Ugandan German Cultural Society
Past - Present - Future

30 YEARS UGANDAN GERMAN CULTURAL SOCIETY 2019

PAST - PRESENT - FUTURE

GOETHE-ZENTRUM
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UGANDAN GERMAN cultural SOCIETY

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Foreword by Director

In 2019, Ugandan German Cultural Society (UGCS) is celebrating its 30th birthday, a special occasion to commemorate and reflect about the past 30 years and to envision the future. When we decided to celebrate this important anniversary, we started a journey into the past and met many people who were attached to the UGCS in the last 30 years: former chairpersons, teachers, directors, employees and artists. In that way, information has been put together one by one to give a broader picture of how and why the Ugandan German Cultural Society was founded, how it developed and how it became what it is today. At this point, we would also like to thank all the people that we interviewed for sharing their information with us willingly and conserve the UGCS history in this way.

This booklet is the result of all the pieces we were able to put together in the last months conserving a great variety of memories associated with the Ugandan German Cultural Society. Some parts, however, are still missing and in the dark. This booklet is not a historical documentation, and we are aware that it is not complete. There are many people out there whose story and memory we could not find and document, therefore we encourage all of you to come to our office to tell us your story in order to keep on writing the many memories of the Ugandan German Cultural Society and contribute to the mutual understanding of Ugandans and Germans.

Shedding light onto one´s past, taking into account different perspectives, is essential for the identity of a person or society and necessary to build the future. If you don´t know where you come from, it will be difficult to find your path into the future. Together, Ugandans and Germans managed to keep this Society alive and make it a true success story. With this booklet, we wish to keep the memories alive, find a joint way for the future and keep the fire for mutual cultural partnership burning.

Barbara Sommer
Director, GZK/ UGCS

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Ugandan German Cultural Society
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Introduction by Chairman

The year 2019 is very significant in the history of the Goethe-Zentrum/Ugandan German Cultural Society because it marks 30 years since its inception. In these three decades,innumerable cultural exchange programs have been conducted to the benefit of the of communities living in Uganda. This in turn has strengthened mutual understanding and friendship between Uganda and the Federal Republic of Germany.

The Goethe-Zentrum Kampala (GZK)/Ugandan German Cultural Society (UGCS), whose major aim is to strengthen and promote the growth of bilateral co-operation between the people of Germany and Uganda, uses culture to galvanize the bond between the two countries.

It is a well-known fact that language is a significant tool necessary for communication and social cohesion. GZK/UGCS has ably applied this to achieve our desired aim, which is how we embarked on teaching German, Kiswahili and Luganda to interested students. In 2008, the Ugandan German Cultural Society became a Goethe-Zentrum, associated to the famous Goethe-Institut, which is the official German Cultural Institute and worldwide very well known for its high quality German teaching standards. The number of learners that have benefitted from these programs is evidenced by the steady numerical growth that has been registered over the years. The program of teaching German as a foreign language has particularly attracted many students to our centre.

The GZK/UGCS hosts and supports a myriad of cultural events ranging from local art, architecture, music, short films, photography, poetry, pottery and so many others. This intercultural engagement has grown much more robust than when the centre started thirty years ago and continues to grow unabated. The notion that culture is the glue that binds diverse societies together is best witnessed here where bilateral collaboration between Uganda and Germany is smooth and friendly. Without partners, members and friends, and most notably, the past and present leadership of GZK/UGCS, all our activities would not get the support they have received for the last three decades.

On behalf of GZK/UGCS, allow me on this 30th anniversary to thank you for your continued support; attending our events, learning new languages, your membership and partnership. We look forward to seeing better programs, increased membership and stronger bilateral links between Uganda and Germany in the coming decades.

Taga F. Nuwagaba
Chairman, GZK/ UGCS

Founding Ugandan German Cultural Society in 1989

UGCS Inauguration 1989 - The Toast with Prof. Wavamunno, former German Ambassador H.E. Henatsch, and Kizito (from left to right)

"Ugandan German Cultural Society (UGCS) was officially launched on 9th March 1989 in Kampala at a colorful ceremony held at the City Hall Kampala." This information can be found in the booklet UGCS Culture Scope Vol. 1, No. 1, p.6 from March 1990 celebrating UGCS´s first year of existence. However, little is known about this *"colourful ceremony"*, apart from the old photos found in the UGCS archive.
The people present in this ceremony were the former ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Uganda His Excellency, Ruprecht Henatsch, the Second Deputy Prime Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Co-operation, Dr. Paul Kawanga Ssemogerere, and the interim Committee of UGCS:

- **Gordon Wavamunno** (Chairman)
- **Ingrid Rissom** (Vice Chairman)
- **Richard Mutumba** (Secretary General)
- **Matthew Muwanga Batuuka**
- **Hans Joachim Friess**
- **Volker Werner**
- **Aci Manzi**
- **Henry Ssewanyana**
- **Rainer Epp**
- **Thomas H. Meister**
- **Peter Stiemke**

According to the booklet celebrating the first year of existence of UGCS the foundation story is this:

"Early in the 1989, a few Ugandans and German nationals in Uganda in close co-operation with the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Kampala conceived an idea to establish a society bringing together peoples of the two countries, Uganda and the Federal Republic of Germany. The main objective of establishing such an organization was to promote cultural interaction between Ugandans and Germans and to complement efforts by governments of both countries to forge co-operation.

In March, 1989, the Uganda German Cultural Society (UGCS) was officially and ceremoniously born. As the Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Regional Co-operation, Dr. Paul Kawanga Ssemogerere, rightly observed, the formation of UGCS was long overdue. The Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) was one of the first nations to establish a resident Mission in Uganda. And as such, bilateral ties between the two countries have been longstanding."
(UGCS Culture Scope, vol. 1, no. 1, March 1990, p. 2)

Launching Ceremony UGCS 1989 at City Hall Kampala with the former Mayor

Founding Ugandan German Cultural Society in 1989

UGCS Inauguration 1989 with Mutebire - Bank of Uganda (2nd from left) and Miria Matembe (3rd from left)

An important element of the foundation of the society was thus to strengthen co-operation and cultural exchange between Uganda and Germany.

From a language teaching perspective, another element was as important as the official policy. From former language advisor of the German pedagogical exchange service (Pädagogischer Austauschdienst) and founding member, Volker Werner (1987 – 1991 in Uganda), we learned that another motivation to found the society was to give German teachers an additional income source to their meagre salaries at schools while at the same time meet the demand of German language learning for adults. At the end of the 1980s, more and more people outside school and university context wanted to learn German which was not possible at that time if not studied at school or university.

UGCS Teachers_ Meeting at Makerere University with Samuel Sekiziyivu

In consequence, when the Ugandan German Cultural Society was founded, the first adult teaching German language courses were established. The students were taught by the German language teachers under the guidance of Volker Werner. His proposal to Goethe-Institut Nairobi, Goethe-Institut Munich and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Germany to establish a branch of the Goethe-Institut in Kampala was not of any interest at that time. However, the acting ambassador in Kampala, Mr. Thomas Meister, and the embassy itself supported the idea of establishing regular German language courses for adults and an official Ugandan German Cultural Society with cultural events like exhibitions, concerts and panel discussions. From the Ugandan side, the establishment of the society was especially supported by Dr. Paul Kawanga Ssemogerere, who was the chairman of the Democratic Party (DP) during this period. He attended the events of Ugandan German Cultural Society on a regular basis and acted as speaker.

UGCS Teachers' Meeting at MMakerere University with Fred Kyazze (middle)

Finally, the Ugandan German Cultural Society was founded, the first office at Spear House installed and the first German language courses were taught at different places throughout the city. Shimoni S.S. on Nile Avenue gave the society their first teaching place and Radio Deutsche Welle, the German radio station for the diffusion of German language and topics in the world, sent the first German language books for free. It was their publication "German for beginners". Charles Male and Dr. William Wagaba were the first two German language teachers teaching German courses for adults in Kampala.

What started with some hundred people learning German and attending regular cultural events has grown 30 years later to a Society associated to Goethe-Institut Nairobi teaching the German language to about 1.300 adults per year and organizing several big cultural events and numerous smaller events throughout the year.

Written by Barbara Sommer

The very Beginning UGCS' first year (1989/1990)

According to Mr. Gordon Wavamunno, the co-founder of UGCS, the vision of this society started with the ambition to raise awareness to Ugandans about German culture and language.

