



Canberra Boys Choir  
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To Whom It May Concern:

RE: The Hurricane Choir

I am writing on behalf of the Canberra Boys Choir, ACT, Australia. We are a choir of some 45 boys who age from 5 to 14 years. The Choir has been established in Canberra since 1981.

The Canberra Boys Choir aims to provide boys with treble voices with the opportunity to learn good vocal production and performance skills in an enjoyable, friendly and supportive environment. We aim to offer boys a chance to explore music from a wide repertoire. We strive to build self-esteem as well as musical excellence. These aims are achieved through weekly rehearsals leading to performances serving the wider community of Canberra. Recent activities have included performing with the Australian National University School of Music Orchestra and The Llewellyn Choir in Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, support performance with the Vienna Boys Choir, regular Church choral works, and recording in house concert CD's.

In Australia we were certainly made aware of the trauma and chaos that was suffered by the people in New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina; one could not help but share and feel the shock and anger of the people as they seemed to wait for help. In Canberra in early 2003 our city experienced the horror of bushfire. Four lives were tragically lost and around 500 homes were destroyed. The rallying of the community was overwhelming, healing continues in many ways, and yet pain and hurt still linger as many lost everything in the fire.

One of the joys of being involved with a music organisation is seeing how music can bridge a gap between many diverse peoples. When our boys sang with the Vienna Boys Choir, although the language barrier was obvious, so too was the understanding of the joy of music. There wasn't a great deal of conversation, but there was lots of ruckus and laughter as they met. There is such diversity on the styles and rhythms of songs that can be sung; hearts can soar with the music, and drop with the music. Emotions can be invoked from laughter to sorrow. Timing and volume are all important, interpretation and intonation must be practiced to reflect just the right sense of what a

composer was hoping to achieve. There is great pride in successfully presenting a beautiful piece of music, be it jazz or rock or choral or classic, it is truly one of the few mediums through which many can participate whether they have great skill or just great enthusiasm.

I wholeheartedly endorse the intent of this project to encourage all people to join in, sing and let their emotions out; through the power of the voice and singing, reconciliation and hope can be encouraged. To think, too, that a recording could be made, CD's sold, and the proceeds given towards the ongoing work of repair in the hearts and lives of the people of New Orleans is fantastic.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Heathwood  
Vice-President  
Canberra Boys Choir