



UNIVERSITY *of*
TASMANIA

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Soulful sounds of Aboriginal gospel choir rain on Hobart

Brisbane's Aboriginal Centre for Performing Arts ([ACPA](#)) Gospel Choir is in Hobart for a jam-packed week of performances for the Festival of Voices.

"We're very excited to have the Aboriginal Centre for Performing Arts Gospel Choir to Hobart to perform *Melodies from Heaven*," the Conservatorium of Music's Coordinator, Contemporary Voice, Ms Maria Lurighi, said.

This is the fourth year the Conservatorium has collaborated with the ACPA gospel project. Ms Lurighi said the experience helped those involved deepen their understanding of the profound and empathetic links between African American culture and music and Australian contemporary indigenous music.

"Gospel music is a foundation for the music that followed – jazz, rock, soul R&B and rap – the core of contemporary music," she said. "We hope that this experience shows the students new possibilities and helps with a deepening of their music knowledge and their voices but also of who they are."

The Conservatorium of Music's Curator of Music and Performance, Associate Professor Andrew Legg, said some ACPA students from previous visits have discovered a pathway here and have relocated to study a Bachelor of Music with the University of Tasmania.

Associate Professor Legg runs a renowned program in African American music at the Conservatorium. He said the idea behind the collaboration with ACPA was to explore and celebrate the connections between African American and indigenous Australian music.

The visiting choir comprises 12 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from throughout Australia who study at ACPA's state-of-the-art studios in Brisbane. Many of the students are from remote communities.

The students will work with African American gospel composer and arranger Steven Ford, a PhD candidate at the University of Tasmania and University of Delaware. Mr Ford will be leading the African American Gospel Workshop at the

Festival of Voices on Friday 12th and Saturday 13th July at the Recital Hall in the Conservatorium of Music.

The ACPA visit is supported by the University of Tasmania's College of Arts, Law and Education.

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