The newly founded Ugandan German Cultural Society was during the first years run and managed by people working in their free time on a voluntary basis. The positions that were filled and the people who were elected in 1989/1990 for the Executive Committee were:

1. Chairperson
   Prof. Gordon Wavamunno
2. Vice-Chairperson
   Dr. Ingrid Rissom
3. General Secretary
   Mr. Richard Mutumba
4. Assistant General Secretary
   Mr. Matthew Muwanga
5. Treasurer
   Mr. Volker Werner
6. Organising Secretary
   Mr. Henry Ssewanyana
7. Assistant Organising Secretary
   Mr. Simon Sagala
8. Publicity Secretary
   Mr. Christopher Muganga
9. Assistant Publicity Secretary
   Mr. John Kakande

Sheraton Art Exhibition 1989 with Artworks from Fabian Mpagi Kamulu

Sheraton Art Exhibition 1989 with Henry Ssewanyana, Geoffrey Mukasa and former German Ambassador H.E Henatsch

Furthermore, the Society consisted of members amongst the first were:
Mr. Klaus Lotzer, Mr. Uwe Prien, Brother Tinkasimire J., Professor Filimoni Banugire, Mr. Acali Manzi, Mr. Rainer Epp and Mr. Hans Joachim Friess.

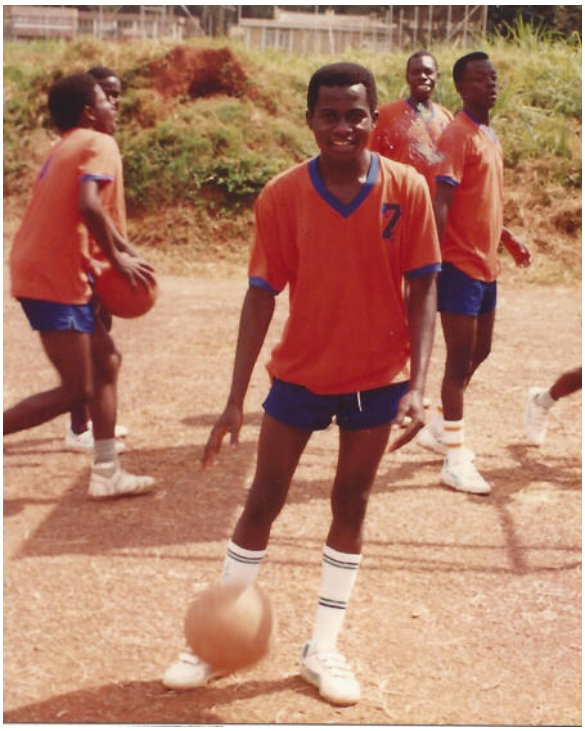
Nevertheless, looking back at the initial structure of UGCS in 1989, the organization and implementation of language courses dominated the cultural activity aspect, which followed later on (Charles Male). Back then, the language program of UGCS found itself in various places, German lessons took place in school, college, hospital and private home settings – *"wherever there was need, when people wanted to learn German you go and find your costumers"* (Charles Male). Charles further remembers the salary situation for school teachers back then was difficult, so any chance to gain additional income by teaching German was taken.

One of the first teaching homes of UGCS was the Shimoni Teacher's College which is now known as Kingdom Kampala – mostly adult-orientated classes were hold with 20 people, on beginner, intermedium and advanced level. Back then Volker Werner from the 'Pädagogischen Austauschdienst' (Pedagogical Exchange Service, PAD) was language advisor and teacher at the same time.

As the first language consultant of UGCS, he held an essential position evaluating the courses, discussing problems with the teachers, and organizing advanced trainings. He remembers the very first opening of German classes of the UGCS:

> *It was the first opening of the classes. I had no doubt that my teachers would turn up. But there were other exciting questions: Would the participants turn up? When would they turn up? Would it rain during classes – students would not be able to hear anything the teacher said because of the noise on the corrugated iron roof?Above all: What would the students think of their first step into German? In the end it all turned out well: The participants were happy and proud to have learnt the first German words: 'Ich heiße ...*

The formation of UGCS was seen as a development process from the beginning, creating a platform for friendship and cooperation on a non-ministerial and -diplomatic level, but on the ground. *"Once our people get close culturally, once people learn to appreciate lifestyles of each other, this will remove prejudices as well as conflicts."* (UGCS Culture Scope, volume 1, no. 1, March 1990, p. 2)



Sports Activities at UGCS

Shortly after the inauguration of UGCS a programme of action was launched implementing the objectives of the society including German language courses, music performance and theatre, art exhibitions, establishment of the library, sports, discussion rounds and other social events. The UGCS brochure undertakes a cross-section and highlights the society as one of the most active cultural organizations back then followed by a constantly growing number of members.

Besides successfully conducting German courses with the help of the teachers and language advisor Volker Werner, several art events had taken place such as the showcase of a German puppet theatre group 'Vis-à-vis' as first UGCS cultural event at all.

In addition, there was a concert of a Bavarian Music Trio Huber/Zapf in 1989 in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut and the German Embassy, where a number of known Ugandan musicians and lecturers of the department of

Sheraton Art Exhibition 1989 with Klaus Betz, Geoffrey Mukasa and Fabian Mpagi Kamulu (from left to right)

Music, Dance, and Drama of Makerere University had participated. The visual arts have also been taken into account by UGCS from the very beginning – an art exhibition in the series **"UGCS and the Creative Artist"** was launched at Sheraton Hotel showcasing art works of the well-known Ugandan artists Fred Ssenoga Makubuya, Fabian, Mpagi Kamulu, Geoffrey Mukasa, and the multimedia artist Pauline Disonn (UGCS Culture Scope, volume 1, no. 1, March 1990, p. 7).

Within the UGCS brochure, an insightful article by Mathew Muwanga, who was General Secretary Assistant of UGCS at that time, focuses on the topic of cultural sensitivity and the many questions that arose within the locals when the Deputy Prime minister back then launched the UGCS, marking the beginning of a cultural bilateral cooperation.

The question of how to combine two cultures which do not have much in common at first – especially when the term of Ugandan culture was narrowly connected to rituals and tradition-orientated songs and dances. People questioned *"the possibility and practicality of cultural cooperation between people who are so different."* Therefore, in his text, Muwanga engaged promoting a deeper understanding of these both cultures including a more specific sense on the term of culture and its meaning for society in terms of sharing and learning from each other. (UGCS Culture Scope, volume 1, no. 1, March 1990, p. 12)

Written by Sina Weber

Impressions of the 90's

In the 90´s, the UGCS actively developed their cultural programme promoting a variety of events, films, and performances on an intercultural level that was enhancing both German and Ugandan art. As former UGCS board member from 1995 – 1998, Hilmar Froelich remembers a

> *German church service in the garden of UGCS with the theme "overcoming hatred and becoming friends" by knowing each other accelerated by the children of the parents who had become enemies through envy, according to the German author of children's books Max Bolliger: Die Kinderbrücke / Children's Bridge (bohem press, Zurich, 1999).*

According to the German teacher and UGCS board member Charles Male, the teaching situation at the end of the 90´s changed as German courses of UGCS were now hold in one building in Nakasero. The organization of teacher's availability, time schedules and class routines were now centralized.

Within our research finding information on the history of UGCS, the period of the 90´s came along with several challenges as this time was neither mentioned much in the interviews nor did we find written documents. Therefore, many connections and happenings from back then remain somewhat in the dark. Nevertheless, we have found several pictures from the archive of UGCS which speak for themselves.

Impressions 90's Art in Action

Impressions 90's Oktoberfest parade

Impressions 90's Trip to Berlin

Impressions 90's School Project

Impressions 90's with Dr. Andreas Schumann - DAAD Lecturer (3rd from left)

Impressions 90's with Jean Baptiste Kayigamba (3rd from left)

Impressions 90's UGCS Outdoors

Dance Class in Nakasero with Trainer Christopher Kato (In the middle - yellow shirt)

Inauguration
of a house

(Unknown)

The colorful Millenium 2000-2006

In the beginning of the 2000´s, UGCS developed to become a home for fine arts. More and more activities promoting visual and fine arts found their way to UGCS, as most local artists who were active in this field have passed the doors of UGCS. The former German Ambassador Klaus Holderbaum (who was UGCS chairman from 1999 to 2003) intensely remembers activities and happenings during the early 2000s, such as the art exhibitions which were on display in the Villa in Nakasero (Location of UGCS before 2003).

While the German courses took place at another location back then, the Nakasero Villa became a melting pot for upcoming artists of Uganda. To Holderbaum it was always a matter of great concern that these local artists got a platform to display their work and have a possibility to sell their pieces. In this context, he advocated that the Ugandan wealthy classes as well as Institutions such as banks and insurance companies – who do have the economic capacity to buy art works – should get motivated to invest in the art field.

