

Exchange Project “Bayimba festival Uganda 2010”

14th – 20th, September 2010,

Travelling Party: 5 persons

- Vusa Mkhaya Ndlovu (Austria/Zimbabwe)
- Pasacal Lopongo (Austria/Austria)
- Roland Guggenbichler (Austria)
- Stephan Maass (Austria/Germany)
- Andreas Neubauer (Austria)

The Festival

The Bayimba International Festival of the arts is a festival that takes place right in the middle of Kampala inside the National Theater and has an open air main stage outside the theater. We were honored to be part of this event. Bayimba Festival is still a young festival that needs a lot of experience and there are a few things that need to be done to improve it. The festival needs an experienced technician to take care of all the festival sound. Our technician ended up doing the sound for all the bands performing at the festival this year because of lack of an experienced technician. The workshops need to be better coordinated because there were times when the coordinators, the workshop facilitators and participants were there and no one knew what was going on. Beside the festival performance and two workshops we performed at a conference hosted by the Austrian Coordination Office. After the festival a committee from the international well known Sauti Za Buzara Festival invited the Austrian band.

The Journey

We left Vienna on the Tuesday 14th of September from Vienna via Istanbul and arrived in Entebbe the following morning on the Wednesday 15th of September at around 7 am. After the necessary passport control and visa checks we were driven to Kampala right in the middle of the morning traffic jam. We finally made it to the hotel and had a deserved rest in the afternoon. Later in the evening we were invited for dinner by Christine Jantscher & her colleagues of the Austrian Coordination Office.

Thursday 16th September

We were supposed to conduct a workshop for young musicians at a studio in Kampala but unfortunately it was not well coordinated and we had to wait for hours before ...

Friday 17th September

We performed at a conference hosted by the Austrian Coordination Office in Kampala. The conference was attended by an Austrian delegation including Mr. Manfred Novak. Despite the late sound check the performance went well. After that we headed straight to the festival site to watch the bands that were billed to perform that evening.

Saturday, 18th September

We left the hotel at 10am to go for sound-check and we were kept waiting till around 4pm and no sound-check was done because of some organizational problems. We were billed to perform at 10pm but went on stage at 11pm because of the festival late schedule. The audience was on their feet dancing to our music from the first note and all the waiting in the afternoon paid off. We were happy to see the Austrian delegates as well at the festival coming to watch us perform. At 12midnight we bowed down and left the stage for Sarah Ndagire an Ugandan singer to take over from where we had left. We were the only Band that night that had an anchor. The committee from Sauti Za Busara festival was also watching us and after

our performance they approached us and showed interest in having us perform at their festival in February 2011.

Sunday 19th September

We went to the studio again to record with young Ugandan musicians and the session was a bit better compared to the first day. The only unfortunate thing is that Stephan`s I-phone “disappeared” inside the studio. I suspect someone took it without everyone noticing. I suggest that the festival makes sure that security is always available not only at the performance venues but also at the workshop places. Later in the evening we were at the festival to show support to the performing bands.

Monday 20th September

This was our last day in Uganda and since our flight was leaving at 11pm we had a chance to visit Entebbe and see lake Victoria and other places of interest there. At 11pm we boarded our plane from Entebbe to Vienna via Istanbul.

Vusa Mkhaya, Vienna 12th October