

**STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL: 00:01AM, THURSDAY 6 AUGUST 2015**

## **DAVID GILMOUR ANNOUNCED AS FOUNDING SUPPORTER OF THE LIBERTY CHOIR, FOR PRISONERS AND EX-PRISONERS**

- **The Liberty Choir features on *Rattle That Lock*, the title track on David Gilmour's new album**
- ***Rattle That Lock* confirmed as BBC Radio 2 Record of the Week**

**David Gilmour** has been announced as a founding supporter of **The Liberty Choir**, following their performance on ***Rattle That Lock***, the title track of Gilmour's new album. The Liberty Choir is a unique, community interest company and choir singing programme, launched at Wandsworth Prison in April 2014, bringing singers into prisons to join with inmates as a choir, and providing ex-offenders the opportunity to join the choir and be part of a community upon their release. **MJ Paranzino** and **Ginny Dougary** created the Liberty Choirs programme.

The Liberty Choirs were dreamt up by MJ Paranzino, singer, composer and choir director, and her partner, the journalist and writer, Ginny Dougary, more than ten years ago. Their idea was to take MJ's singers into prisons to create choirs with inmates in a continuous programme of choir singing. The second part of the programme kicks in when the ex-offenders are ready to be released into the community - their hope, which one year on has become a reality, was that former prisoners would feel comfortable joining the community choirs, where they would recognise familiar faces and friends, be part of a community and enjoy a healthy and fun activity.

David Gilmour said: "The guys from the prison are lightened by this beautiful thing that they're doing and they're taking part in this action with no stigma. They're just part of the community in that room and they are with someone who is as inspirational as MJ guiding them – and impressing on them that there is no success and no failure here – you do your best and enjoy it. You learn if you want to learn – just sing along if you want to sing along. It's such a positive and inclusive message. And even better for them to know that they can continue to be part of the Liberty Choir community after they are released."

Kenny Brown, CBE, former Governor of HMP Wandsworth said: "The Liberty Choir has made a very positive impact for a number of prisoners within Wandsworth. Both MJ and Ginny are inspirational individuals determined to make a difference with some of society's most challenging citizens. For prisoners, I have observed a new found confidence, an enhancement of comradeship, with a sense of pride to achieve positive outcomes. What these guys achieve in such a short period of time is truly impressive."

MJ Paranzino said: "To be able to see our idea come true, has been an incredible experience. Not only do we feel that this can be a big part of the rehabilitation process, but as a music director, it is joyous to see the abandonment and freeing of spirit as the guys lose themselves in music. And within one year, to now hear them on the radio as part of David Gilmour's song is beyond our wildest expectations."

Ginny Dougary said: "We are so thrilled that David Gilmour and Polly Samson are recognising the potential of the choir, both as a rehabilitation and community programme as well as musically. It is incredibly fulfilling working with offenders and having the opportunity to work with them within the confines of a prison. To then keep

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the contact and friendships going when they leave prison and help them where we can, with practical support and simple friendship and a listening ear, is and will always be our goal."

On Tuesday, David Gilmour and Polly Samson, the co-writers of *Rattle That Lock* visited Wandsworth Prison and sang with the Liberty Choir.

Polly Samson said: "The great thing was the milling around before and realising that on the whole there is no difference between people on the inside and people on the outside, it's just luck and circumstance. That was very clear today."

David Gilmour and Polly Samson became involved with The Liberty Choir at the suggestion of their son, Charlie Gilmour, who went back to Wandsworth Prison to see a Liberty Choir concert which was being performed for their friends and family. It was Samson's idea to have the choir sing on Gilmour's album, specifically the title track *Rattle That Lock*.

Major founding members of the Liberty Choirs, include Roger Daltrey and Pete Townshend as well as founding supporters that include: Baroness Kingsmill, CBE, David Suchet, CBE, and Ian Hislop. Both the present Governor, Ian Bickers, and the former Governor, Kenny Brown, CBE, are champions and supporters of the Liberty Choir.