> *"In dem Fall nicht wiederum in erster Linie, um aus dem Bild Kapital zu schlagen sondern um auch zu zeigen - wir sind in der Lage und auch bereit und haben darüber nachgedacht, dass Uganda etwas zu bieten hat Ich hab´ auch immer gesagt - auch in der Zeit als Botschafter - wenn ich da so zu Veranstaltungen eingeladen war: „Leute, ihr habt da ungeheures Potenzial!"*[1]

[1]*English translation:* "In this case, in the first place, it was not to capitalize on the painting but also to show that we are able and willing and have thought about the fact that Uganda has to offer something I have always said, also in my time as an ambassador, when I was invited to events, "People, you have enormous potential there!"

Ntinda House__St. Martins Umzug_

The building move from Nakasero to Ntinda in 2003 defined another influential era of UGCS – a busy and active time was starting. The Ntinda house was more than a place for German courses, art exhibitions and UGCS board meetings.

Besides running a kitchen that served German food and hosting get-togethers from DAAD and 'Deutsche Welle', there was a guesthouse offering three rooms, usually rented out to German visitors for the German Development Cooperation, 'Deutsche Welle', KfW, the German Development Bank and private guests from Germany. The cultural activities during this time were numerous and well-received from German and Ugandan side: You could join Christmas and Easter parties, enjoy German Movie Nights and Art exhibitions, as well as experience candle light dinners with German food at Café Beethoven or dive into the parties of DAAD which were especially popular among Makerere students. Obviously, the typical German 'Oktoberfest' could not be missing at Ntinda House either.

The many parties and get-togethers followed by changing themes defined a meeting place for Germans and Ugandans, the doors of UGCS were widely open and attracted different audiences. In addition, the UGCS offered a Translation and Interpretation Service, ball-

Ntinda House_Office of Director Anne Hecker-Alia

Ntinda House_Cultural Activities

room dance classes and a well-stocked library with German Books and videos. Moreover, during the time UGCS was located at Ntinda House, there were weekly workshops for Interior Design and Fine Art Lessons every Saturday to connect with Ugandan local artists.
More information you will find under the still active website link
http://www.kampala-city-guide.com/ugcs/more_about_ugcs_eng.htm

Written by Sina Weber

HOW YOU FIND UGCS

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Plot 13A Commercial Road Kampala, Ntinda Branch right between Shell and Caltex

Anne Hecker Alia, the UGCS director, married to a Ugandan, was a former presidential guest house leader. She then took over the UGCS leadership, where there are increased activities and moved to a new residence where you will find now some guest rooms for great accomodation.

UGCS has a well trained staff in cooking (even in German cuisine), and housekeeping.

UGCS Website 2003-2006 More About

Cafe Beethoven

Cafe Beethoven will offer you German Cuisine, local dishes, cakes and snacks at their best. Every 2nd and last Friday of the month at 7:30pm we offer you a saucy dinner in a comfortable and unique environment. Please look at our Program page to know our Menu in advance.

UGCS Website 2003-2006 More About UGCS

GUEST ROOMS BY THE UGCS

At the UGCS premises are three *unique* double bedrooms with balconies available.

Stay in a nice familiar atmosphere;

Enjoy the nice view from the balcony and relax;

UGCS Website 2003-2006 Guesthouses

Ntinda House_Christmas cookie Baking

Ntinda House_Christmas Time with Doreen Kasiita and Anne Hecker-Alia

A new Era - Moving in with Alliance Francaise de Kampala in 2006

2006 not only was a milestone for Ugandan German Cultural Society processing the status of a Goethe-Centre, it also marked the beginning of sharing a building with Alliance Francaise de Kampala. Due to the political friendship of France and Germany and numerous contracts between the two countries assuring the mutual cooperation, it was the political wish to manifest this political friendship in a shared building of the two official institutions in charge of language teaching and promoting mutual cultural bonds. Both institutions should work together on the basis of shared European values in joint cultural projects with the Ugandan artist community, meanwhile for the language teaching the same infrastructure could be used. **Roberta Wagner mentions this important step in her interview:**

> "The first step was to integrate the society into the Goethe-Zentrum network, given that it matched the quality standards. At the same time, Germany and France decided on national level, that both cultural institutes (Goethe-Institut and Alliance Francaise) would foster their cooperation by sharing premises. Kampala was one of the first countries where this was put into practice."

Today, on the African continent, there are also Goethe-Institut Kinshasa and Goethe-Zentrum Maputo sharing premises with the Alliance. Politically, these allocations of Goethe-Institut and Alliance Francaise on the African continent are promoted, and there is the political will to increase its number. **Roberta Wagner remembers:**

> "After the inauguration of the new premises as a joint French-German House, the Society was accepted to operate officially as a Goethe-Zentrum."

After Alliance Francaise has been based at the National Theatre for 42 years, the French institute moved out and found a new home with Ugandan German Cultural Society at plot 62 on Bukoto Street which though very soon got too small for both cultural institutions. In 2008, Alliance Francaise and Ugandan German Cultural Society shifted to a nice old Indian Villa with a garden in Nakasero at plot 6, Mackinnon Road, where they would stay for the next 6 years. **His Excellency, the retired German ambassador, Mr. Klaus Holderbaum narrates in his interview:**

> "...we had wonderful premises at Mackinnon Road – it was a beautiful compound; it was excellent for film screenings in the evening, concerts; we got people in – I was already at an advanced age – I had no idea of them – from the different music scenes. Then, I attended one evening a concert, and I have to say, I was enthusiastic." (translated from German original)

Charles Male, one of the two most senior teachers remembers the advantage of the cooperation between Alliance Francaise and Goethe-Zentrum:

> "...the time before Alliance Francaise de Kampala (AFK) joined, Ugandan German Cultural Society was only "amongst themselves". With AFK the neighboring spirit started, the principles of sharing arose. Some German teachers started also to learn French for free and the other way round..."

Daily cooperation, however, is and was not always easy due to the different financial structure and employment policies of the two cultural institutions. Moreover, both institutions address partly different audiences. Nevertheless, the sharing of a building of two European cultural institutions means to put into daily praxis the spirit of the European Union, promoting unity in diversity on a bigger African – European cultural exchange.

Written by Barbara Sommer

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UGANDAN GERMAN Cultural SOCIETY

The Turning Point: **Becoming Goethe-Zentrum in 2018**

In 2008, the Ugandan German Cultural Society officially got the status of a Goethe-Centre. In this year, the Foreign Ministry of Germany handed the responsibility over to the Goethe-Institut to look after the Cultural Societies, which existed in many countries of the world. This was a big milestone in the history of the Society marking its transition from a meeting-point for Ugandans and Germans with no regular funding to a more formal status of being associated to the big Goethe-Institut network and German teaching institution worldwide changing the routine of the existing Ugandan German Cultural Society.

Dr. Francis Xavier Bisasso, chairperson in the transition period remembers:
"One time, for example, the German Embassy had even to step in and strongly demand that the activities of the Society should focus a lot more on the planning and conducting of cultural program activities and not so much on the social gatherings aspect whereby food and drinks are at the forefront."

Goethe-Institut is the official German Cultural and German Language Institute with headquarters in Munich/ Germany. Named after the famous German writer and scientist of the 18th century, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Goethe-Institut is especially associated with high quality German language teaching and teaching trainings and the promotion of innovative ideas in the cultural sector worldwide. There are 159 Goethe-Institutes in 98 countries in the world, 12 institutes are in Germany itself. The first Goethe-Institut abroad was opened in 1952 in Athens/Greece. Apart from real institutes, there are 1.100 points of contact which are part of the Goethe-Institute´s network: examination partners, teaching materials centres, German reading rooms, partner libraries and information centres, Goethe-Centres, German-foreign cultural societies and language learning centres as well as residencies and project spaces.

Goethe-Centre Kampala is one such contact point in Subsahara-Africa. The Goethe-Institut in charge of the Goethe-Centre Kampala is Nairobi/Kenya, whereas the regional Goethe-Institut in charge of the whole Subsaharian region is Johannesburg/South Africa. There are 5 other Goethe-Centres in Subsahara-Africa: Harare/Zimbabwe, Antananarivo/Madagascar, Maputo/Mozambique, Cape Town/South Africa and Bamako/Mali.

