**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Sauti za Busara unveils heavyweight line-up to celebrate its 20th anniversary**

Zanzibar. Organisers of Sauti za Busara, the globally renowned African music festival that takes place in Stone Town, Zanzibar each February, has announced the line-up for what promises to be a memorable twentieth edition in 2023.

Featuring well-known and upcoming bands from all regions of the African Continent, the bill is topped by Tiken Jah Fakoly, from Ivory Coast, who is widely known as Africa’s greatest reggae star. In French, English, Dioula and Bambara, his lyrics speak of injustices suffered by Africans. His calls are for African unity and economic, political and cultural resurgence. With more than a dozen popular albums released since 1996, Tiken Jah Fakoly regularly fills football stadiums when he performs across Africa, Europe and beyond.

BCUC, from Soweto South Africa, play music ‘for the people by the people with the people.’ BCUC were the undisputed heroes of Sauti za Busara in 2019, where their powerful messages and explosive performances were highly acclaimed by all in attendance. “We see ourselves as modern freedom fighters who have to tell the story of Soweto’s past, present and future to the world,” says ‘Jovi’ Nkosi, lead vocalist.

This year’s singeli representative will be Mzee wa Bwax, who also promises a show people will never forget. Other Tanzanian artists to be featured include Patricia Hilary, Damian Soul, Zawose Reunion, Stone Town Rockerz, Uwaridi Female Band, Zan Ubuntu, Supa Kalulu, Zenji Boy na Wenzake, Waungwana Band and Culture Musical Club, Zanzibar’s traditional taarab orchestra that was founded in 1958.

International highlights next February include Asia Madani, a Sudanese vocalist and percussionist whose music reflects pride in her heritage as a strong African woman, with a voice that is magical and fierce. Naxx Bitota from DRC blends Congolese rumba with mutuashi and other music styles with reggae, rumba and afropop. Sana Cissokho is a celebrated kora player from Senegal, who keeps the rich Mandinka cultural heritage alive. The Atse Tewodros Project forges collaborations between traditional Ethiopian and Italian musicians. Their repertoire includes songs from the Ethiopian Resistance, who fought against the Italians. As articulated by their bandleader Gabrielle Ghermandi, “Music gives volume to unexpressed voices. Music is a way of giving the vision of a possible or impossible future.”

Sauti za Busara 2023 also promises outstanding performances from Majestad Negra, a dance troupe from Puerto Rico, Kaloubadya, a maloya group from Reunion, Nasibo, a singer-songwriter- mbira player from Zimbabwe, and Zily, another strong woman whose music is rooted in the cultural traditions of Mayotte.

The theme for this year’s festival is Tofauti Zetu, Utajiri Wetu: Our Wealth is in Our Diversity. As Yusuf Mahmoud the festival director mentions, ‘our spotlight shines brightly on quality and diverse live music from across Africa, especially women musicians, young and emerging talents with unique sounds, powerful messages, excitement and energy on stage. Visitors to our website can already watch videos and learn about all the groups who will be perform next February at this special 20th anniversary edition.’

With uncertainty after years of donor support from the Norwegian Embassy expired in March 2022, then Blue Amber Resort cancelling their sponsor agreement only six months later, Busara Promotions, the NGO behind the festival, almost had to close its doors. As announced only a month ago, Fumba Town, a project by CPS came to the rescue with a sponsorship deal to cover most of the organisation’s office running costs until March 2025. Tobias Dietzold, CCO said on signing the agreement, "We are committed to keeping the Sauti za Busara festival robust and dynamic for the next few years as we enjoy our rich and diverse cultural heritage through live music. Through this partnership, we want to ensure that, at the minimum, the next three Busara festivals and the culture that surrounds them continue to thrive.”

Sauti za Busara is hailed by BBC, CNN, OkayAfrica, Afropop Worldwide and others as ‘one of Africa’s best and most respected music events’. The 20th edition will take place in Stone Town, Zanzibar from 10 – 12 February 2023 with all-festival passes for Tanzanians costing only 20,000/- (three days), or 10,000/- for single day tickets.

*Sauti za Busara 2023 is powered by Fumba Town, a project by CPS; Ignite Culture, Kendwa Rocks, Zanlink, Institut Français, Australian High Commission, Emerson Zanzibar and more to be confirmed.*

More info: www.busaramusic.org

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Note to Editors:

Download Sauti za Busara hi-res photos and more at[**www.busaramusic.org/downloads**](http://www.busaramusic.org/downloads)