David Gilmour's new studio album 'Rattle That Lock' is released on Sony Music/Columbia on 18 September 2015.

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The Liberty Choir founders, Ginny Dougary and MJ Paranzino are available for interview. Please contact Doug Wright to secure opportunities.

### **Notes to editors:**

#### **About Ginny Dougary:**

Ginny Dougary is an award-winning journalist best known for her interviews with the great and the good. She worked for The Times for several decades, until recently, and her work has appeared all over the world. She now writes freelance for a variety of newspapers and magazines, including The Guardian, Financial Times, Radio Times, Evening Standard, ES Magazine and Daily Telegraph.

She has written songs and a musical with her partner, MJ Paranzino.

The ideas for the Liberty Choirs have been worked on for ten years. To see it going strong into its second year, is the most exciting and rewarding work imaginable. She is looking forward to bringing more founding supporters on board to expand the Liberty Choirs and take them to the next stage.

#### **About MJ Paranzino**

MJ's Choirs

The Brighton City Singers, The South London Choir, The West London Choir, The Hastings Town Singers and The Liberty Choir Programme:

MJ's Choirs are non-auditioning choirs, with over 300 members, led by the singer/songwriter and musical director, MJ Paranzino. The choirs sing all styles of music, from Mozart and gospel to The Black Eyed Peas.

Over the past 13 years, the members have organised a programme of community outreach concerts, raising over £25,000 for charities. Every year, MJ commissions new choral pieces, from around the world, for The Brighton Fringe Festival - believing that composers need to have the

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opportunity to write new music for choirs, work their craft and hear their work practiced and performed.

MJ's Choirs have performed several times at the Royal Festival Hall, Southbank and Central Hall Westminster, as well as appearing on a film by the dance group STOMP, the BBC, Channel Four, and SKY Arts.

MJ is often contacted as a musical director for events, and a source for singers at all levels. Recent examples include the Just Eat ad and Volkswagen Christmas campaign. She is the go-to contact for flash mob choirs (Citroen and Channel Four). Her clients for vocal corporate workshops include the NHS, Travelex, EDF and Amicus Horizon.

MJ and her partner Ginny Dougary accept commissions for all kinds of events. Last year, Lady Carnarvon of Highclere Castle [aka Downton Abby] commissioned a 20 - minute piece to commemorate the 100th year anniversary of the First World War. Three hundred singers performed on the main stage in front of an audience of 15,000, culminating with a finale of Alexandra Burke singing Hallelujah.

Liberty choirs were launched in 2014. This programme takes community choir singers into prisons and forensic psychiatric units to form choirs with inmates and patients. It is supported by the Arts Council and its founding supporters include: Roger Daltrey, Pete Townshend, David Gilmour and Polly Samson, Ian Hislop, David Suchet and Baroness Kingsmill CBE.

Donations and information on the Liberty Choirs – [www.libertychoir.org](http://www.libertychoir.org)  
and [www.mjparanzino.co.uk](http://www.mjparanzino.co.uk)

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**ALBUM AVAILABLE TO PRE ORDER FROM 17 JULY 2015**

[www.davidgilmour.com](http://www.davidgilmour.com)

**iTunes**

[smarturl.it/RattleThatLock](http://smarturl.it/RattleThatLock) – Standard  
[smarturl.it/RattleThatLockDLX](http://smarturl.it/RattleThatLockDLX) – Deluxe

**Amazon**

[smarturl.it/RattleThatLockAmz](http://smarturl.it/RattleThatLockAmz) – Standard physical  
[smarturl.it/RattleThatLockAmzDLX](http://smarturl.it/RattleThatLockAmzDLX) – Deluxe physical  
[smarturl.it/RattleThatLockAmzV](http://smarturl.it/RattleThatLockAmzV) – Vinyl