

7TH CONSULAR BALL

raises one million rand for charities

CAPE TOWN
Consular
CORPS

The Consular Ball took place at the Kelvin Grove Ballroom on 10 November and for the first time since its inception the glittering event raised more than a million rand for its four chosen charities.



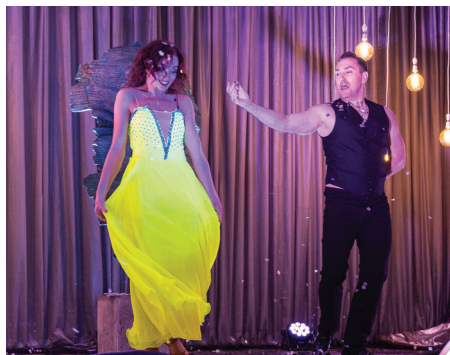
The black-tie affair was attended by diplomats and honorary consuls representing **26 countries**, as well as their friends and business associates. The mayor's office, Independent Newspapers and the local business community also purchased tables to support the fundraising event that has become a highlight on Cape Town's social calendar over the years.

"This year's Consular Ball was exceptional on so many levels," said **Isabel Verwey**, wife of the Deputy Dean of the Corps and organiser of the event.



"There is a special energy in a room when people from so many countries come together to mingle and enjoy themselves - especially if their target of raising a million rand is reached!"

TV-celebrity **Dr Michael Moll** was the MC for the evening and the entertainment was provided by **Quick Change**, a Russian duo that flew in especially from Munich to perform at the Ball – much to the delight of all the guests. "I've seen this act abroad, in Mallorca to be precise, and it intrigued me for days afterwards!" said Isabel. "I knew I wanted them to perform at the Consular Ball, and it took a bit of fancy footwork to get them here for this one performance.....but it was definitely worth it!"



Another highlight was the surprise performance of the **Tygerberg Children's Choir** who won the gold medal for the best children's choir in the world at this year's Interkultur World Choir Olympics.



The heavenly voices of the children enthralled the guests, but it was a bittersweet performance – it was one of the very last times the choir sang under the baton of choir master **Hendrik Look** who started the choir 47 years ago.

The Tombola has always been a favourite part of the evening when guests can buy tickets at R100 each to win prizes donated by the various consulates.



Andrei Zaharescu, Dean of the Consular Corps

This year the most coveted prizes were two nights' stay for 4 persons at **Club Mykonos** in Langebaan, sponsored by the Honorary Consul of Cyprus, **Johnny Philippou**, as well as a weekend at **21 Nettleton**, Clifton, arranged by **Perfect Destinations**.

The star-item was a trip for two lucky guests to magical **Namibia**, arranged by the acting Consul General of Namibia, **Elsie Maseke**.



Tombola winner Annika Schwägerl with Elsie Maseke from Namibian Consulate.

It included return flights from Air Namibia to Walvis Bay and accommodation at the **Strand Hotel** in Swakopmund, as well as ten cases of Lager sponsored by **Namibia Breweries**.

The Consular Ball is known for its unique auction items that cannot be bought in a shop and this year saw a line-up of truly extra-ordinary items. "We had something for every taste!" said Isabel. "For art-lovers we had a wonderful, majestic **Faith mask** by sculptor **Anton Smit** that dominated the stage and had everyone talking.



Singer Penelope Radsma

And for the adventurous spirit who has travelled to all the "normal" destinations, we had a **one-day trip to Antarctica** generously sponsored by the **Honorary Consulate of Paraguay**. It is a once-in-a-lifetime experience that our highest bidder was overjoyed to get!"

Another auction item that grabbed everyone's attention was a dinner for six friends with



Prof Thuli Madonsela

prof. Thuli Madonsela. She was also a guest of **Mukhtar Joonas**, Honorary Consul of Mauritius, at the Ball and graciously allowed the **auctioneer, Joey Bourke**, to auction her off twice – all in the spirit of the evening.



Auctioneer Joey Bourke

Another auction item that proved immensely popular was the trip for two persons to **Slovenia**, handcrafted by the Honorary Consul of Slovenia, **Dr. Prieur du Plessis**, where they will meet the **2017 World's Best Female Chef, Ana Ross**. The item included 2 return flights, Business Class, on **Turkish Airlines**. The bidding was so fierce that it was decided there and then to triple the item – and three trips to this charming country were promptly auctioned off.



Trevor Brown, Dr Prieur du Plessis, Harvey Foster (winner of Slovenian trip) and Kenan Ince (Turkish Airlines)

"It is heartening to me that even midst our weak economy, individuals and big companies like **Turkish Airlines** are willing to give freely to a good cause," said Isabel. "The real winners of the evening are the many children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds who will benefit from the funds raised."



Organiser Isabel Verwey and MC Dr Michael Moll

This year the Consular Ball's beneficiaries are Durbanville Children's Home, Cape Times' Bursary Fund, Proud Partners and Shine Literacy – all charities that have made a huge difference in many lives over the years.