The difference to a real Goethe-Institut is the status, structure and financing: Goethe-Centre Kampala is registered as an international NGO. It has a Board that consists of a Chairperson (by its constitution always a Ugandan national), a Vice-Chairperson (by its constitution always a German national), a Secretary and 5 Board Members. It has employees who are working 100 % on local contracts, selected locally by open calls, whereas a Goethe-Institut always has a director sent by Goethe-Institut Munich employed at Goethe-Institut Munich. The director of a Goethe-Centre has to apply for funding of cultural and language projects once a year at the Goethe-Institut in charge which approves or denies the funds for the projects. At the beginning of each year the director has to report the whole accountancy of the funding approved for projects according to German law. Yet, 70 % of the funding of Goethe-Centre Kampala rely on local income.

Becoming an official Goethe-Centre had a huge impact in accountability, administration and the quality of language teaching. Accountability and administration were step by step professionalized and had an influence on the way projects were administered. Quality of language teaching increased because Goethe-Institut imposed its high quality standards: Teachers had now access to teaching seminars and are in need of at least C1 level of German, the European Reference Frame for teaching was introduced and only teaching material and methods approved by Goethe-Institut were used. In 2009, Goethe-Zentrum also became an official examination centre for Goethe-Institut exams with officially licenced teachers.

Rashid Kasiita, a long-term teacher to UGCS remembers this moment with pride and much satisfaction *"people didn't have to go to Nairobi anymore – they could do the international exams right here at our institute."* Furthermore, Rashid Kasiita remembers the transition from UGCS to GZK as a big day, a huge event which was supported by the 'Deutsche Welle'. Due to this event, the recognition of now GZK increased enormously.

Doreen Jolly Kasiita, a former employee of Goethe-Zentrum/UGCS remembers:
"Becoming a Goethe-Zentrum was the biggest party ever. More than 1.000 people attended. There was a concert, for which you did not have to pay entrance fee, drummers, dancers. The German ambassador, people from Goethe-Institut Kenya and Goethe-Institut South Africa were present.
As for the changes, now every year a supervisor from Goethe-Institut came. UGCS changed a lot when they could offer the official exam "Start Deutsch 1". Offering a big exam is exciting. Teachers got bursaries for "Grünes Diplom" ("Green diploma" (highest level of German language exam)). The first was Isaac Kakande, then Rashid Kasiita and Joseph Lugema."

Today, GZK/UGCS is proud to have 10 Ugandan German teachers with C1 level of German, several of them licenced to execute Goethe-Institut exams. There are also critical voices which stress the loss of passion and personal motivation and interest to work at Ugandan German Cultural Society. Some Ugandans feel that the German language teaching has been taken away from them to submit it to the rules and regulations of German administration. As for the cultural department, becoming a Goethe-Zentrum meant to have access to the Goethe-Institut network with regular traveling exhibitions, music tours and the chance to participate in regional projects and to establish bigger projects because of regular project funding.

Roberta Wagner, the first director of the newly established Goethe-Zentrum/Uganda German Cultural Society remembers:
"At the time, the society was not very well funded and therefore only few projects could be realized. The Goethe-Institut was ready to gradually invest more funds and considered expanding their activities over the years....

Furthermore, together with the great UGCS-team, we slowly developed cultural programs on a bigger scale – this is how the LABA Festival was born. The LABA Street Art Festival became an institution on the Kampala events calendar and more so, spoke about the stands we took to involve the artist into our programming, working together on joint ventures and trying to build an audience for the visual arts sector."

But it also meant to be subject to the rules and regulations of project funding by Goethe-Institut.

Dr. Francis Xavier Bisasso, chairperson in the transition period, remembers:
"During the time I was chairperson of the board of the Uganda German Cultural Society, the biggest challenge we had as a board of the society was to figure out the terms and conditions of the then foreseen partnership with the Goethe-Institut.
Because the Goethe-Institut is such huge institution and the UGCS was such a small society, there was fear among many members of the society that the identity of the society was going to be shawled up by the giant institution. There was even the idea of naming the emerging institution "Goethe Centre". The compromise was therefore to name the emerging institution "Goethe-Zentrum/ Uganda German Cultural Society".

Former director Carolin Christgau (2012 – 2016) also remembers to struggle with administrative issues:
"My challenges have been rather in relation to certain circumstances and the political environment in Uganda. I needed to set up basic structures for UGCS, since certain systems and registrations have not been in place and made us legally vulnerable.
We also had two break-ins at the Mackinnon Road office, which threw us financially back and caused lots of extra work and frustration. Later on we moved to Bukoto Street, which has been a challenge, too."

The director following Carolin Christgau which was **Anja Göbel (2016 – 2018) describes** the contradicting rules of being at the same time the Ugandan German Cultural Society with roots in the Ugandan cultural environment and a Goethe-Zentrum which has to stick to German rules and regulations for project funding:
"In general, managing an organization that has to fulfill rules of German bureaucracy in a Ugandan setting shaped by its own rules and customs, was quite a challenge, too.
From the outside, GZK was considered as a White/Western organization, whereas from the inside, it was structured and conceived to be local.
This paradox was maybe the hardest challenge, because it caused misassumptions and wrong expectations on almost all sides, particularly among Ugandan artists."

This contradiction is up to today a challenge that Ugandan German Cultural Society has to deal with.

Written by Barbara Sommer

The Start of Big Events: **Activites 2008 - 2019**

A Home for Artists

Due to the interviews we conducted with two of our long-lasting cooperating artists, Isa Kamyuka from FAAM Club and Acaye Elizabeth Pamela as Hybrid-Artist, both coming to UGCS in the mid of the 2000s, it becomes clear which essential role UGCS – and then from 2008 – the Goethe-Zentrum Kampala, developed to be for the artists' community – especially for the non-musical sector. In 2007, Isa likes to come to UGCS events during his University time, it was a melting pot for friends of art, *"those who started with him in High School doing art I used to meet my good old friends there."*

In his interview, the music and performances during the cultural gatherings of UGCS back then were described as fascinating, creative, artistic and original – in any case different from the mainstream and outstanding as it touched the audience. Also Pamela highlights the importance of UGCS to be a place for alternative and visual arts - *"Via artists, UGCS was the only other apart from the National Theatre, the 'go-to place' for alternative artists, for non-musical artists as AFK was big in music and GZ was big in arts and theatre and other forms [...] It as was an alternative space for artists like me like hybrid-artists going between disciplines [...] you can go in and out and taste ideas, that is what it was for me."*

In both interviews, UGCS as magnet for the artists' community in Kampala is highly pointed out. The artists' community, especially regarding the disciplines of visual arts, performance and theatre installation relied on UGCS as it drew attention to these fields of art from an institutional side giving them a significant voice. Further, UGCS back then held a remarkable position for artists in Kampala as it was a place where art was understood as a talent and profession, which for instance was not the case in all social settings where artists came from.

Isa remembers why he came to UGCS in 2008, *"it gave an environment for artists, it was a feeling of home [...] while growing up with challenges at my home place and in school for doing art, at UGCS it was fully supported and seen as a profession".*

When Roberta Wagner came in as director of UGCS in 2006, she continuously paved the path that UGCS developed to become a strong player in the cultural sphere upholding intercultural and intellectual dialogue and being exactly this place of home for artists what Isa referred to. When talking about her goal as a director, Roberta Wagner in detail states, *"My overall goal was, to build a strong foundation for UGCS/GZK to be known and recognised as a solid and strong player in the culture sphere of Kampala [...] a place where artists could share their vision and to feel, that the society is there home."*

The statements of the interviewees side come along with being aware of the particularity UGCS stands for and the responsibility of UGCS to keep this status and platform for visual and alternative artists alive.

Glance of Cultural Activities at GZK/ UGCS

Goethe-Zentrum Kampala/ Ugandan German Cultural Society has organized numerous big events and established regular smaller event formats since it gained the official status of a Goethe-Zentrum.

Big Events

The most famous event which was mentioned by nearly all people who were interviewed, was LaBa! Street Art Festival, which was celebrated in eleven editions from 2007 to 2017 on Bukoto Street as well as on Mackinnon Road. Other big events that could be found evidence of, were Mabarti, Open Doors and the still ongoing Festivals Ngalabi Short Film Festival in collaboration with Maisha Film Lab and Azulato Children´s Festival.

01

Laba Street Art Festival

LaBa! Street Art Festival started in 2007 with the slogan "Pot in the Hole" in allusion to the many potholes on Bukoto Street where UGCS was located at that time. Artists and spectators were invited to transform the street with its potholes into art.
Over the years it developed into one of the most important art festivals in Kampala. Together with the Ugandan Artists Association, it aimed to bring art closer to the people, out of the galleries and exclusive places.
As the 2013 Annual Report puts it: "The idea is to create interactive spaces, for artists and audiences to exchange and experience art, but it is also thought as a platform to present the current movements of contemporary art in Uganda to a varied audience.
Art forms of all kinds are presented to the visitors – visual arts, poetry, literature, music, theatre, dance, performance art, sculpturing, film...-, inviting them to talk to the artists, participate at workshops and see the variety of art forms Uganda bears.
The aim is to present and promote Ugandan contemporary art and culture and making it accessible to everyone while challenging the artists to work in new environments and constellations." (Annual Report 2013, p. 10)
The last edition of LaBa! took place in June 2017 and was ended due to financial issues and a discussion about the role of the artists.

