



For Immediate Release

Inaugural Ubumuntu Arts Festival kicks off

13 Participating countries confirmed

Kigali July 09th 2015

Preparations the first ever Ubumuntu Arts festival are underway.

The first of its kind in Rwanda, the Ubumuntu Arts Festival is an art centric festival inspired by and created for the sake of humanity. The festival slogan is, “I am because you are, you are because I am”

Art is a powerful form of communicating, sharing, expressing opinions, airing issues, emotions, and values about all aspects of life that affect humanity. However, in many parts of the world, either by omission or commission, art has not been given the importance it deserves both at policy, educational, and practice levels. For instance, in Africa and indeed Rwanda, art is often seen as an extracurricular activity as a way to pass time, as mere entertainment and not as an avenue to share, open up and have civic dialogue.

Art played a crucial role in tackling Rwanda’s immense post genocide challenges. From genocide perpetrators giving truthful testimonies, to victims forgiving perpetrators. Art was and can still be part of a continued solution to the issues confronting Rwanda, the same issues confronting all of humanity.

The Ubumuntu Arts Festival will therefore, act as a bridge over nations and provide an avenue where people from different countries can come together to learn from each other and be empowered to spearhead the healing process in their countries. The festival will be a forum for and of unity one world, one problem, one solution. It will be an annual festival that will take place in the last week of the 100 day Genocide memorial. The festival will be held at the outdoor amphitheater of the Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre. Festival activities will include but not be limited to: performances, workshops, panel discussions and genocide memorial site visits.

NOTES TO THE EDITOR

The festival goal:

- To make the arts an appreciated discipline in its own merit.

The festival objectives:

- To prevent genocide .
- To promote peace building and healing from violence.
- To provide cutting edge training and mentorship to artists.
- To provide space for artists to network, grow, share and create.
- To equip the festival attendees with tools to enable them to be agents of change in their countries.
- To provide a one stop centre for art professionals in terms of resources and creative industry information.

Expected outcomes:

- Creative industries will be elevated.
- More artists shall be able to live off their art as source of livelihood.
- More people will be open to the method of using art to spark civic dialogue.
- Festival attendees will start “art for humanity” projects in their countries to foster dialogue and peacebuilding.

Venue

Amphitheatre Kigali Memorial

Dates

11th 12th July 2015

Participating Countries

Rwanda

Burundi

Uganda

Kenya

Tanzania

USA

Sri Lanka

Canada

Serbia

Lebanon

Egypt

Ethiopia

Zimbabwe

Partners and Sponsors

Mashirika Performing Arts and Media Company

Mashirika is a theatre performing company which was established in Rwanda in 1998 by graduates of Music, Dance and Drama from Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. Starting just four years after the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi, the wounds from the genocide were still fresh, and all efforts to advocate for unity and reconciliation were needed to achieve the government call. Mashirika's initial productions focused much more on unity and reconciliation, creating awareness on what the root causes of genocide were, and how to avoid a repeat of the same. Today Mashirika's focus has widened to cover other social issues affecting humanity. They have had successful productions on the national and international scene, with themes on "health (HIV prevention, youth sexual and reproductive health), and girl child empowerment, among others. Their main activities include theatrical performances, community outreach through theatre video production, choreographic performances for big events, and capacity building.

AEGIS

Aegis is a registered public charity in the UK, US and is a registered NGO in Rwanda. The mission of the Aegis Trust as stated in our charitable bylaws is: "To work towards the prediction, prevention and ultimately the elimination of genocide for the benefit of mankind primarily through research, education and the dissemination of information and advice." The Aegis Trust was established by brothers James and Stephen Smith in July 2000 in response to the Kosovo crisis and their recognition of the need to focus efforts on the prevention of genocide and crimes against humanity. Aegis also provides research and advocacy support for the All Party Parliamentary Groups on the Prevention of Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity in the UK and Canada.

Rwanda Development Board RDB

The Rwanda Development Board is evidence that Rwanda is open for business. It is truly a one stop shop for all investors. The Rwanda Development Board was set up by bringing together all the government agencies responsible for the entire investor experience under one roof. This includes key agencies responsible for business registration, investment promotion, environmental clearances, privatization and specialist agencies which support the priority sectors of ICT and tourism as well as SMEs and human capacity development in the private sector. The RDB is independent and influential. It reports directly to the President and is guided by a Board that includes all the key ministries (e.g., finance, commerce, infrastructure, agriculture). The RDB is built with global expertise. It is modeled on international best practice examples of Singapore and Costa Rica. It has advisory and hands on support from global entrepreneurs and experts from Singapore Development Board, World Bank, IFC and the Office of Tony Blair.

SORWATHE Rwanda

The largest single tea producing factory in Rwanda. The tea processed by the factory is grown on the SORWATHE owned plantation of 256 hectares, as well as on another 850

hectares owned by ASSOPTHE, a Rwandan cooperative that represents over 4,500 farmers.

Sri Lankan Community in Rwanda

Kigali Today

Kiss FM

Bralirwa

Inyange Industries

Sulfo

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT
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