Is Gonna Come Sam Cooke
Heaven Help Us All Ronald Miller
I’ll Take You There Alvertis Isbell
Respect Ottis Redding The Living Years Mike Rutherford and B.A. Robertson
What’s Going On Marvin Gaye, Renaldo Benson, and Al Cleveland
Stand Up Joshuah Campbell and Cynthia Echumuna-Erivo
Stand by Me Ben E. King, Jerry Leiber, and Mike Stoller

Note: All information is subject to change.
Program Notes

Hope: It’s Been a Long Time Coming offers as a heartfelt message of hope to all people. It combines South African struggle songs sung by communities fighting the oppressive apartheid regime and the songs of America’s civil rights movement. These are the songs of a people all praying for a better life. They are songs of resistance. They come from the soul. Theirs is a heartfelt message of both resilience and of hope. We trust that this powerful music will not only reach you and cheer you, but will give you inspiration that we can rise above all ills, that we can climb the mountain and emerge from the darkest valleys and into the sun, victorious.

—Soweto Gospel Choir, 2022

“God has wrought many things out of oppression. He has endowed his creatures with the capacity to create—and from this capacity has flowed the sweet songs of sorrow and joy that have allowed man to cope with his environment and many different situations.”

—Martin Luther King Jr., 1964 Berlin Jazz Festival (article)

“… the political use of music in South Africa changed from being a ‘mirror’ in the 1940s and 1950s to becoming a ‘hammer’ with which to shape reality in the 1980s. In South Africa, music went from reflecting common experiences and concerns in the early years of apartheid, to eventually function as a force to confront the State and as a means to actively construct an alternative political and social reality.”

—Anne Schumann

The Beat That Beat Apartheid: The Role of Music in the Resistance Against Apartheid in South Africa
2008 Vienna Journal of African Studies (article)
HISTORY IN THE MAKING

The first time I visited South Africa was in 1978 during the height of the racist apartheid regime. I was a former United Nations legal researcher and international corporate attorney, and I was in the country to observe the trial of the Soweto student protestors. Many had been in prison since the uprisings of 1976. Some had not seen any friendly faces except their lawyers since then. I wrote about the incident in I Too, Am an African:

“The scene was somber as one might expect, fearful, apprehensive. No one knew what condition the children were in. As the buses carrying the children approached I could hear muffled singing. The closer the buses came, the louder and more militant, even joyous the music became. The kids were singing Struggle Songs! As they came closer the parents joined in and began to toyi-toyi. The police were perplexed and intimidated. It was then that I came to understand that these were a people who would not long be subjugated under apartheid.”

I returned to South Africa nearly 25 years later as a Fulbright Fellow at the University of Stellenbosch, a former white Afrikaner University. It was after the first democratic elections in 1994, the release and presidency of Nelson Mandela, and the ascendence of the African National Congress to political control of the country. We were there during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings organized by Bishop Desmond Tutu. The country was attempting to heal itself through forgiveness and reconciliation instead of vengeance and violence. That approach had never been tried before. It proved essential in teaching former sworn blood enemies how to live and work with each other peacefully.

I witnessed an example of that process. In 2011 I returned to teach at another former Afrikaner school, the University of the Free State (UFS). The faculty was still predominantly white, and the student body was two thirds Black. UFS was led by a premier Black educator, Vice-Chancellor Jonathan Jansen. Soon after he took office, Jansen had to steer the university through a scandal, which became known worldwide as the “Reitz Four” incident. Four young white men, members of the Reitz Club, which had been founded as a whites-only residence, had humiliated four Black domestic workers at the UFS. The students had even forced the workers to consume urine. The students videotaped the incidents and broadcast the tapes on YouTube.
It caused a major uproar. Some thought the incident signaled a return to the white supremacy of the apartheid past. People demanded that the students be severely punished—expelled, even jailed. Jansen took another approach. He brought the students and workers together. He provided translators, since the workers were primarily Xhosa speakers. They dined together, visited the township homes, came to know each other. A year later there was a “forgiveness ceremony.” The boys asked for forgiveness from the workers. The workers said, “we forgive you because you are our children who we must embrace and teach.”

