

KAWEESI MARK professional profile.

I am a Ugandan B-boy/breakdancer, arts & culture organizer/promoter, creative facilitator and Hip-hop practitioner using such skills and abilities to see, communicate, develop and unleash potential inside people.

<http://kaweessimark.com/>

BREAKDANCING/B-BOYING;

In 2008 I was exposed to breakdance and hip-hop by Breakdance Project Uganda (BPU) where I learned many valuable life lessons. I earned a new and meaningful identity; instead of “Mark the orphan, the school dropout or the homeless boy” as I was referred to before, my label changed to Mark the breakdancer or Mark the breakdance teacher.

Such a shift in how I saw myself and how the outside world saw me empowered me so much. While still living in the slums and going some days & nights without food, I voluntarily started sharing my breakdance skills for free with others in communities across the country through activities by BPU, myself and other initiatives. That experience helped me to learn and develop more skills and abilities, identify underlying issues to work upon and inspired me to start acting to solve deeper problems.

Teaching & creative facilitation. I have been actively teaching breakdance & creative movement based sessions, and facilitating transformative trainings to people of various age brackets and backgrounds with the intention to develop hidden strengths and talents, create opportunities, assist people to live whole and meaningful lives. I have been active since 2008; primarily using hip-hop elements for meaningful change among young people by teaching skills & knowledge-based classes, designing & facilitating transformative processes in work & personal change, Team building, Culture & perspective shifts, integration, and organizing community events, social activities and tailor-making effective programs for effective & sustainable growth of young people.

I develop project concepts that not only focus on hard skills but grow and unleash essential life skills such as confidence & self-esteem, teamwork & collaboration, good communication, presentation, good leadership practices and bridging gaps between people. I have collaborated with prisons (juvenile & adults), rehabilitation

centers, refugee centers, schools, NGOs, government organizations, events, festivals, camps (resident & nonresident), education programs, cultural projects and more in The Netherlands, Uganda, Italy, Poland, U.S.A, Denmark.

Judging battles/competitions. I have been judging breaking battles since 2010 in countries like Morocco, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda. I have studied judging both in virtual congresses and in-person (Porto, Portugal) under the World Dancesport Federation – WDSF and Dance Adjudication Network – DAN. I hold level B & A breakdance judging licenses from WDSF and Threefold + Trivium judging certification from D.A.N. Most notably I judged at WDSF continental championships Africa, the first continental breakdance qualifiers for Paris 2024 summer Olympic games in Rabat, Morocco.

Organizing/producing events, initiating, leading & managing projects:

In 2011, I co-founded BREAK-FAST JAM (<http://breakfastjam.org/>) an annual festival of breakdance, hip-hop, creativity, urban culture and sports to serve as a neutral platform for breakdancers to come together, share, build meaningful connections, collaborate and bring their creativity to audiences. I have been chairing and producing break-fast jam events since then. In addition, I have produced many other charity, community, commercial and cooperate events including managing stages at The Notorious IBE festival in Heerlen, The Netherlands (<https://www.thenotoriousibe.com>).

In 2015 I founded Imagination Circle Ltd a social enterprise that increases and supports the discovery and growth of potential among young people by assisting them to find, grow and learn to use their strengths and talents well. Through providing informal learning opportunities & extracurricular activities, personal and interpersonal leadership development, creative and innovative programming as ways to nurture a whole person, promote effectiveness and transform lives.

www.imaginationcircle.org.

I have co-implemented U.S Mission Uganda sponsored programs;
Youth Excellent on Stage (Y.E.S) Academy – 2021 & 2022,
Pre fellowship orientation & debriefs for Mandela Washington Fellowship of
Uganda African leaders Uganda – 2021, 2022 & 2023 cohorts,
Arts envoy exchange program – 2018,
Next level hiphop X cultural diplomacy program – 2015,
Many more.....

Special features and recognitions:

1. CNN Africa voices changemaker program

<https://edition.cnn.com/videos/world/2023/07/04/african-voices-kaweesi-mark-uganda-courtina-paul-south-africa-breakdancer-intl-spc.cnn>

2. **Builders impact awards 2023**; a recognition award by Bavubuka Foundation and Authentic Voices Africa for me efforts in creating productive employment opportunities for hip-hop artists in Uganda.

