



Background

Sosolya Undugu Dance Academy (SUDA) is a member of Undugu Family and a project of Kiseminti needy children organization a Non-Profit, Non-Government community based organization founded in 1993 by Br. Lezon Mark Mugwanya. Although it thrives on self sustainability we have received support from different partner organizations notably ISP In Africa (Local International Non-Government Organisation), Nggaali Music Project, Kids Canada and PTMOF (Teenage Mother’s Foundation Uganda)

The academy center shelters prioritizing artistically talented but socially disadvantaged and vulnerable children and youth. The group aims to break the vicious cycle of poverty and enable young people's ambitions to fully bloom. It provides, promotes and organizes educational activities, and provides free skills in traditional African music, dance and drama to vulnerable children and youth who can eventually access quality formal education through scholarship awards to talented students.

The academy now consists of 309 members of which 121 children (aged 5 – 18) and 188 youth aged 18-26 who are trained by 15 professionals in the traditional arts of the different cultures of Uganda and the great lakes region. The group has branches around Kampala city, Gulu and Entebbe with its main center in Kabalagala, Kiseminti Zone one of Kampala’s urban slum districts.

The criteria for selecting the beneficiaries is simply their willingness to attend and learn tradition music, dance and drama, un fortunately because of limited space and resources for sustainability this public recruitment happens once in 5 years.



Sosolya aims to restore African confidence by uniting tribes through instilling brotherhood, sisterhood spirit, pride and dignity, as well as to promote, respect and understand through the celebration of music and dance. It focus on preserving and developing culturally based arts and practices while decampaigning harmful cultural norms like female genital mutilation.

Workshops and Performances Repertoire

During the workshops in Europe we would intend to provide hands on experience and basic lessons and info of the different instruments, dances and music.

We would be well able to hold a 3 hours course. That could be in drumming and rhythm, which is very popular – or in dancing and performing. We sometimes have foreign groups and visitors at our Center in Kampala. They often very much enjoy our workshops as they are full of joy and commitment.

As for the performances we will tailor between 60 and 90 minutes productions and the combo will include music, dance and storytelling including the history of the productions dances, music and instruments.



We intend to start with playing the Royal Mujjaguzo (Celebration) Drum Ensemble this will develop into the Amagunju waist Royal Dance that is accompanied by singing and unique drum rhythms and ensemble originally played by only the Buutiko Clan and Only for the Buganda King and royal subjects 10-15 mins.

This could be followed by a short commentary (in English) of the historical background of the drums and dance that the audience has just been watching and this will give the other performers a break and change of costumes 5-7 mins.

Various traditional dances of different parts of Uganda and other former kingdoms would follow. There will a selection of solos, duets and more involved. People will get to know various African instruments like for example the bow harp (Adungu).

Depending on stage and audience 5 mins are dedicated to audience interaction.

There will be also an introduction of the Agwata (Calabash) as multi African Instrument and this will develop into Lakaraka and Pots dance from the Acholi people of Northern Uganda. The dance ends with a girls balancing competition of carrying pots while dancing.



Mostly we perform with body and facial expression so much that the message will be transmitted in an universal language. The rest will be expressed in the English language.

We recently performed a rediscovered old central African Story about a Queen called Karagwire, who as the legend is told, became the first female head of her tribe. It tells about the heritage of female power and how a woman is just as strong as a man. It tells about her fight and how eventually she gained the respect of men and the elder. It shows her pride and perseverance.

Our Artist director Lawrence Okello is one of two Ugandans who were invited and have been part of both the Nile Music Project gatherings and tours of 2013 and 2014. He is very dedicated in bringing his creative vision into the group and his effort to achieve a high level of performance is endless.



Sosolya Undugu Dance Academy's impressive orchestra is made up of most rare, unique and varied instruments that so far were played in isolation by different tribal musicians. The virtuoso skills of the musicians make for an unforgettable experience. Instruments played by the group can be classified as follows:

- **Drums of various types and sizes** - mujjaguzzo and Burundese Batimbo (royal celebrations) embuutu, empunyi, engalabi and namunjoloba
- **Melodic percussion instruments** - including balafons (amadinda, akadinda, endaala) and thumb piano (akogo)
- **String instruments** - including one stringed tube fiddle (endingidi) and adungu played in ensembles of at least four different sizes –soprano, alto, tenor and bass. Their sounds are scintillating like the West African kora.

Sosolya has a varied dance repertoire which carries the meanings and philosophies of life. They are the means from which knowledge is only accessed by participation. That is why Sosolya never separate the audience from the artist. And Sosolya's versatile artists celebrate human happiness through a seemingly endless repertoire of dances that they ebulliently execute using different parts of the body, such as: stamping dances, hip dances, arm dances and abdominal dances.

Undugu is a Swahili word for brotherhood or sisterhood, Sosolya Undugu Dance Academy aims at creating a genuine and fresh smile on the lips of everyone - ***without discrimination of any sort.***



Reference

The academy works mainly with Grace Nakimera one of the best female artists in Uganda and our first major dance collaboration the music Video Ntadika won the *Best Performance Music Video award at the HiPipo Music Awards (HMA2014)*.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfrmosQvQhg&list=RDTfrmosQvQhg#t=0>

We have performed also at the following events

- The Mahagi peace festival 2010, Democratic Republic of Congo to share experience and in uniting feuding tribes through Music dance and drama performances
- Colabo with Simona Abdullah at Bayimba International Festival of Arts 2010 (Kampala, Uganda)
- Winner of the NGGAALI Music Competition 2011
- invited and performed at various events in China
- Sauti Za Busara 2010, (Zanzibar). We were the first Ugandan artist or group to appear on the 6 most popular memorable performances list
http://busaramusic.org/newsletters/2010_03_Newsletter.htm#performances
- Urithi international Festival of the Arts 2010 (Arusha, Tanzania)
- The Bayimba international festival 2010 and 2013.
- We have a very strong team spirit, which carries us not only easily through the performances but also while on tour. Put to the test in tours to China (up to 6 month), Kongo, Kenia and Tansania.

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Links

www.sosolya.com

www.facebook.com/SosolyaUnduguDanceAcademyCenterForChildrenAndYouth?ref=br_tf

Due to financial limitations we haven't yet recoded any official Audio or video these will give you a picture of some of our dances and instruments

www.youtube.com/watch?v=wNzadiLgayA

www.youtube.com/watch?v=5fKDclbyGJ0&feature=youtu.be

www.youtube.com/watch?v=abOLSAI2tVA

The proposed tour members and birth dates

1. Oyella Josephine 08th 08 1993
 2. Husina Kyoziira 16th 05 2002
 3. Madina Nalwanga 15th 03 2000
 4. Sulaiba Namagambe 16th 09 2000
 5. Ronald Ssemaganda 12th 02 2000
 6. Isma Alakin Suudi 08th 08 2000
 7. Sadam Sseguya 25th 11 2000
 8. Benard Muyambi 06th 03 1996
 9. Lawrence Okello 17th 08 1987
- Br. Lezon Mark Mugwanya 11th July 1975

Apart from Ronald Ssemaganda the rest of the team members have passports.

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