02

MabARTi

The Sadolin MabARTi challenge, street art in public space, saw three editions between 2011 and 2016 and was sponsored by Sadolin paint in partnership with Goethe-Zentrum Kampala/ UGCS. It was a painting competition where artists painted on mabaati/iron sheets in and around Kampala to show their artistic talents and bring it to public spaces.
Each year had a different theme and a team of selected artists and organizers judged the different paintings electing three winners who were rewarded financially.

03

Open Doors? Integration and the impact of refugee populations

(French-German project)

Open Doors was a joint French-German project in 2017 dealing in different artistic forms with the experience of impact of the reception of refugees in France, Germany and Uganda which won funds from the French-German Elysee-Fund and was organized jointly by Alliance Francaise de Kampala and Goethe-Zentrum Kampala/ UGCS. The project included a photo-exhibition, several debates and workshops, film screenings, a dance performance and a concert. It involved local, migrant and refugee artists as well as German and French artists and experts.

04

Ngalabi Short Film Festival

Ngalabi Short Film Festival was founded in 2017 in collaboration with Maisha Film Lab to celebrate Ugandan and East African Short Films and give local and East African filmmakers a platform to develop and show their talents.

In 2020, there will be the 4th edition of Ngalabi Short Film Festival, for the first time at the premises of the cooperation partner of Goethe-Zentrum/UGCS at Maisha Garden.

Regular events

01

German Movie Night

Regular screenings of German films with English subtitles for all audiences to enjoy German films, get a picture of contemporary Germany and listen to the German language. If there is the chance to invite the filmmaker, a discussion following the film is organized.

02

CinemArt

Regular screenings of Ugandan and African films with English subtitles for all audiences to get an insight in the variety and talents of the local film industry as well as the filming in different African countries. CinemArt aims to promote non-commercial films of African cinema and documentaries.

03

Readings

In cooperation with different writers and poetry associations, there are regular readings, presentations by authors and poetry performances to give local writers a platform for their works.

05

Azulato Children's Festival

In 2018, the first edition of Azulato Children´s Festival took place to promote art and science learning among children with a day full of activities and performances for kids with local artists ranging from Hip Hop and capoeira to story-telling, painting, drumming and live science experiments. In 2020, the 3rd edition of Azulato Children´s Festival will take place in cooperation with a school and expanded by the element of language learning. Artists and teachers will be given the chance to inspire children of all ages and backgrounds to love arts, science and language.

04

Art Forum

The Art Forum hosts panel discussions regarding topics of interest for artists and cultural professionals in Uganda and aims at creating a platform for exchange and dialogue.

05

Exhibitions

Since the foundation of Ugandan German Cultural Society, the Society gave visual artists a platform and organized different types of exhibitions.

Since joining the Goethe-Institut network, it also has access to the regular traveling exhibitions in cooperation with artists and curators from Germany and other countries from all over the world.

The last two big traveling exhibitions, hosted and expanded by Goethe-Zentrum/ UGCS, were ***African Modernism*** in 2018, including a workshop of photographers and architects working together on African Modernist buildings in Kampala, and ***FAVT: Future Africa Visions in Time*** in 2019 in collaboration with University of Bayreuth dealing with the topic of visions for the future of Africa bringing together scientists and artists who worked together on a topic of their choice materializing it into different art forms.

Written by Barbara Sommer and Sina Weber

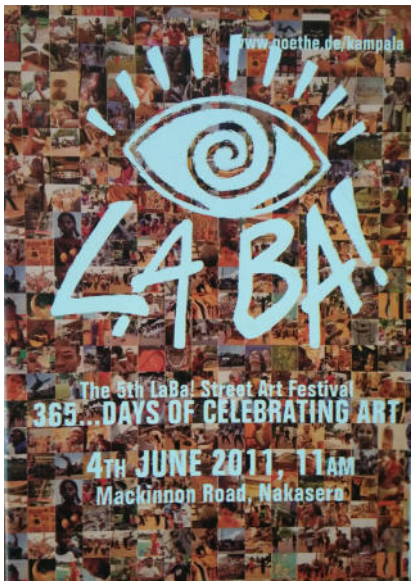
Glance of Cultural Activities at GZK/ UGCS

MabARTi 2016

MabARTi 2014

La Ba! 2012 artists

La Ba! 2011 artists



Top:
La Ba!
2010 cover

Left:
La Ba!
2011 cover

Artists' Memories

Numerous artists gave us their impressions and memories through interviews, written notes or comments. Below you find a compilation of artist´s personal insights of the time they have experienced at and with UGCS.

Taga Nuwagaba – MY MEMORIES

Back in the early 1980s, there was nothing like UGCS and the Nommo Gallery was one of the few places one could go to mount Art Exhibitions. As time went on, word started circulating around town around 1990 that there was a new home for individuals who wanted to express themselves. For some of us who had completed university education and were busy looking for spaces to exhibit, this was music to our ears.

My first time to visit the UGSCS was when legendary Fabian Mpagi Kamulu (rip) and his contemporary Geoffrey Mukasa (rip) were exhibiting their work. Visitors who came to this exhibition did not only congratulate the exhibiting artists but the UGCS for coming up with such a great idea of promoting the arts and teaching of key languages like German, Kiswahili and Luganda. Years that followed, many other artists displayed their art and the place became vibrant with colour and new ideas. I was among the artists who exhibited in this space and Sayid Saihou who was the resident representative of the UNHCR and an avid art collector always came and purchased our work together with several other collectors.

The best exhibition I ever attended there was by legendary Joseph Ntensibe. The walls came to life with iridescent colours and I wondered whether he used the same colours I had on my palate. I looked at the giant paintings and realized how lucky Uganda is to have such a talent because his work is sublime. To my shock, he sold nothing and I was shuttered. A week after the closure of his exhibition, I went to visit him at his home in Makindye. I got another shock of my life; I found him painting. He had embarked on other giant paintings with intricate geometrical shapes that only he could decipher. In my mind, I thought I would find him nursing some frustration but he was busy pursuing his promise to the world. From that time on, I realized the kind of indomitable spirit he had and learnt from him how small and big waves of life should never avert us from the promise of docking. Today, Joseph Ntensibe has sold his works the world over and his recent painting at PIASA Contemporary African Art Auction went for 156,000 euros and the best is yet to come.

The UGCS brought new and young artists in their Nakasero space and some of these were Mavericks. The most vibrant of them was none other than Samson Senkaaba aka Xenson whose new idea to land a new ism of exhibitons almost cost him a career. He arrived late at his own exhibition with all the paintings on his truck to find the Guest of Honour H.E Ambas-

sador Klaus Holderbaum and other dignitaries at the venue waiting. One of the business luminaries I remember seeing that evening was Mr. Gordon Wavamunno, of Spear Motors and one of the founders of UGCS. Xenson arrived in style reciting an ode similar to the ones Banyankore people recite on marriage ceremonies. He picked one of his paintings at the end of his ode and moved through the crowd imitating a typical Kampala street hawker, "bibiri bibiri" which means two hundred each.

A Ugandan artist who pulled out a two hundred coin never received a painting because I think Xenson meant either two hundred dollars or pounds as it were. The whole event ended up with a summon from the VIPs of the day and whatever they said, from a distance I saw him courteously nodding. The UGCS did not only arrange art exhibitions but also Art Festivals. One of the colourful ones was the 2007 LABA Art Festival which attracted many artists to send a message to government about the deplorable condition of Bukoto Street where the Society had relocated. The street closed the whole day as artists placed polythene in the potholes and used them as molds to cast organic sculptures using concrete whose surface, they painted with acrylics and an assortment of emulsion paints. Sometime later, that road was tarmacked. This effort involved artists like Xenson, Daudi Kalungi, Mzili, Stella Atal, Peter Otim, Enock Mukiibi, Kassi, Edson Mugalu. Margaret Nagawa, Harrison Watsala, Ronex, Sane and many whom I cannot recall. There was Poetry, fashion and design by Atal, music bands and Maurice Kirya who needs little or no introduction at all in Uganda attended and performed.

