

Mak initiates the “Zadok Adolu- Otojoka Music Excellence Award”.

Makerere University College of Humanities and Social Sciences(CHUSS) through the Department of Performing Arts has initiated the establishment of “Zadok Adolu- Otojoka Music Excellence Award”. This award will be given to the best performing students of music education and performance.

The initiative was disclosed by Dr. Milton wabyona while presenting a keynote and biography recital in honor of Prof. (Emeritus) Zadok Adolu- Otojoka as part of the activities to celebrate the 100 years of Makerere University’s service to humanity.

Over 600 thousand shillings was collected in thanksgiving as seed to kick start the, “Zadok Adolu-Otojoka Music Excellence Award”.

The function held on 31st March 2022 at St. Francis Chapel was graced by the Vice Chancellor represented by the Principal CHUSS Associate Prof. Josephine Ahikire, the Chaplain St Francis Chapel Rev. Onesmus Asimwe, Makerere university staff and students, distinguished musicians and teachers, the alumni and the Zadok Adolu- Otojoka’s family from Serere district.

Adolu-Otojoka was honored for his invaluable and monumental contribution to academia through musical arts presentations exploring through the 52-years of his professional music teaching with a view of learning and understanding the trends, as well as predicting the future of the music education discipline in Uganda.

Zadok Adolu-Otojoka is one of the highly celebrated icons of music education and professional music performance in Uganda and East Africa. Educated in Uganda and in the United States, Adolu-Otojoka has taught music at all levels of the formal education pyramid in East Africa, with the most distinguished acclaim.

At the peak of his teaching career in Uganda, he served as Head of Department of Music, Dance and Drama (now Performing Arts and Film) at Makerere University in the mid- to late-1990s. At Makerere, he was particularly famous for his charismatic conducting of the university anthem and the mesmerizing leadership of the academic procession during graduation ceremonies.

Adolu-Otojoka is also revered for his extra-ordinary talent in both Western and African musical art forms and passion for the music profession, in which he excelled and mentored generations.

The biography recital was based on the article: “Zadok Adolu-Otojoka and Music Education in Uganda: An Oral History” by Milton Wabyona, published on January 27, 2022, in the *American Journal of Historical Research in Music Education*. The purpose of this recital was to highlight some of the senior educator’s experiences, approaches and recommendations presented in his oral history.

The recital repertoire focused on some of Adolu-Otojoka’s favorite works, particularly, those highlighted in his oral history as well as recitations of select sections of his life story. The performance forces included some of Adolu-Otojoka’s former students, acquaintances,

professional musicians and music faculty alongside current music students from Makerere University.

In his keynote address, Dr. Milton Wabyona who was the Author and Conductor said “Adolu-Otojoka’s recital provides valuable inspiration for the young music education discipline in Uganda as well as insights regarding multicultural music education perspectives.

To keep the legacy of Prof. Zadok Adolu-Otojoka Dr. Wabyona proposed the initiative to establish the “Zadok Adolu-Otojoka Music Excellence Award” at Makerere university.

“Through such initiatives, we hope to ensure that legacies of exemplary individuals are kept active, but most importantly the ideals and values they lived for can continue to shape life in our society,” Dr. Wabyona said thanking the Principal CHUSS for the resolute support for the recital and for sanctioning to honor Prof. Zadok Adolu- Otojoka as part of the activities to Mark Makerere@100 years.

Citing the words of the American writer, William Arthur Ward, Dr. Wabyona said, the contents, character and intentions in the recital are all inspired by the life of Zadok Adolu –Otojoka, the music teacher and performer, to help the academia ponder upon the music profession.

“American writer, William Arthur Ward wrote: The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher inspires”. It is my hope that through this recital, we’ll all have a fair ground base to classify the man we are celebrating here today, but also reflect upon our professional careers as teachers”. Dr. Wabyona stated.

Zadok Adolu- Otojoka was described as prolific in all the three disciplines of music dance and drama. As a dancer, Adolu was the artistic director of the national dance troupe, the Heartbeat of Africa of the 1970’s which produced the likes of Stephen Rwangyezi of Ndere troupe. He also featured in several stage dramas alongside some Uganda’s celebrated actress Prof. Rose Mbowa and acted in television series, “Teeth and Tears” directed by Prof. Patrick Mangeni, the current Dean School of Liberal and Performing Arts.

As teacher, Adolu- Otojoka was praised as one who always set his students for success irrespective of their abilities or previous education or other background and only focused on potential, a virtue that inspired remarkable levels of confidence among his students as they felt secure under him.

Although he was extremely talented and one of the most accomplished professional, he was applauded for having remained an incredibly humble human being who only used his advantages to inspire, demonstrate and facilitate learning for his students.

