

**VICE CHANCELLOR'S SPEECH AT THE LAUNCH OF THE OF THE MAKERERE  
UNIVERSITY KLAUS WACHSMANN MUSIC ARCHIVE, 25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2009**

**The Public Affairs Officer, Embassy of the United States**

**The Cultural Specialists, Embassy of the United States**

**The representative of the Japanese Embassy**

**The Dean, Faculty of Arts**

**The Head of Department MDD**

**Partners from the University of Bergen**

**Stakeholders from the music industry**

**Members of Staff**

**Students**

**Ladies and gentlemen**

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It is with great pleasure that I welcome you today to this ceremony to launch the Makerere University Klaus Wachsmann Music Archive to be housed here at the department of Music Dance and Drama. I am also exceedingly honoured to be a witness on this historic occasion at which we are taking the initiative to document and preserve an important part of our African and national cultural heritage. Such events only seldom happen in a single lifetime and those of us who are here should consider ourselves privileged to be part of this occasion.

We have in the recent past witnessed the rapid growth and transformation of the music industry in Uganda, a fact that has popularized our own local music and served to strengthen and protect our indigenous languages since most of our artistes have opted to use local languages in their music. However, while this is a good development, I should point out that the music industry, as indeed the music itself, has adopted a heavy dose of western hip hop and other formats chiefly for commercial reasons. I am not here

to criticize our music industry, but the whole idea is that the aspect of ethnic or what is at times referred to as world music is largely fading away.

It is also extremely intriguing that we have to talk about Klaus Wachsmann's music collection. It is also interesting that copies of this music on twenty-eight ethnic groups in Uganda in the 1940s and 1950s are being repatriated from the British Museum for Sound Archive. Where have we been that we could not document our own heritage? I would like to credit Dr. Janet Fargion, Prof. Peter Cooke, and Mr. Philipp Wacshmann, through whom we have been able to achieve this significant success.

It is for this reason that today's event, the launch of the Klaus Wachsmann Music archive is such a special event in the history of Makerere University as indeed it is in the History of Uganda. I am informed that it is as a result of the research on this subject that the pathetic situation of archiving music in Uganda was revealed. It was revealed that generally, the archiving of music in Uganda is left to the private sphere, to the personal collections of individuals and a few private organizations. I am therefore tremendously proud of the Department of Music, Dance and Drama, and Dr. Sylvia Nannyonga Tamusuza who developed and nurtured this idea to fruition.

I am happy to note that the overall objectives of this collaborative project between Makerere University and the University of Bergen, Norway, are to contribute to a sustainable cultural heritage in Uganda through strengthening the capacities of the Music Section in the Music, Dance and Drama Department of Makerere University, train staff towards MA and PHD degrees in music, enhance a dialogical research process between Makerere University and University of Bergen students, staff and other researchers through joint research projects, establish a collection of audio/visual recordings and writings on the diverse musical cultures of Uganda and enhance accessibility of electronic and printed publication on Ugandan music. These are the all too important strategic roles that Makerere University has to take on towards

strengthening our cultural identity and safeguarding our heritage through the documentation and preservation of music.

Indeed these developments are in harmony with our strategic objectives spelt out in our ten year Strategic Plan through which we should see Makerere University playing a central, strategic role in national development, by providing practical research and solutions to our social, economic and political challenges, including the preservation of culture and our heritage.

It is also critical for us as Makerere University that improved staff capacity is one of the outcomes of this collaboration. I am therefore pleased to note that the projects' major components include scholarship for 3 PhD students. On this note I would like to congratulate the two students Mr. Nicholas Sempijja, and Mr. David Basoga who have successfully completed their course requirements for a PhD in Music and an MA in Music respectively. I would like to encourage them to complete their research projects on which they have embarked. I am hopeful that more will follow them soon.

I am also pleased, that the project is providing funding for nine researchers on Ugandan music and African music in Norway as well as the establishment of a music archive. Research is the lifeline of any University and here at Makerere we take investment in research very seriously. The University has therefore taken a conscious decision to transform into a research led University over the next ten years. It is therefore important that such investments in research such as that provided for in this project are vital in getting us to that objective of becoming a research led institution.

At this point let me take this opportunity to thank those institutions and individuals who have been instrumental to the success of this endeavour. These include the Norwegian agencies NORAD and NUFU, the American Embassy, the Japanese Embassy and the University of Bergen with whom we enjoy a tremendous collaboration. Through your

support we have continued to register significant successes and your presence here and continued support is a sign of your confidence in Makerere University as a partner and we are very grateful.

I now take this honour to launch the Makerere University Klaus Wachsmann Music Archive and declare it open.

Thank you

Professor Venansius Baryamureeba

**VICE CHANCELLOR**