In the recent past, other special events have been hosted and supported like the Film Festivals, Photo Exhibitions, Architectural Exhibitions, Talks and live performances. I am delighted and honoured to be part of this GZK/UGCS, an organization focused on promoting the arts and culture as it promotes bilateral cooperation between the people of Uganda and Federal Republic of Germany.

Written by Taga Nuwagaba

Acaye Elizabeth Pamela

During the interview with Pamela, La Ba! Festival was mentioned throughout and associated with a time where artistic ideas could wildly flourish to be implemented during this annual street arts festival. To her, quite some visual artists got a collaboration due to La Ba! Being lucky to get the full taste of what professional arts cooperation on an international level means. As answer to the question where does your artwork go beyond the streets, the festival therefore worked as mediating platform, too. According to Pamela, La Ba! developed so beautifully that it reached a standard of high quality where artists were selected. "With La Ba you always had the chance of meeting all community leaders, because they got involved in terms of parades, in terms of sending flyers, you got an artist core who came in for something other than usual and they are all contributing" (Pamela). In 2009, she applied for an internship at GZK/ UGCS and was intensely involved in the preparation and implementation of La Ba! Festival under the theme Moving Roots setting up drumming parades, a bazar, a German puppet show, and more. A moment arose she will never forget when the German Ambassador, at this time Klaus Holderbaum, commented on the La Ba! that this fusion of Moving Roots was the most relevant fusion of LaBa Arts he had ever seen – Pamela felt really validated as she engaged herself for these artists, and though she was not yet fully articulated in her vision it then came all together through the words of Holderbaum.

Written by Sina Weber

Kagayi Ngobi

A Relationship of meaningful encounters

"My collaborations/ work with Goethe-Zentrum started in 2014 as a judge on the ***Spoken Word Project***: Uganda chapter. This was the first poetry competition I participated in as a judge (outside the school poetry programs I was running then). Later as a writer/ director/ performer, I staged a theatre-poetry show dubbed THE AUDIENCE MUST SAY AMEN on 6th June 2017. This poetry production was based on my poetry book, previously launched in 2016 by the same title. We travelled a week later to Cologne, to perform at the Afri-Cologne Theatre Festival. Also, thanks to Goethe-Zentrum, through Anja Goebel.

I later staged another show at their space entitled WHEN WAS HE BORN on 9th October 2017 with my co-creators; Otako Williams, Mudasi Hatim and Tareka Desire. On the night of this show, I met the German theatre director Simon Eifler.

This 2019, I co-directed the play ROMEO AND JULIET IN KAMPALA with Simon Eifler which was staged both in Cologne and Kampala. The Ugandan cast included; Ejuku Mark, Abrams Tekya, Druchiru Kifuko, Byamukama Powers and I. The creation process partly happened in Cologne. This was a collaborative project which involved Goethe-Zentrum (Uganda), House of Talent (Uganda) and FRED (Germany). Two theatre styles were combined to 'Ugandanize' Shakespeare's classic romantic tragedy."

Faisal Kiwewa

"Bayimba's engagement with Uganda German Cultural Society started with Sebastian Woitsch. Together, we engaged in small projects that included exhibitions, financial support exchanges and workshops. With Caro Christgau the collaborations widened in scope to include: financial exchanges, the opening up to the Goethe mobility funds, the exchange of artists and programme of Goethe supported Artists like Akua Naru (Music), Stephanie (Sound Art) and others. BAYIMBA continues to pursue mutual working relations and partnership with UGCS/ Goethe-Zentrum."

Beatrice Lamwaka

"You know, my travel to Frankfurt Germany for that writing residency was on recommendation from Anja Goebel for that Visa." – Beatrice Lamwaka says of her recent writing residency. As mobility to Scandinavian, European and American countries remains a sticky issue for most African Creatives with the challenges of visas to these countries, Beatrice Lamwaka was thankful that she got this chance to travel abroad through GZK/ UGCS.

Giovanni Kiyingi

"I can confidently say thank you for growing with me as a Ugandan Artist since 2013 to date. It's been a journey of building and sharing with one another from then to date both in Uganda and Germany. I have done cultural exchanges with your help: creating with other musician of all genres through Goethe-Zentrum Kampala Office. We have had positives and weakness as any organization but that's part of growth. So don't stop."

Hilda Twongeirwe

"My collaboration with Goethe-Zentrum as head of FEMRITE has been many beautiful things. From workshops, to travel recommendations: to feminist activism through writing and panel discussions.

I would also like to seriously congratulate them for the thirty years. Many organisations are no more. They have shut down."

Henry Mujunga Aka Mzili

"Uganda German Cultural Society has always supported me with my dreams, ideas and concepts. They turned my individual artistic vision into a whole festival – La ba!. I also met Simon Njami and the Dakar Bienalle in 2005, courtesy of a UGCS sponsored trip. He later curated the 2018 Kampala art Biennale. I congratulate them and applaud them for all the great work done with us."

Ronex Ahimbisibwe

"My first trip outside of Uganda was to Swindoff on a residency through recommendations of UGCS. Through this Visa, I was able to visit other countries and places. Places like Paris which I had always wanted to visit. My first collections were also bought by Germans. My multi –media perspective to arts making is also as a result of that first trip, seeing other artists make arts differently. I congratulate them. They are still close to my heart. I even still have their logo. I could have covered it with spray paint over the years. "

Drichiru Key Kifuko

Dance| Performer |Choreographer | Educator |Organizer and Graphic Designer

"When I got invitations to travel to Europe to perform and teach at events/ concerts/ festivals.

UGCS wrote me very good visa recommendation letters to submit at the Embassy. I am grateful for all the support UGCS has offered me all the years. I see UGCS supporting different artists, and cultural activities. They support events and offer sponsorship, or free space to people to host activities.

They ardently promote cultural exchanges. I wish you all the best in all your upcoming endeavors. Keep supporting and connecting with the Ugandan cultural scene."

Linda Nabasa

Acaye Elizabeth Pamela remembers the outstanding performance of AFROMANSPICE by Linda Nabasa during the La Ba! Arts Festival in 2016. One Man, one wife was a street performance that AFROMANSPICE performed on the 10th Anniversary of the La ba!. "It was our first time as a women's theater company to participant in the festival and definitely our first close connection with the Goethe-Zentrum and how they worked."

The nonverbal performance was about the polygamous norm in African homes, and how women ought to stand together instead of fighting one another. We were honored, that through the La ba! artist's fund, we were supported with some funds to make the performance a reality."

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AFROMANSPICE is a women theatre company birthed in Uganda by three female artists. "Our vision is to grow into a multi international company that supports women in arts all over Africa."

Suzan Kerunen

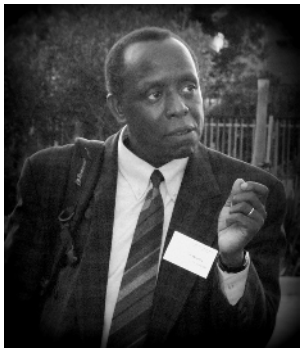
Pearl Rhythm Foundation

Pearl Rhythm Festival was initiated in December 2012 and started off with the support of development partners like Alliance Française, Uganda German Cultural Society, and a collection of early supporters in Uganda's private sector. It was first hosted by AFK/ UGCS on Mackinnon road for two years (2012 and 2013), and then progressed to be hosted at the Uganda National Cultural Centre (National Theatre), where it has been based ever since.

Pearl Rhythm directors Suzan Kerunen, Jude Mugerwa directors toasting with partners: Caro Christgau of UGCS and Robert Musiitwa PRO of UNCC, Mr. Samy Kasule headline artist in 2015.

Memories from the Language Department

Dr. William Wagaba
As one of the first teachers of Ugandan German Cultural Society, Dr. William Wagaba from Makerere University shares his memories in form of a poem in his beloved language – German.



Der Rückblick auf 30 Jahre

Etwa vor dreißig Jahren
Wurde die UGCS ins Leben gerufen
Einige von uns waren neugierig dabei
Es kamen schicke Diplomaten und Politiker
Zahlreiche Geschäftsleute kamen vorbei!

In Hülle und Fülle gab es an diesem Tag
Ugandisches Bier in Flaschen und deutsches Bier in Dosen
Auf Partys gab es damals kein in Flaschen abgefülltes Wasser;
Es wurden Reden gehalten und Versprechungen gemacht
Es wurde gefeiert und gelacht, es war ein schöner Moment;
Eine lange Reise für einige von uns
Mit und für Deutsch hatte damit begonnen!

