

## Di Klef Jan. Feb 2023 edition

Dear Readers

We begin 2023 with optimism that we can continue to grow and develop as Sierra Leone's foremost music school, established since 1995. We continue to thank God for the success of our work, and for His divine guidance and support even as economic hardships have affected our enrolment and fundraising events. We continue to be grateful to our individual and corporate donors and sponsors for their support. May God continue to guide and protect you as you support our endeavours.

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### STAFF

We have two weddings to celebrate....one is that of a member of the Ballanta Music Makers, Elizabeth, who is now married to Saidu. Congratulations!!



The second is that of Lovelace Love-Harding, who made Melvina his wife. Congratulations!!

Our office assistant Alpha Bundu also tied the knot with Nia in unique wedding attire. Congratulations!!



### Learning

Ibrahim S. Bangura, flute student, got an uplift from charming Kenthel Macauley from the US who graciously shared her flute skills with him, watched by Egerton Peters-John, visiting from the US.



In a previous newsletter, we introduced a mature learner who started on the accordion. In this issue, we present yet another mature learner who has always wanted to play an instrument to complement her singing talent. She's Mrs. Christiana Harding Conteh, a very interesting and accomplished lady who has been singing gospel music and launched her first album in 2005, and a second one in 2010. Her friendship with the late Millicent Rhodes, and also with George Buannie, a well-known name in the music industry fueled her interest in this genre. Here she's pictured with Senior Teacher Leslie Cummings-Wray, listening intently to his guidance on playing the guitar. We applaud you Mrs Harding Conteh, and wish you success. We look forward to seeing you at one of our students' concerts this year.



“My name is Prince Aiah Kamanda. I am a student at the Ballanta school of music . Major area of study is piano and organ. I entered the school in April 2022 and by God’s grace I have moved to some levels with my studies . As a student, I appreciate the tremendous work of all the staff and administration for their efforts in making me a better person in music. Most especially Mr. Leslie (theory teacher), Mr. James (practical teacher) and Mr. Lovelace. I stay all the way in KONO district eastern province of Sierra Leone 212 miles from the capital city. I travel every week to take classes for two days here in Freetown. As my major constraint, I have to skip some classes because of transportation fare problem. I spend not less than le 400 every week, to acquire this knowledge. My sponsors are : Mr. Sessie and the UMC Joint Parish Church in KOIDU city KONO district. They sent me because we do not have an organist in the church. I have to tap this knowledge here because, from research it is the best school of music in our country Sierra Leone. I am pleading to the school or any individual organisation to help me reduce some of this burden by offering a scholarship to me. Or in any other way. God will extendedly bless you. I promise to pay back to the school and my district Kono. Thank you God bless you.”



## Performing

On 4<sup>th</sup> February, ‘An Hour with KFD’ was presented at the Logie Wright Auditorium, to catch a glimpse of Dr. Kitty Fadlu-Deen’s life and works. After sharing power point pictures of her life to the background of the Doris Day song ‘Que sera sera’, she performed three piano pieces, ‘Ballade pour Adeline’ by Paul de Senneville and Oliver Toussaint, ‘Rustle of Spring’ by C. Sinding, and Fantasie-Impromptu by F. Chopin. This was followed by the performance of one of her compositions, the MMTC song, sung by David S. Koroma accompanied by the band Groovy Colours. Two students Maxwell Apka and Edwin Kamara played the 2 piano duets she composed on Sierra Leonean songs ‘Fayia Fayia’ and ‘A wonga fabere’. The Ballanta Music Makers sang three of her arrangements, ‘Malaika’, ‘King Jimmy’ and ‘Dori o Dori’. More personal instances were shared using the auditorium’s technical equipment and the Ballanta Dance Team ended the programme with their energetic ‘Bubu Dance’ to the accompaniment of Groovy Colours playing their original composition on the bubu. She

ended with the hope that the academy would champion and develop Sierra Leonean music. A reception followed, catered by Cassava. Here are a few pictures from the event.



