

NEWS RELEASE

UP Principal's Concert delivers spellbinding performances



UP choirs and orchestra perform for the audience at the 2024 Principal's Concert

PRETORIA - The University of Pretoria (UP) recently held its annual Principal's Concert, captivating hundreds of attendees who gathered at the Aula on Hatfield campus for two nights of enchanting musical performances. This premier event showcased the extraordinary synergy created when the UP Symphony Orchestra, UP Ovuwa Cultural Ensemble, UP Chorale and UP Camerata come together, along with singers and piano soloists.

The Principal's Concert showcases the University's commitment to fostering excellence across an array of artistic genres, while reinforcing its advancement of local youth within the realm of the arts.

This year's event was held under the theme 'Make Today Matter – The Light We Cast', and combined choirs, an orchestra, soloists, and visual and dramatic arts, taking the audience on a journey from darkness to light through three compelling segments. It addressed global issues such as conflict, climate change and mental health.

"As the music unfolded, we were reminded that amid darkness lies the opportunity to Make Today Matter, said Professor Themba Mosia, UP's Interim Vice-Chancellor and Principal. "Inspired by UP's students, this call

to action urges us to confront adversity with determination, fostering hope and positive change in our lives and the world around us.”

Prof Mosia called upon the audience – which was made up of students, staff members, donors, leaders of industries, representatives of various embassies and government delegates – to embark on a transformative musical journey and reflect on the powerful message of the event’s theme.

“Through every note and performance, we are reminded that even in the face of the greatest global challenges, we have the ability to shine a light, to inspire hope and to make a meaningful difference,” Prof Mosia said. “The artistry we witness serves as a testament to the talent and resilience within our community, and the role we all play in shaping a brighter tomorrow.”

Prof Mosia also encouraged the audience to support UP’s [Giving Matters](#) campaign by purchasing a [raffle ticket](#) for a chance to win a 1967 VW Beetle. The campaign aims to raise funds for the ‘missing middle’ – students who do not qualify for [National Student Financial Aid Scheme](#) funding, yet cannot afford university fees.

“Since its launch three years ago, we’ve raised over R90 million and are nearing our R100 million goal,” he said. “We hope you will help us reach it.”

“The concert was extraordinary this year,” said UP Chorale members Delise van der Merwe and Jamie Lamb. “Seeing the UP ensembles come together and perform so well was inspiring. It was encouraging to see the UP Camerata embrace our piece, ‘Please Stay’.”

“This year’s concert was different to last year’s,” said Keotshepile Molefe of Human Resources Systems at UP. “The message for this year’s concert was very relatable and I could resonate with certain aspects of the evening. I also loved how people showed up in brand colours; they looked stunning.”

With Heritage Month being commemorated in South Africa this month, the concert was an opportunity to celebrate the country’s diverse and rich heritage, which incorporates African, Asian and European cultures and traditions. Through the performances, the audience was reminded that heritage plays a significant role in their daily lives as it shapes both individual and collective identity.

“Heritage, through art and cultural expression, helps us to understand our present and shape our future,” Prof Mosia noted.

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>> [Click here to see a gallery of images from the Principal's Concert](#)

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Media enquiries can be directed to Mr Sashlin Girraj - Public Relations & Events Manager

Email: sashlin.girraj@up.ac.za | Cell: +27(0)72 447 3784

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

The University of Pretoria (UP) is one of the largest contact and residential universities in South Africa, with its administration offices located on its Hatfield Campus in Pretoria. This 115-year-old institution is also one of the largest producers of research in South Africa.

Spread over seven campuses, it has nine faculties and a business school, the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS). It is the only university in the country with a Faculty of Veterinary Science, which is ranked the best in Africa. UP has 120 academic departments and 92 centres and institutes, accommodating more than 56 000 students and offering about 1 100 study programmes. It has the most academic staff with PhDs (70%), NRF-rated researchers (613).

The 2024 Times Higher Education subject rankings placed UP first in South Africa in the fields of Law, Veterinary Science, Accounting and Finance; Agriculture and Forestry and Electrical and Electronic Engineering. Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) ranked the University among the top five in Africa, as part of their 2024 World University Rankings (WUR). UP was the only South African university featured in the 2023 World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI), falling within in the 101-200 range of innovative universities.

For more information, please go to www.up.ac.za