Die UGCS wurde für uns zur Heimatadresse
Für alles, was mit Deutsch und Deutschland zusammenhing;
Der Deutschunterricht wurde zum Treffpunkt
Für unterschiedliche Kategorien von Menschen;
Es gab welche, die Deutsch wie eine Ware schnell kaufen wollten
Sie wollten viel Geld bezahlen, hatten aber zum Lernen gar keine Zeit;
Es gab aber auch andere, die sich ganz in die Sprache verliebten
Und verhielten sich so, wie man das tut, wenn man sich verliebt;
Sie waren neugierig, und wollten immer mehr von
Deutsch haben!

Meine Reise mit und für die deutsche Sprache
Begann wie eine Begegnung mit einem unbekannten Mitreisenden
Der neben einem bei einer Nachtfahrt im Bus oder Flugzeug sitzt
Und dann doch während der langen Unterhaltung
Auf der Reise mit dem Unbekannten stellt man fest
Dass man doch dasselbe Reiseziel, und noch viel Gemeinsames hat!

Aus meiner damaligen Neugier auf die deutsche Sprache
Aus dem Ärger mit Dativ, Akkusativ und zusammengesetzten Substantiven;
Aus den vielfältigen Beschäftigungen über dreißig Jahre hinaus
Mit der deutschen Geschichte, Kultur, Sprache und Politik;

Aus langen Gesprächen mit deutschen Freunden und Kollegen
Aus Konferenzen und Seminaren an verschieden Orten Deutschlands;
Aus meinem Beruf, als jemand, der Deutsch verkauft
Der mit und für Deutsch dauernd unterwegs ist;
Ist im Laufe der Zeit eine Leidenschaft geworden
Die mich zum Deutschunterrichten
Immer noch heute stark motiviert!

Written by Dr. William Wagaba,
Makerere University – November 2019

Franziska Lindhout

Franziska Lindhout was the former Head of Language Department of GZK/ UGCS from 2009 till 2012. Before, she worked as DAAD Language Assistant and as a researcher in Uganda. During that time she already followed the developments at UGCS with big interest and was enthusiastic when Roberta Wagner offered her the position as Head of Language Department. Franziska shared the following memories with us:

"Those three years were among the best years of my life so far! Coming from abroad and working with the teacher team and students at UGCS was a great learning experience for me. Understanding the history of teaching German in Uganda, learning about the challenges of being a Ugandan German teacher in Kampala, enjoying the great sense of humor in our day-to-day work and meetings, and being supported by the fantastic accountant and organizer Doreen Kasiita – all that made working at the UGCS a wonderful experience.

German classes used to be organized on a demand basis. Once enough students had registered for a new course, it would kick off. We replaced that form of registration by a standardized course program with fixed dates which we could market more easily across Kampala. That transparency translated into a higher student enrollment of up to 500 students p.a., which was a good number at that time. A class would consist of 8 up to a maximum of 16 students. The communicative teaching methodology was already in place and all teachers had followed regular trainings through Goethe Institute before. However, we installed a regular exchange of knowledge and experience within the team to make teaching development sustainable

[...]
In order to make learning German a more vivid experience we aimed at a closer cooperation with the cultural department at UGCS. First, we completely reorganized and stocked the library. We then started organizing bilingual readings and theater productions for a wider interested audience as well as literature workshops. Against this background more elaborate events were organized. A bilingual reading with the sound maker Max Bauer ("Geräuschemacher") come to my mind as well as the drama production "Language Cosmonauts/Sprachkosmonauten" with German learners from secondary schools in Kampala under the guidance of musical and drama educators from
Germany."

(According to the question 'A moment you'll never forget during the time you worked with UGCS – which was it?')

"It is hard to pick out one specific moment as I am flowing over with so many dear memories of those years: Memories of exchange with big groups of enthusiastic pupils at secondary schools, enjoying magical evenings in the UGCS garden during the bilingual readings, receiving the first box of printed course brochures, hanging out with my great colleagues in front of our small UGCS café or in the garden during office breaks and so forth. There was this saying that whatever you would stick into Ugandan soil would root and flower overwhelmingly and allow for a good harvest. In that sense, I perceived the cultural soil was extremely fertile for creativity and "thinking out of the box" in Kampala at that time. New business ideas were mushrooming, shops and cafés opening, arts and artists coming out into public spaces, learning of foreign languages becoming more popular. This wind of change was also blowing through UGCS and encouraged us to bring in some new ways of management and interaction.

I extremely appreciated the exchange with the core teacher team during our regular sessions called "Fachaustausch": Badru, Charles, Japhet, William, Rashid, Evelyn, Isaac, Joseph, Sekayala - one colleague volunteered to prepare an input on e.g. methodology to be discussed in the whole group afterwards. I remember a lot of meaningful discussions as well as laughing and good humor during those sessions! Whenever possible, we also took time to go out as a team and enjoyed the great Ugandan food or tested Italian pizzas."

Vision 2029
What's next?

After highlighting the historical breaks of UGCS, showing the impact of this society towards the public and the artists communities, we questioned where is the journey of GZK/ UGCS taking us from here and more important how would the people, the members, the artists like to see the society in the future? What do they miss, what is their wish for UGCS?

From the conversation with Isa (FAAM Club), he would love to see more practiced interculturality within the programme, the objective of GZK/ UGCS to promote Ugandan and German culture including food, dance, poems, music, and more needs to be more visible. To him when working with GZK as FAAM Club he misses the aspect of German culture, *"we need to share this cultural exchange between Uganda and Germany more intensely, even on the festivals (such as Azulato) let us see what you got".*

An ongoing challenge which was mentioned from the artists' side within the interviews is the cultural gap between German and Ugandan in terms of artists' understanding, cooperation and implementation of projects. According to Pamela, cultural shocks and cultural clashes repeating themselves due to continuous fluctuation of the GZK team do not stay away and should be reflected and taken into consideration. What is taking hold here, is more than cultural clashes but an ongoing challenge that has been acknowledged from both sides, former directors and artists – the rules of German bureaucracy versus the Ugandan arts setting. Still, to soften the
cultural transition here, the wishes we got out of the artists' interviews were to have a bigger Ugandan presence in the cultural team as well as having more than one
coordinator for each sector such as music and visual arts, so that every discipline is represented and all cultural stakeholders, both art and nation spanning, move hand in hand.

The promotion and continuing demonstration of links between Germany and Uganda and their interdependency is also represented in the essay of Nakawooya Gloria. At the end of September 2019, Goethe-Zentrum Kampala/ UGCS sent out a call to submit an artistic product of the vision for Goethe-Zentrum Kampala/ UGCS for 2029, ten years from now on. Nakawooya Gloria Sseritto won the third prize of the projects submitted with her written vision of GZK/ UGCS in 2029. She wishes for a deeper mutual exchange in terms of culture, economy, politics and society. Out of her essay the importance of future UGCS being a *"place where cross-cultural interaction and learning takes place"*, is inevitable and should be the core of the society. Future UGCS should serve as *"information hub that builds on and highlights the ever closer relationship between Germany and Uganda"*. It further should mark stronger ambitions to uphold students exchange programmes and promote talented and skilled youth in general.

Nakawooya Gloria's essay holds strong visions and fruitful perspective on a future Goethe-Zentrum Kampala/ UGCS in 2029 – the following are original abstracts of her essay:

"As the Goethe-Zentrum Kampala celebrates thirty years and looks forward to the next decade, I visualize a centre that meets the following needs
A centre that serves as a reception point to all guests from Germany. From there, their different needs, perceptions and curiosities about Uganda can be addressed. At the centre, they find
recommendations about food to eat and places to see; a place where cross-cultural interaction and learning takes place.

The same reception will act as a way from
Uganda into Germany. I personally love Germany and I would like to know as much as I can about its culture, famous foods, strong work ethic, world famous scenery and way of life. One foot into Goethe Zentrum and I can find answers to my burning questions.

This could be through the establishment of a museum and history section. Like all other museums, it can have literature and images (imitations) of critical history, which will quell the considerable curiosity about much of Germany's past and recent history:
Adolf Hitler's story and Nazism, National Socialism as a political ideology; details of Germany's independence and reunification; modern politics in Germany and its role in the European Union; the German people's incredible sports prowess (replica key trophies or a picture of their trophy cabinet and/or sports statistics would help visitors to realize the significance of the global achievements); their exceptional talent in arts and music; and any other items of interest worthy of a place in the museum, such as traditional dress, food items etc.
It could also: (1) host exhibitions to showcase art, music, paintings and sculptures from Uganda and Germany; and (2) display items demonstrating the links between Germany and Uganda, thereby demonstrating the close relationship between our two countries and any interdependencies. The educational programs have been scaled up. Goethe Zentrum Kampala has supported the formation of language clubs not just in the top Ugandan schools but also down to Universal Secondary education (USE) schools — USE is a government program that aims at increasing literacy through low cost education. It has increased the number of language contests, with significant prizes that help to generate the desired interest.

