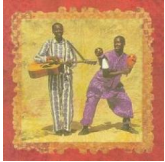


Bernard Kabanda - Olugendo (1999)

Written by bluelover

Thursday, 20 December 2012 17:43 - Last Updated Thursday, 19 May 2016 14:24

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01. *Abakazi Be Kibuga-Crazy City Woman* (6:00) 02. *Ettaala Ya Bbulu-The Blue Light* (7:03)
03. *Olugendo Lw'e Bulaya-The Journey to Europe* (5:55) 04. *Kasennyanku-The Firewood Collector [an insect]* (4:59) 05. *Nanankya* (6:56) 06. *Olutalo Lw'e Kakingq-The Battle at Kakinga* (6:05) 07. *Tugendeyo-Let's Go There* (5:58) 08. *Katuzinywe-Let's Drink Together* (3:16) 09. *Enfa Ya Taata-My Father's Death* (9:13)

The late Bernard Kabanda, from Uganda, only left this album as his musical legacy, but it's quite the joy. Playing the style known as "Kadongo Kamu" ("just a small guitar"), his idiosyncratic singer/songwriter style, augmented by basic percussion (shaker, beer bottle) on some tracks, is immensely attractive, his guitar style wonderfully layered, the picking not only providing complex bass and treble lines, but his fingertips and elbows acting as drumsticks against the soundbox, making him virtually a one-man band. The songs themselves deal with the issues of everyday life in East Africa, whether the way a young woman cooks greens ("Let's Go There"), "The Battle At Kakinga," or "The Firewood Collector," about the spread of AIDS. This is music originally made for playing in the nightclubs of Kampala, to entertain the crowds in exchange for tips -- a hard way to make a living, but "Kabanda"'s ability, both as singer and guitarist, is never in doubt. This record shines a light on a small African tradition from one of its master practitioners, now sadly departed. --- Chris Nickson, Rovi

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