With Angelo Mockie and other artists, we created a dance/poetry piece, Race, Reconciliation, and the Reitz Four, which we performed with a mixed cast of UFS students. Angelo and I were blessed to bring RRR4 to Penn State (PSU). Working with Elisha Clark Halpin, then head of the PSU Dance program, and PSU dance artists and actors, we performed the show for a State College audience.

Our community will soon be blessed by another visit from special young artists from South Africa, as several arts organizations host the three-time Grammy Award-winning Soweto Gospel Choir for Hope: It's Been a Long Time Coming this fall. This is a not-to-be-missed gala. It is joyous history in the making.

Charles Dumas is a teacher, writer, lifetime political activist, and professor emeritus in the School of Theatre at Pennsylvania State University (PSU), where he was the first African American to receive tenure, become a full professor, and be appointed emeritus. Dumas directed the first play written by an African American on the PSU mainstage and co-produced the first and only festival and seminar showcasing all of August Wilson’s Decade series during his lifetime. Dumas was a Fulbright Fellow at Stellenbosch University in South Africa.
About the Soweto Gospel Choir

Hailing from Soweto (South West Township), a town outside of Johannesburg and home of Nelson Mandela and South Africa’s democratic movement, Soweto Gospel Choir continues to inspire audiences around the world with a powerful blend of African gospel, freedom songs, and international classics.

Comprising a lineup of some of South Africa’s best vocalists, these uplifting performers have shared the stage and collaborated with the biggest names in contemporary music, including Aretha Franklin, Stevie Wonder, Beyoncé, U2, Diana Ross, Peter Gabriel, Chris Martin, John Legend, Pharrell Williams, Jimmy Cliff, Ben Harper, Angélique Kidjo, Robert Plant, Céline Dion, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Hugh Masekela, and Josh Groban.

Soweto Gospel Choir was formed in 2003 at the end of the apartheid era and during South Africa’s inspiring return to democracy. Taking part in some of the major historical events in the new democratic South Africa, Soweto Gospel Choir is proud to have performed on many occasions for the father of its nation, former President Nelson Mandela, and sadly at both his state funeral in South Africa and the subsequent commemorative service at Westminster Abbey in London. The choir was similarly invited to perform at the funeral service for the late president’s first wife, Winnie Mandela.

The choir’s patron is human rights activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and Soweto Gospel Choir is proud to act as ambassador for the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

HIGHLIGHTS

• Three-time Grammy Award winner, including 2019 "Best World Music Album" for Freedom
• Over 17 million views on YouTube
• Spreading joy to audiences across the globe for nearly two decades
Tell Us What You Think!

We’d love your feedback on this performance. If you complete the short survey, you can enter for a chance to win two tickets to Concerto Budapest Symphony Orchestra on Thursday, January 19, 2023.

bit.ly/soweto-gospel-feedback

Engagement Events

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2022
DISCUSSION WITH SOWETO GOSPEL CHOIR
Members of Soweto Gospel Choir ensemble spoke with Virginia Tech students at the Black Cultural Center about the ensemble’s mission, history, and aspirations.

Special thanks to the Black Cultural Center, Kimberly D. Clark-Shaw, and Zuleka Woods

Go Deeper

Soweto Gospel Choir’s program, Hope: It’s Been a Long Time Coming, weaves together South African and Namibian freedom songs and pieces by U.S. artists with roots in the civil rights movement. What functions can music serve in social and political movements for democracy? What are some of the shared themes and images you hear in the American and African pieces in the ensemble’s program?
Craig Drennen: *First Acts, Scene 2*
Ruth C. Horton Gallery
Atlanta-based artist Craig Drennen is best known for his ongoing *Timon of Athens* series—inspired by the Shakespeare play of the same name—for which he has produced paintings, drawings, prints, videos, performances, and sculptures.

