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After a Sell-Out US Tour Soweto Gospel Choir returns to the UK with their new show Blessed!

TOUR DATES: 30 APRIL - 2 JUNE

NEW ALBUM "BLESSED" out April through Shanachie Entertainment www.shanachie.com

The now internationally acclaimed **Soweto Gospel Choir** return to the UK in the spring/summer 2006, touring to 26 venues with their new show, **BLESSED!** Formed to celebrate the powerful and inspirational tradition of African gospel music, the 26-member choir, under the direction of choirmaster **David Mulovhedzi**, have a loyal and enthusiastic fan base here in the UK following their sell-out visits in 2003 & 2004. Now with new repertoire for their unique and vibrant show, **Soweto Gospel Choir** return to the UK, fresh from a 44-date North American tour (Jan - April) and with an unparalleled international reputation as one of the world's great choirs secured in the comparatively short 3 years since they were formed.

'... meticulous and unstoppable ... spirited and spectacular ...' New York Times

Drawing on the best musical talents from the many churches and communities in and around Soweto, the magnificent Choir perform a programme of traditional and contemporary African and international gospel. Earthy rhythms, rich harmonies and charismatic performances combine to uplift the soul and celebrate the unique spirit of South Africa.

'... sheer jubilation ... earthy and unrestrained ... the rhythm of life' Herald Sun, Melbourne

With sell-out concerts from the Sydney Opera House to the Carnegie Hall, topping the US Billboard World Music Chart (with their first album *Voices From Heaven*) and winning the Best Gospel Choir Award at the 2004 American Gospel Music Awards, the world has truly taken this remarkable group of inspirational singers to its heart since its emergence in 2002. Highlights for 2005 included singing for **Nelson Mandela**, as part of the 80th birthday celebrations for South Africa's greatest living statesman (the Choir is also Ambassador for his AIDS Foundation 46664). **Soweto Gospel Choir** also sang at **Archbishop Desmond Tutu's** 50th Wedding Anniversary celebrations at the Holy Cross Church in Soweto and were delighted to be guest artists for the 'Unite For The Stars' celebration singing alongside **Diana Ross** and **Christina Aguilera**, in support of Unite Against Hunger and the Nelson Mandela's Children's Fund. The choir also toured internationally through-out 2005 including a debut USA tour and extensive tours and seasons in Europe, Australia and New Zealand.

An integral part of Soweto Gospel Choir's mission is to raise money for its charities **Nkosi's Haven** and **Nkosi's Haven Vukani** (Soweto-based AIDS-care projects established by Gayle Johnson, whose late son Nkosi died, age 11, gave a moving address to the United Nations International AIDS conference that was televised world-wide). To date the Choir have raised over R1.3million (almost £150,000). This money has helped numerous, struggling AIDS orphans' organisations that are in constant desperate need for just the basic necessities of life such as food, school clothing, electricity and shelter.

“We are truly delighted to be returning to the UK”, said Producer Andrew Kay. “We have always been warmly welcomed there since the Choir’s UK premiere at the Edinburgh Festival in 2003 and British audiences are extremely responsive to Soweto Gospel Choir”.

For further information and interview requests

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Images can be downloaded from the press pages at www.sowetogospelchoir.com

Promotional CD and EPK available on request