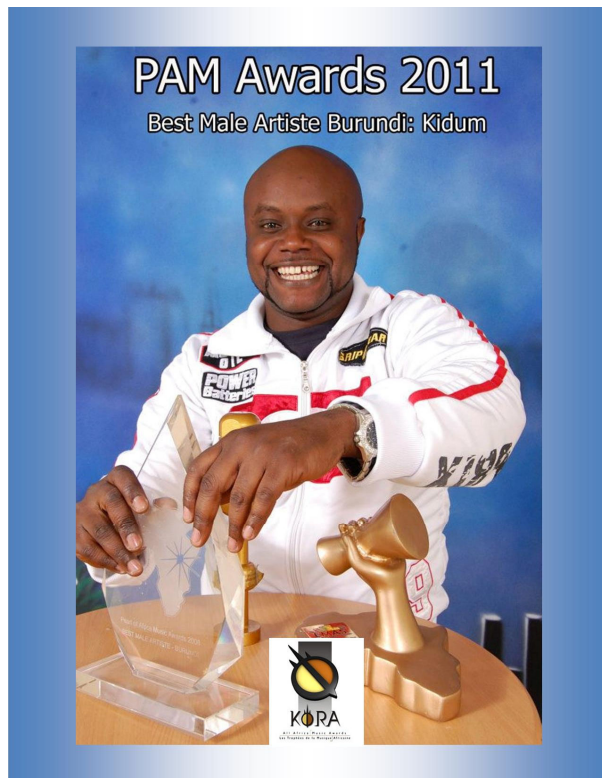


American Media Distribution Wire Service Releases New Story: **Kidum Kibido is Crossing Borders**



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American Media Distribution has releases a new story about Kidum Kibido on the American Media Distribution Wire Service. Here are some excerpts from the interview.



Kidum Kibido is Crossing Borders and Bridging Borders with his Music

Shortly after Kidum Kibido achieved success with his first single “Yaramenje” and performed at the 2001 Burundi Peace Concert, he had a dream of inspiring peace through his songs. Today, Kidum is still driven by that dream and can easily be described as a peace ambassador playing music rather than a musician singing about peace.

An American Media Distribution interviewed this 39-year old Burundi-born musician while he was home in Kenya, where he has lived as a refugee since the age of 21. We talked about his music, touring the world for live shows and his recent 2012 Kona Award for Best Male Artist. Kidum is passionate about his music and his ability to connect with his audience. As he records songs for his next album, his goal is to expand his audience in Africa and globally for one primary purpose – to communicate his message of peace.

Your real name is Jean Pierre Nimbona but you

go by Kidum Kibido. How did that come about?

“You know when I was born, it happened that I was a very big baby. The nickname given to me by my mother was Kidum Kibido because I was fat and big. The actual meaning of the word Kidum is a jug of 20 liters.”

Tell me about how your career started.

“Let’s start when I left my country to come to Kenya because of the war. It was 1995. Instead of going to a refugee camp I decided to stay in Nairobi. I tried to survive when I was in Nairobi at that time because I joined a band and became the drummer and singer. After 4 years, I decided it is not good to be singing songs that belong to other people. Therefore, I decided to go to a small studio, in a container actually, in 1999 to do a song “Yaramenje.” So that song went in Burundi and some parts of Rwanda. It became a very big song because the message which was in there. It was singing to people of Rwanda and Burundi at the same time.

Then I got this recognition from our president who decided to invite me three years later to go there and perform because the country was in a peace process. They were having these talks in Arusha, Tanzania and South Africa. So many people were so interested in bringing peace back in Burundi. In Rwanda things were a little bit different because there the war, it was one part [of the country] had conquered the other part. It was a military victory.

In Burundi, war was still going. The government decided to start this political process to get a political solution to the crisis. So I became the instrument of bringing people together because each group in Burundi saw that I belong to them. They say if he belongs to all of us, then he can bring us together, so let us use him. I became the instrument of the people so this thing of cooperation can start again.

I went to Burundi. I performed in Bujumbura. What follows after it was a cease-fire. The cease-fire was signed 2 years later. And there was this process of having a transition government and power sharing and so on."

Between 2001 and today you have four albums completed, correct?

"Yeah, I've done four so far. I am starting to do a fifth one and then continue.

There are so many songs out from this new one. Six songs are already out on YouTube. The song Kimbia, the meaning is "run." Run powers your dream. Use your talent to make your living.

I am telling people when I was a little boy, my dad told me to go to school. If I go to school and I finish school, I will get a very nice job. But he forgot to tell me about talent because talent is there and it can help someone make his living."

How do you categorize your music?

"They call me "King of Afro-Fusion." They say my voice is soulful and when I sing, they say you sing from the heart, your music is energetic, we love it and it stays in our heart. I just do what is in my heart, man. I don't know where it comes from. I cannot define what I do. The way it comes out, that is what I give to people."

Are there specific artists that have influenced you musically?

"A long time ago, I liked Johnny Clegg. Later there was an artist from Caribbean called Kassav. Everyone at my age used to love Michael Jackson. We used to call him Superman. Also, an English [-speaking] guy from Canada, Bryan Adams and from the French Canadian Roch Voisine. From France, Garou and Francis Cabrel and Phil Collins from England, who sings and plays drums like me."

What 2 songs best define you?

"I would say "Yaramenje" because it was my very first song and "Mapenzi," which was my breakthrough in Kenya."

You won a Kora Award for Best Male Artist. What does that mean to you at this point in your career?

"I have won so many awards around here in this region but Kora was more superior to all the other ones I have because that is like an African Grammy award. I just need people to help me conquer the whole continent properly. And other continents too. It is possible and I believe so. I just need people to push me there and the rest is my job."

What are you doing to promote your music?

"I am going to listen to so many people so they can guide me to reach more fans out there."

Tell me about your upcoming live shows.

"In August, I am going back to Canada. I have been booked for April 14th to perform at the Winspear in Edmonton, a live concert to honor amazing women with some beautiful songs dedicated to women and mothers. I just need to reach the world. I want to have white people in my concerts instead of just singing to this guy in Burundi. I want to sing



to everyone and be able to explain my message in front of the world. What I sing in my language, if it is translated to English, people will understand very well where I'm from. [So] they understand the background, the life we are living in this other side of the world.”

What has been a high point of your career so far?

After I saw the impact of the song [Yaramenje], I had this dream then about writing more songs about the peace you know. I had the dream. [I am at] about 80% of the goal of that dream. I am a refugee in Kenya. We used to be chased by police. It wasn't good. It was very ugly. So I had this dream that one day I am going to unite each country. To do music and be able to cross a border without a visa.

I started a band called Boda-Boda [meaning Border-Border]. Normally Boda-Boda is a bicycle which operates as a taxi. It is like a taxi that takes people from one area to another area, crossing a border. One day I was at the Kenya border and Uganda border. I was crossing the border into Kenya from the Rwanda border using a bus. Then we had so many complications, the immigration officers had us disembark and check our papers. Then I had this inspiration for something to cross a border like that bicycle I remember in front of me. Then I came to Nairobi and I started that band. Now, when I see the dream has come true and politically, these countries are sharing. It's like there is no border anymore.

People enjoy the music but they listen to the words. Sometimes I get surprised when I perform. I see some Nigerians dancing to my music. It's true they have some knowledge of my community. But they relate to me even though they don't understand [my language]. That surprises me and that is my high point. I was able to make people want to understand what I sing and they say my music is good.

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