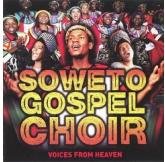


Soweto Gospel Choir - Voices From Heaven (2005)

Written by bluelover

Tuesday, 21 June 2011 08:48 - Last Updated Wednesday, 09 August 2017 13:53

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1. *Jikela Emaweni* [play](#) 2. *Vuma* 3. *Thina Simnqobile* 4. *Zanele* 5. *Paradise Road* 6. *Ahuna Ya Tswanag Le Jesu/ Kammatta* 7. *Many Rivers to Cross/ Going Down Jordan/ Amen* 8. *Amazing Grace* 9. *Thula Baba* 10. *Sikulandile* 11. *Malaika* [pla](#)

[y](#)
12. *Hlanganani* 13. *Bayete* 14. *Jerusalem* 15. *Holy City/ Bayete* 16. *African Dream*
The Soweto Gospel Choir: Sibongile Makgathe, Fikle Sidumo, Jessica Mbangeni, Bongumusa Mabaso, Vincent Jiyane, Maserame Ndindwa, Noluthando Ngqunge (vocals).

South African choral music is renowned for passionate singing and soul-stirring harmonies. The Soweto Gospel Choir is made up of top talent from throughout that hard-scrabble yet celebrated Township. All sixteen tracks were seemingly recorded studio-live with no overdubbing or after-the-fact prettying-up. Paradise Road is led by a powerful pair of female voices who sing in English about walking hand-in-hand toward a place where there will be no more pain. It is almost unbearably poignant. A ceremonial yet ecstatic version of "Amazing Grace" renews the power and grandeur of a seriously hackneyed hymn. The selections are either sung a cappella or accompanied by a guitar-led mbaqanga combo, plus drums, hand-clapping, stamping, exhortations, whistling, and high-pitched ululations. There is even a taste of sacred R&B and hip-hop! The lord being praised here is obviously a robust but loving realist; the voices are redolent of humanity in all its fragile, undying splendor. --Christina Roden

Soweto Gospel Choir's Shanachie debut, *Voices From Heaven*, is a stunning recording that delivers the full range of the choir's talent. The sheer aural beauty of the voices, both in powerful solo segments and lush choral harmonies, makes a memorable impact. But there also is an unquantifiable quotient of spirit—the heartfelt, sincere joyousness that cannot be taught or

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simulated—that infuses the Choir's performances. It is this quality that enables them to make even very familiar material such as "Amazing Grace" or Jimmy Cliff's "Many Rivers To Cross" sound fresh. The Choir moves easily from the traditional a capella Mbube, popularized internationally by Ladysmith Black Mambazo to straightforward church hymns to rollicking "township jive"-inflected numbers with band backing. The most universal, direct and powerful instrument is the human voice and on Voices From Heaven Soweto Gospel Choir revels in this "first instrument" as the essence of human musical expression. ---amazon.com

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