His willingness to support students at every possible opportunity was strongly mentioned by those who studied under him as a highly inspiration approach that worked for him. Adolu was described as one who always taught, demonstrated, mentored and supported students far and beyond the academic obligations. He was also said to be amazingly humorous and shared lot of stories especially of his personal experiences.

Regarding the future of education in Uganda, Adolu-Otojoka recommends a vibrant and deliberate music performance culture at all levels involving both students and teachers in Uganda's education curriculum.

He underscores the importance of methodological focus on music teacher preparation systems as what is needed to meaningfully transform Uganda's music education on reason that, "the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers.

"I am really humbled by the arrangement and performance you managed to organise for just me. All avenues of my 90 years and 2 months have been covered. I offered what you have said. I tried my best. I had a lot of comfort and was not under pressure and God assisted me in whatever I did. I am left with almost nothing to say about myself", Adolu-Otojoka remarked.

Adolu paid tribute to individuals and groups that helped him grow up and serve the way he did including students, maternal uncles who were composers, missionaries and friends who encouraged him, the culture and youth ministry of the time including cows and goats he herded while reading notations in the bush.

Adolu paid special gratitude to his immediate family especially for standing the test of time, remaining home and toiling while away on 5year study in the US.

"I will never forget the class of 1999 of Wabyona and others who are overseas. This was the biggest class I had in teaching in music and they were the best. I thank Wabyona and the whole group who felt it fit to give to me an honor. I will not forget the school, department, music, dance and drama.

I have seen something quite different and creative and of a high class. Whatever has happened, whoever has participated, thank you for giving me this honor while I am living. I am very humbled.

There is nothing you can do if you don't become keen about what you do. Young men and women, if you are aspiring to do something, do it with one heart and labour to make a difference and you will make it", Adolu appreciated and advised.

Adolu also extended his appreciation to Makerere University management and the current Vice chancellor for allowing and facilitating the function to happen

Demand for an honorary doctorate for Zadok Adolu-Otojoka

The former Secretary General UNESCO, Uganda National Commission Augustine Omare Okurut tabled a special request to Makerere university to bestow an Honorary Doctorate upon Prof. Zadok Adolu-Otojoka for his distinguished services as a great man whom God has given chance to serve.

"We are here to celebrate resilience, energy, persistent and energy. To come to where he is from a Grade III primary teacher is no mean achievement. Nothing is impossible. He has shown that it is possible to come from a simple start, progress and succeed in life". Mr Okurut said.

Mr. Okurut recounted how together with Adolu performed during the 21st anniversary celebrations for the national theatre in 1980, the national competition in the promulgation of the 1995 constitution and in the formation of the anthem for Busitema university besides his administrative service and tertiary teaching.

Okurut said, Adolu was on high demand in the field of culture administration and held multiple positions simultaneously, He reported that in 1971 Adolu was appointed as culture officer in the Ministry of Culture and Community Development and grew in ranks to Principal Culture Officer ending his portfolio as Deputy Commissioner for culture in 1989.

“Even in this capacity, Adolu-Otojoka cherished opportunities to participate in musical arts performances and their related education perspectives”.

Within three years of his appointment to the Culture office in Uganda, Adolu-Otojoka was appointed as in charge of Culture affairs for the East African Community in Nairobi from 1974 to 1977. This regional assignment according to Okurut included serving as coordinator and artistic advisor for East Africa FESTAC Festival of Arts and culture that was held in Nigeria in 1977- a position that provided him excellent continental platform to showcase his art performance credentials.

Mak to initiate an online Doctoral Professorship for Zadok Adolu-Otojoka

Speaking on behalf of the Vice Chancellor, the Principal CHUSS Associate Prof. Josephine Ahikire described the day’s event as great saying, the Dean School Liberal and Performing Arts will handle the request to bestow an Honorary Doctorate upon the celebrated music teacher, performer and mentor.

“Today was really a great day for Makerere as we celebrate 100 years of building for the future and transforming lives. We honor Prof. Zadok Adolu-Otojoka.

There was a demand note that I have passed over to the Dean to initiate an online doctoral professorship. We want to see this come to the Freedom square and I wait for paper work”, The Principal asserted.

Prof. Ahikire congratulated Dr. Milton Wabyona for successfully initiating and implementing the idea of honouring Prof. Adolu-Otojoka as part of Mak @100.

“It is a pleasure to see our students perform this high level and wow!. Our teachers, the way you are modelling our students is commendable. As Principal CHUSS, CHUSS is the soul and PAF is the spirit.” She added.

She also hailed the family of Prof. Zadok Adolu-Otojoka especially the women for standing by him throughout his musical career, noting that if the family arena is shaken, the person is shaken.

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