### International Music Evening

This was a scintillating event at the Bintumani Hotel on 25<sup>th</sup> February. Although the number of participants was not as large as in previous years, the enthusiastic audience enjoyed them greatly. Our sponsors were Brussels Airlines, Print Point, Bintumani Hotel, Pee Cee & Sons, Union Trust Bank and Moore. Food donations were gratefully received from Alex's Beach Bar, Atlantic Lumley Hotel, Brussels Airlines, Casino Leone, Country Lodge Hotel, Crown Bakery, Dr. Adonis Abboud, Dr. Kitty Fadlu-Deen, Family Kingdom, Home Suites Hotel, Lagoonda, Ms. Krishna Anil Bhudiya, St. Mary's Supermarket, Swiss Hotel and T. Choithram & Sons Ltd. Enjoy the pictures of this unforgettable evening!



Figure 1 Groovy Colours Band



Figure 2 Bhangra Dance from the Indian community



Figure 3 Dance from the Lebanese School



Figure 4 Song from Indonesia and Malaysia



Figure 5 Ballanta African Ballet



Figure 6 Dance from Mongolian and Wa people from China



Figure 7 Drum sequence from Model School Band



Figure 8 Song by Amadou Jobareth from the Gambia



Figure 9 Song by Solo's Beat



Figure 10 Courtship Dance from the Philippines

The Groovy Colours Band performed at the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank at its headquarters on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2023.



### Donations

We thank the following for their kind donations:-

1. 3 recorders, a tambourine and a harmonica from Cecil Williams of the USA. The picture (right) shows board director Gwyn Allen handing them over the chairman Dr. Julius Spencer.
2. John B. Williams for a brand new signboard at the front of our building!
3. Dr. Christian Horton for \$100 and L1,000
4. Mrs. Henrietta Thompson for L300
5. Ms. Kläre Heyden for €100



6. Mr. Tejan Fadlu-Deen for a gently used Apple laptop
7. Ms. Jane Shakespeare for the design of a tri-fold brochure
8. Dr. Sinead Walsh for €1,500



Figure 11 Receiving the donation from Dr. Sinead Walsh

### Visit

On Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> 2023, the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, Jens Kraus-Massé and his wife Sabine Yang-Schmidt, paid a visit to the Academy. He addressed the staff and a few students, and was shown around. They had attended the Christmas concert, and he expressed the hope that the academy would continue to provide the community with more musical events. They showed interest in our work and promised to support us. We presented them with souvenirs from the academy and they signed the visitor's book.



### Obituary

Mr. Kamal Nassib Nassar's passing on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2023 in the Lebanon came as a deep shock to the entire construction world in Sierra Leone. As founder and CEO of Sierra Construction Systems (SCS), he and his late brother Nabih built many important buildings in the country, such as the Sierra Leone Commercial Bank, Rokel Commercial Bank, Zenith Bank, Sky Bank, and Standard Chartered Bank, as well as the important renovations to State House and Connaught Hospital. 'In good times as well as bad, they (the Nassar brothers) served this nation. In the height of competition, they soared to heights impassable', testified Prof. Kosonike Koso-Thomas. From all accounts, he was very kind to one and all. In the words of Gladys Jusu-Sheriff, 'In Kamal one witnessed a visionary, a creative artist, and a skilled engineer with an eye for beauty in design, quality in production and trust and reliability in client relationships. His word was his bond. For him, empathy was paramount.' He loved his family, the country, his employees, and his work.



He was a true friend and supporter of the Academy. To us at Ballanta, his kindness manifested in the donation of \$7,000 towards the cost of the van, various donations to our fundraising events and building materials towards the completion of the Logie Wright Auditorium. We are very fortunate to have known this kind and generous man, Mr. Kamal Nassar.

We offer our sincerest condolences to his family and pray that his soul rests in perfect peace.

### Save the date

April 15<sup>th</sup> for the *Easter Concert* at Buxton Memorial Methodist Church at 5 pm.

April 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> for *Film Night* at the Logie Wright Auditorium. Main feature is 'The Poets' a film by Chivas Devinck. This is a documentary that follows two acclaimed West African poets, Sierra Leone's Prof Syl Cheney-Coker and Nigeria's Prof Niyi Osundare. 'The Poets' is an exploration of how art is shaped by life experiences, and of the power and

urgency of art in the face of political adversity.' Other films and documentaries will accompany this.

April 29<sup>th</sup> for the *Choreo Dance Competition* to celebrate International Dance Day. Venue to be announced later.