**Sauti za Busara’s vision lives on**

**Press release,**

**February 11**

**Unguja.**

The 20th edition of Sauti za Busara festival kicked off on Friday night with energetic performances from an array of artists bringing the Stone Town neighbourhood to near standstill with visitors pouring in from every part of the world.

On an evening that featured outstanding performances from many artists including Culture Musical Club, Naxx Bitota, Asia Madani, Mzee wa Bwax and Stone Town Rockerz, there was every sign the festival had come a long way.

Narrating the humble beginnings at the turn of the millennium, Busara Promotions’ Chairman and Zanzibar’s Minister for Tourism & Heritage Simai Mohammed Said, said the festival was born out of a desire to promote local music.

"It is rather nostalgic to remember how it all started. We were some few young people who were very enthusiastic about the state of our local music but we didn't know how to go about it. The first edition almost aborted," he said.

He added: “Today this festival has survived and grown to become one of the most respected in Africa. It is no longer just about us the founders, it is for everyone.”

He called on businesses to leverage on the Sauti za Busara brand which has transcended boundaries in the 20 years.

Speaking of the 20 years festival director Yusuf Mahmoud said “even though some of our original founders including Emerson Skeens, Ruge Mutahaba and Waziri Ally have passed on, the vision and purpose of our festival still stands. Each year in February, here in Stone Town, we show the world Africa’s music and culture is rich, vibrant, soulful, diverse, creative and forward-looking. We never strayed from our mission: to build skills and employment opportunities, to promote originality and excellence in Tanzanian music and to be in exchange with other regions of the African Continent and diaspora.”

He pointed out that through the years even with the global pandemic and ongoing financial challenges, the festival was only able to survive thanks to partnerships.

He particularly pointed out the core funding, covering office expenses through the year, were paid by the Norwegian Embassy for more than a decade, and these costs are now generously supported by Fumba Town, a project by CPS.

More info: www.busaramusic.org

***The 20th Sauti za Busara festival, 10 - 12 February 2023 is powered by Fumba Town - a project by CPS, Ignite Culture, CRDB Bank, Australian High Commission, Embassy of France, Institut Français, Kendwa Rocks, Mjini FM, ST Bongo Tv, Serikali ya Mapinduzi ya Zanzibar, Adventure247 Marketing Agency, Zanzibar Serena Hotel, Coconut FM, Zanlink, Emerson Zanzibar, 2Tech Security, Embassy of Germany, and more.***

**NOTE TO EDITOR**: For hi-res photos, see

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/sautizabusara2022>