

Artist EPK

Sewa Sewa





About Ssewa Ssewa



Ssewa Ssewa is a Ugandan multi-instrumentalist, composer, and innovator widely celebrated as the inventor of the Janzi, a 22-string instrument that beautifully bridges Uganda's musical heritage with contemporary sound. Based in Kampala, he is the founder of Janzi Band and a passionate cultural ambassador whose work connects tradition, innovation, and community through music.

Born in Kampala, Uganda, James Ssewakiryanga Junior, professionally known as Ssewa Ssewa, stands among East Africa's most forward-thinking musicians, a performer, composer, educator, and inventor redefining the boundaries of African sound.

Guided by deep respect for traditional music and a visionary spirit, Ssewa Ssewa created the Janzi, blending the tones of the adungu (Hatched harp) and endongo (Bow lyre) with a modern design. This innovation became both a symbol of cultural preservation and a gateway to global recognition, inspiring the creation of the Janzi Awards in 2021, a platform celebrating Ugandan creativity and excellence.

Through his dynamic performances with Janzi Band, Ssewa Ssewa has captivated audiences across Africa and beyond, bringing the soulful warmth of Ugandan rhythm to international stages. His artistry embodies a powerful message that music can heal, educate, and unite.

Beyond performance, his impact continues through his charity foundation JanziHope and creative hub The Live Room, where he mentors young talents, empowers communities, and nurtures Uganda's next generation of artists.



JanziBand

Founded and led by Ssewa Ssewa, Janzi Band has become one of Uganda's most celebrated live music collectives. Since its formation, the band has carved out a unique sound — a fusion of Afro-fusion, soul, jazz, and Ugandan folk music, performed with technical mastery and emotional depth.

Renowned for their immersive live shows, Janzi Band has performed at major cultural festivals and corporate stages across East Africa. Their performances highlight the

versatility of Ugandan instrumentation — featuring the Janzi alongside drums, guitar, keys, and traditional percussion — all woven into a signature sound that feels both ancient and contemporary.

"Janzi Band is where African heritage meets world-class performance."

Janziband





► The Janzi

(Instrument & Award 2021)

The Instrument

The Janzi is a 22-string harp-like instrument conceptualized and handcrafted by Ssewa Ssewa. Designed to harmonize traditional tonal systems with modern performance needs, the Janzi uses two necks — one tuned to the diatonic scale and the other to the pentatonic scale — enabling rich melodic and harmonic possibilities.

It is the first Ugandan instrument to be registered with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and stands as a testament to creativity, cultural identity, and innovation.

“The Janzi embodies Africa’s creative future — rooted in tradition, resonating globally.”

The Award (2021)

In 2021, the Janzi Awards were launched to honor Ugandan arts and entertainment excellence — named after the instrument that symbolizes innovation and originality. The awards have since become a national platform recognizing musicians, filmmakers, poets, and creators across disciplines.





JanziHope

(Community & Charity Initiative)

JanziHope is Ssewa Ssewa's charitable foundation, founded to support struggling communities in Uganda through art, education, and empowerment. Rooted in the belief that music can transform lives, JanziHope organizes outreach programs, music education workshops, and youth mentorship projects across Uganda.

The foundation provides instruments, creative training, and community resources to young people who may not otherwise have access to artistic opportunities. Through JanziHope, Ssewa Ssewa continues to extend his artistic

mission beyond the stage — turning creativity into hope.

"Through JanziHope, music becomes a seed — planted in communities to grow opportunity."

Janzi **HOPE**



The Live Room

(Community & Charity Initiative)

Located in Kampala, The Live Room is Ssewa Ssewa's creative performance space — a home for live sessions, artist rehearsals, educational workshops, and collaborative projects.

The venue embodies Ssewa Ssewa's vision of a sustainable Ugandan music ecosystem, offering a stage where emerging and established musicians can connect, create, and perform in a nurturing environment.

"The Live Room is not just a venue; it's a heartbeat for Uganda's live music culture."



Media & Achievements

- Inventor of the Janzi, the first registered Ugandan musical instrument
- Founder of Janzi Band, Uganda's leading Afro-fusion live band
- Founder of JanziHope, a charity supporting communities through music
- Creator of The Live Room, Kampala's hub for live performance
- Inspiration behind the Janzi Awards (2021)

"A visionary who redefines what it means to be a Ugandan artist."



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