3. **MTN UG hip-hop special award 2022**; a special award from Uganda hiphop award for building and strengthening Uganda hiphop through Break-Fast Jam initiative.

4. Book feature - BUILD! The power of hiphop diplomacy in a divided world. By Mark Katz. <https://global.unc.edu/news-story/bookmark-this-build-the-power-of-hip-hop-diplomacy-in-a-divided-world/>

5. Featured in the documentary film “Shake the Dust,” executively produced by the American rap Nasir “Nas” Jones, filmed by Adam Sjoberg. <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3122736/> . Shake The Dust shares how breakdancers from underprivildged communities in Uganda, Columbia, Cambodia and Yemen are using breakdance as a tool to uplift themselves and others in their communities.

Record of international engagements:

Morocco.

2023: Judging breakdance battles at WDSF continental championships Africa in Rabat city.

Netherlands

2023: Managing 2 stage focused on educational talks at The notorious IBE festival.

2022: Doing presentations, speaking on panels and participating in workshops at The Notorious IBE cultural festival in Heerlen, Netherlands.

2019: Speaking and leading workshops at Kennis (knowledge) Festival in Deventer city.

2017: Facilitating activities at De Esdoorn and many other public schools.

Portugal:

2023: Undergoing in-person breakdance judging congress with World Dancesport federation – WDSF.

United States of America

2017: touring with Shake The Dust film, speaking and teaching workshops at University of California Irvine, Chapman University, Los Angeles Leadership Academy.

2016: undergoing Mandela Washington Fellowship for young African leaders, leadership development program at Wagner college in United States of America.

Uganda

2022/21: Coordinating artists development and capacity building virtual and live program for young Ugandan breakdancers and musicians for American Voices organisation. I was involved in a consultant capacity on recommendation of US mission Uganda's public affairs section.

2022/21: Coordinator of returnees debrief and departees pre-departure orientation events for candidates of Mandela Washington Fellowship for young African leaders initiative (MWF-YALI) for US Mission Uganda's public affairs section.

Tanzania

2023: Judging breakdance battles at Afrobroke East Africa qualifiers hosted at Asili Hiphop festival in Dar Es Salaamu city.

2016: Facilitating workshops for students and after school activity leaders at international school of Tanganyika in Dar Es Salaam.

Kenya

2013, 2014, 2015, 2016: directing Break-Fast Jam preliminary events in Nairobi.

Poland

2013: managing a group of minors (boys and girls) from Breakdance Project Uganda to participate at Brave kids Festival.

Italy

2012, 2013: holding workshops, sharing knowledge & experiences at We Free Days events with Breakdance Project Uganda.

Denmark

2011: Leading workshops in schools, building performances, speaking during World Images in Motion youth education program in various cities across Denmark.

I have collaborated with the following organizations as individual or with teams:

US Mission Uganda, American Voices, UNICEF, European Union Commission UNHCR, Uganda Prison Service, Next Level Academy program(USA), Kampala International School Uganda (KISU), The International School Of Uganda(ISU), French School Kampala (Uganda), Ambrosoli International School (Uganda), Brave Festival (Poland), Breakdance Project Uganda(BPU), Breakpoint (Denmark), The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs/CKU, Uganda Hands For Hope, In Need Home(Uganda), Peace and Justice Commission (Uganda), Kampala Community International Pre-school, 7 Hills international school, InterAID (Uganda), Kids of Africa Orphanage (Uganda), The Naguru Remand Home (Uganda), Product Of Prison (Uganda), Sanpatrignano rehabilitation centre (Italy), Take A Break (Kenya), Peace Corps Uganda, Street Dance Kenya, Youth Legacy Africa(Uganda), You Inspire You(Uganda), Innovative Communities Organization(Canada), Cornerstone Development Home(Uganda), Ashinaga Children Centre (Uganda), People Concern Children Project(Uganda), Rainbow International School Uganda, Light Up Uganda Project, Niteo Eva Ruf Resource

Centre(Uganda), Little Light Uganda, Kampiringisa National Rehabilitation Centre(Uganda), among others.