

Samite - Biography

Samite was born and raised in Uganda, where his grandfather taught him to play the traditional flute. His primary schooling was within the King's Courtyard where the royal musicians played for the King. That daily influence permanently instilled within young Samite, the rhythms and patterns of the traditional music of his people the Baganda. Recognizing his talents, a high school teacher in Kampala put a western flute in his hands putting him on the path to become one of the most highly acclaimed flutists in East Africa. In 1982 he fled to Kenya as a political refugee, where he played with the Bacchus Club Jazz Band and the popular African Heritage Band. Increasingly drawn to instruments and rhythms from the traditional Ugandan music scene, he eventually played solo at the Mount Kenya Safari Club in Nairobi. Delivering his mellifluous vocals in his mother tongue, Luganda, he mesmerized audiences with original compositions played on kalimba (finger-piano), marimba (wooden xylophone), litungu (seven-stringed Kenyan instrument) and various flutes; traditional and western.

Immigrating to the United States in 1987, Samite now makes his home in Ithaca, New York. Samite's sixth and newest CD Tunula Eno, released by Triloka/Artemis, is a work of commitment, devotion and an overwhelming sense of humanity. Written and recorded during the last year of his beloved wife Joan's life, the CD is a celebration of that which makes us human: love, loss, endurance, hope. It is a joyous album conveying optimism through stories and song, replete with swirling melodies, infectious rhythms and soulful vocals. Indeed these songs are a reflection of life itself. Tunula Eno reached #2 in the CMJ Music World Chart within the first month of its release. Radio stations, including WYEP (Pittsburg, PA), KCRW (Santa Monica, CA), WCBE (Columbus, OH), KFAI (Minneapolis, MI), WNCW (Spindale, NC), WDET (Detroit, MI), WYSO (CD of the month) and WDPS (both in Dayton, OH), WXPN (Philadelphia, PA), WVIA (Pittston, PA) and WFPK (Louisville, KY) have the album currently in rotation. Samite has also appeared live on the nationally syndicated radio program Echoes, as well as WFMU (Hoboken, NJ), KUNC (Greeley, CO) and WNYC (New York, NY). Samite recently recorded a live performance for the Ngoma

Channel on XM Radio in Washington, DC (XM's current listener base is over one million people). Samite's live performance on the nationally syndicated show E-Town will be broadcast on over 120 stations as will his broadcast for the nationally syndicated radio show World Vision Radio. In addition to Samite's musical career, he is the founder of the non-profit organization, Musicians for World Harmony, whose mission is to enable musicians throughout the world to share their music to promote peace, understanding and harmony among peoples, with a special emphasis on the displaced or the distressed who could benefit most from the healing power of music.

Samite's previously released CDs include his first tour-de force Shanachie release Abaana Bakesa (Dance My Children, Dance). His second release, Pearl Of Africa Reborn, contains recordings which retain the essence of African tradition. Samite's third US album Silina Musango, released by Xenophile, is a joyful collection of melodic, trans-cultural songs which are the heartfelt of Samite's music. This CD reached #2 on the CMJ World Music Chart in the summer of 1997. Samite's fourth worldwide release Stars to Share (Windham Hill Records) reinforces his reputation as an artist who has made a career out of confounding expectations.

Samite spent the summer of 1999 traveling through parts of Africa and filmed the PBS documentary, Song of the Refugee. This film along with Samite's fifth CD release Kambu Angels was inspired by a desire to present African refugee's hope for the future in spite of the suffering and loss they have endured. Media coverage during the darkest days of crisis concentrated on violence and destruction, with little or no coverage of the reconciliation and healing process now underway. One of Samite's goals is to open peoples' minds and hearts to the common threads of human concerns, conveying optimism through stories and song. "I am convinced that we are all moved by the same desires, needs and emotions, regardless of the language in which those feelings are expressed."

For more information on Samite's music, live performance schedule and Musicians For World Harmony please visit www.samite.com, www.triloka.com and www.musiciansforworldharmony.org.