**Steve Locke: the daily practice of painting**
Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery and Sherwood Payne Quillen ’71 Reception Gallery
Comprised of 114 portraits made in 2019 and 2020, *the daily practice of painting* is part of Locke’s exploration of relationships among men and their gaze. Painted mostly in gouache on 6- by 6-inch Claybord, each square panel features a centered solitary head seen from the shoulders up. Bright hues prevail in these intimate scaled portraits, which contain a multitude of male expressions. Sometimes with eyes closed and tongues out, Locke’s men go against the idealized male portraiture. Presented horizontally in a single line below eye level, the viewer looks down to return their gaze, compounding their vulnerability.
Did You Know?

The Moss Arts Center Ambassadors, a Virginia Tech student organization founded in 2015, is a group of dedicated student volunteers who work together to build arts connections across the Virginia Tech campuses. Each fall the Moss Arts Center Ambassadors recruit fellow student arts lovers to join the team.

K-12 Programs at the Moss

Experiences with the arts cultivate the next generation of creative thinkers, engage learners of diverse backgrounds, and foster community dialogue. The Moss Arts Center has been dedicated to providing K-12 students in the region with free, high-quality, and exciting arts programming since opening our doors in 2013. Through school-day matinee programs, gallery tours, in-school performances, and workshops with artists, we are passionate about serving our youngest community members and schools. Learn more at bit.ly/moss-k12.
Land Acknowledgement and Labor Recognition

Virginia Tech acknowledges that we live and work on the Tutelo/Monacan People’s homeland and we recognize their continued relationships with their lands and waterways. We further acknowledge that legislation and practices like the Morrill Act (1862) enabled the commonwealth of Virginia to finance and found Virginia Tech through the forced removal of Native Nations from their lands, both locally and in western territories.

We understand that honoring Native Peoples without explicit material commitments falls short of our institutional responsibilities. Through sustained, transparent, and meaningful engagement with the Tutelo/Monacan Peoples and other Native Nations, we commit to changing the trajectory of Virginia Tech’s history by increasing Indigenous student, staff, and faculty recruitment and retention, diversifying course offerings, and meeting the growing needs of all Virginia tribes and supporting their sovereignty.

We must also recognize that enslaved Black people generated revenue and resources used to establish Virginia Tech and were prohibited from attending until 1953. Through InclusiveVT, the institutional and individual commitment to *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve) in the spirit of community, diversity, and excellence, we commit to advancing a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community.

Health and Wellness

The Moss Arts Center adheres to the guidelines of the Virginia Department of Health and Virginia Tech in its operations, including protocols for distancing, face coverings, and cleaning and sanitation. Our status may change according to changes in university operating procedures. Find the most up to date information at artscenter.vt.edu/visit.

We ask patrons to do their part in keeping our community healthy. If you feel unwell, please stay home.
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We are grateful for the generosity of our patrons and donors who sustain the Moss Arts Center with their annual gifts. The impact of all contributions, no matter the amount, is significant in helping us transform lives through exploration and engagement with the arts and the creative process. We are honored to have received donations during the period of July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, from the following:

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We have long held the belief that science, technology, and the arts strengthen our community, however, we feel that it is the arts alone which heal and calm. We are most honored to have been able to lend our support to the Moss Arts Center from the very beginning. We are grateful for the gifts it bestows to all of us in return.

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The YMCA VPI Golden Triangle Award is just over an inch long and stands for mind, body and spirit, a unity of purpose and balance that is essential to lives committed to service.

The Fellowship of the Golden Triangle was started in 1928 as a way to recognize men and women who contributed appreciably to Virginia Tech’s campus and community through their involvement with the Y. It includes such illustrious members as Julian A. Burruss, Ellison A. Smyth, Walter S. Newman, John Whittemore, Charlie Yates, Leander Deitrich, George Litton, & Paul Reaves. You may recognize these names from several campus buildings!

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