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BOOK RELEASE  
REDEMPTION SONGS:  
A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF A COMMUNITY PRISON CHOIR

March 21, 2019 - Iowa City-based writer Andy Douglas's new book, "Redemption Songs: A Year in the Life of a Community Prison Choir", will be released on April 1. For six years, the author volunteered with the Oakdale Community Choir, a performing chorale composed of both volunteers and inmates and directed by University of Iowa associate professor of music education Dr. Mary Cohen, based in a correctional facility in Coralville, Iowa. Taking the reader inside the walls of this medium-security prison, the book offers a glimpse at how music and the arts are offering second chances to the incarcerated.

The United States incarcerates more prisoners per capita than any other country, with more than two million people in U.S. jails and prisons. In addition to exploring the role of singing as a rehabilitative tool, the book examines some of the pressing issues facing the criminal justice system.

In doing so, it reflects on several questions - how can music and the arts inspire prisoners to change? Should the underlying philosophy of our penal system be one of retribution or restoration? What can restorative justice offer to all those touched by crime and the criminal justice system?

Dr André de Quadros, Professor of Music and Chair, Department of Music Education, Boston University, notes, "More than an account of the choir's work, the book is a deep insight into musical humanity under dehumanizing conditions. Douglas's work is evocative and thoughtful, deeply compassionate and humble, and brings the reader close to the troubled lives, wounds and hopes of the incarcerated men."

Andy Douglas (andydouglas.net) received an MFA in Creative Writing from the Nonfiction Writing Program at the University of Iowa, where he was the recipient of the Marcus Bach Fellowship for Writing about Religion and Culture. His first book, *The Curve of the World: Into the Spiritual Heart of Yoga*, was published in 2013 by Bottom Dog Press.

TO ORDER: The book and ebook will be available from Amazon.com, in selected bookstores, and directly from the author. To support the author, order directly from him! Pre-order by sending your mailing address, \$16, plus \$2.50 for shipping and handling, to Andy Douglas, 2721-D Muscatine Ave, Iowa City, IA 52240. Or send your info to [andy.c.douglas@gmail.com](mailto:andy.c.douglas@gmail.com) and pay by paypal.