Goethe Zentrum Kampala has spread its wings outside via the faculty of language at Makerere University, and to other institutions of higher learning. Students of tourism are benefiting enormously from the acquisition of the language skill as it is pivotal to the delivery of exceptional guest experiences where applicable. The language has generated repeat business for the country through trade links and has further cemented the partnership between Uganda and Germany.
Thanks to Goethe Zentrum language courses are more affordable and there is an increase in language reach. It has been proven that sales maximization makes more economic and social sense.
Goethe Zentrum has made a bigger investment in its publicity and media management. Save for the fliers at the reception area, we have the privilege to hear from them as we would wish. It has an active mailing list, through which any news updates can be disseminated as and when appropriate.
Exchange programs are offered by Goethe Zentrum for the faculties in which they take interest. Working with the Home Office, and relevant ministries, they organize exchange programs for scientific, artistic and educational advancement where we have German specialists coming through to train and learn from Ugandans, and vice versa.

The library is already in existence but has an improved scope of coverage. Translation of popular and acclaimed works has been done and the books are available for all. Great African and Ugandan literature has a chance to feature on the shelf, which offers a rare and important opportunity for African and Ugandan authors to showcase their works, and through those their cultures. As a platform for intercultural exchange Goethe Zentrum is touching base with cultural institutions in Uganda. Courtesy visits to cultural leaders and sites take place periodically as an avenue for information sharing, and in turn those cultural leaders also visit the centre to improve their knowledge of Germany and the importance of the links between the two countries. Goethe Zentrum maintains a close interest in developments on all fronts with international Uganda, and where there is need for dialogue and mediation, they offer valuable input about similar experiences encountered and how they navigated them. Some of these dilemmas include religious impasses."

What should Goethe Zentrum Kampala/ Ugandan German Cultural Society stand for in 2029?

Goethe Zentrum Kampala and the Ugandan German Cultural Society should stand for:

The promotion and continuing development of links between Germany and Uganda — cultural, economic, political and social;

A centre that offers all-inclusive language services to students in both public and private schools and subsidized language courses to other interested individuals and/or groups;

An information hub that builds on and highlights the ever closer relationship between Germany and Uganda and which addresses cultural and economic curiosity via demonstrating diversity and convergence. Goethe Zentrum Kampala should be readily known as a one-stop centre for all information relating to Germany and important information about Uganda.

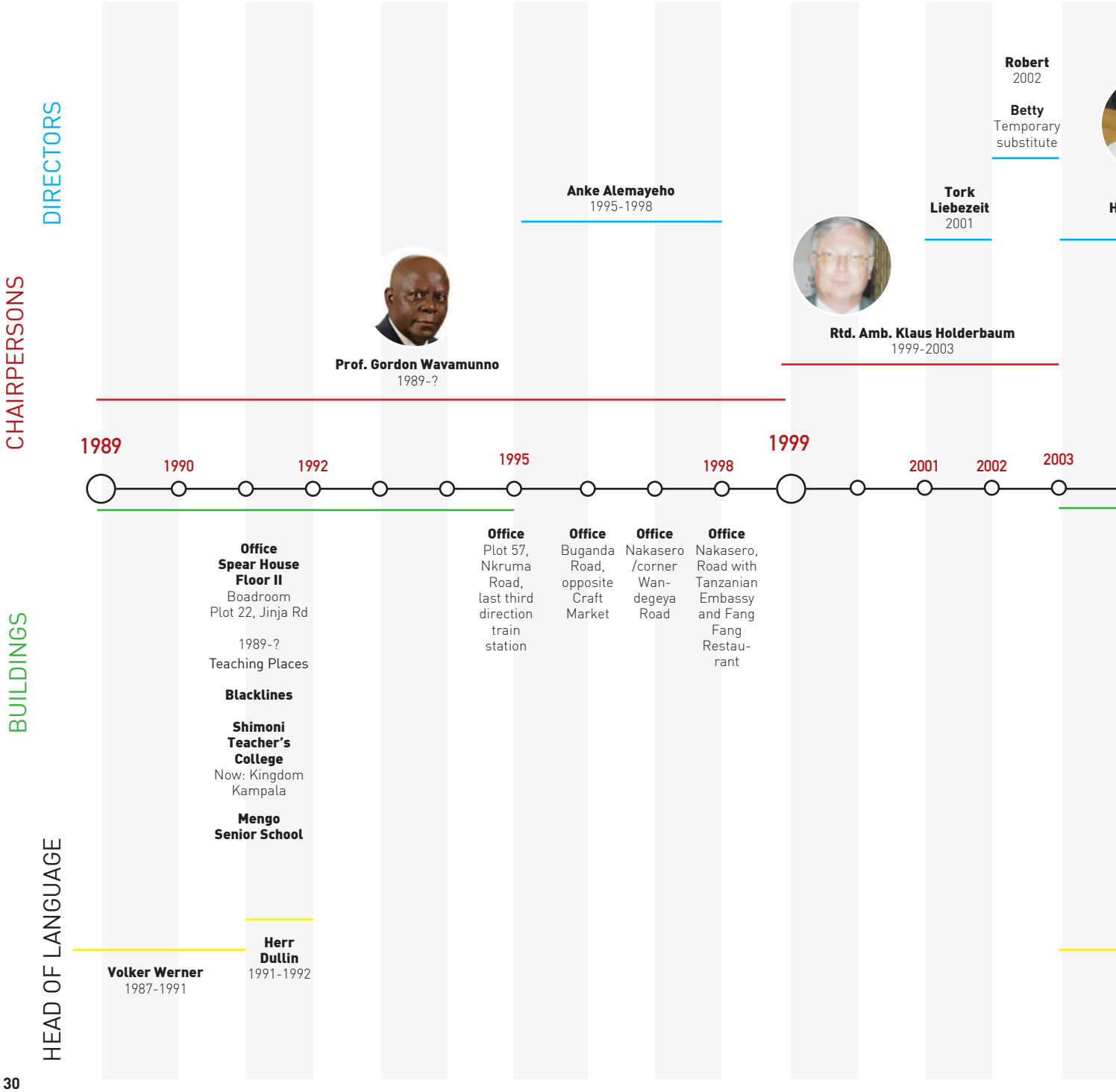
A centre for diplomacy and inter-party dialogue, promoting ideas and social policy.

A cultural centre with a high public profile — this might best be achieved via the promotion and hosting of culturally popular and diverse talents such as: artists, musicians, designers and painters from both Germany and Uganda. This will not only improve public knowledge about the centre and what it offers but will also help to grow and showcase that talent."

Written by Sina Weber

Ugandan German Cultural Society
Past - Present - Future

Timeline



Milestones

1989	Foundation
2006	Alliance Francaise moved in with UGCS
2008	Goethe-Zentrum status achieved
2009	License as official Goethe-Institut examination centre
2010	Reopening of library

Number of Students	
2009	290
2010	430
2011	716
2013	891
2015	854
2016	785
2017	871
2018	999
2019	1325

Anne Heckler-Alia
2003-2006

Roberta Wagner
2006-2010

Sebastian Woitsch
2010-2012

Carolin Christgau
2012-2016

Anja Göbel
2016-2018

Barbara Sommer
2018-today

Dr Francis Xavier Bisasso
?-2010

Dennis Ruharo
2010-2018

Taga Nuwagaba
2018-today

2006 2008 2009 2010 2012 2013 2014 2016 2018 2019

Today

Office
Ntinda House, plot 13B, Ntinda Crescent

Office
Plot 62, Bukoto Street (opposite Microfi-nance)

Alliance moved in with UGCS

Office
Plot 6, Mackinnon Road

Goethe-Zentrum status achieved

Teaching Place

Flat A IV, plot 1998, block 15, Nsambya

Office
Plot 52, Bukoto street

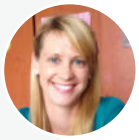
Japhet Kigozi
?-2008

Charles Male
2009

Rashid Kasiita
Temporary Substitute

Franziska Lindhout
2009-2012

Kouassi Djondo
2012-2017



Joanna Jacquet
2017-2019

Sonja Puhr
2019-today

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www.goethezentrumkampala.org

Spear House 1989

Plot 57, Nkruma road 1995

Ntinda House 2003-2006

Plot 6, Mackinnon Rd 2008-2014

Plot 62, Bukoto Street 2006-2008

Plot 52, Bukoto Street 2014-today