

PAUL KAGIMU REVIVED ARCHITECTURE

PAUL KAGIMU

JULY 3, 1943

TO SEPTEMBER 17, 2003

BY MATHIAS MAZINGA

Architecture, just like many other professions, was enormously affected by the misrule that prevailed in Uganda after independence. Although there were some talented Ugandans who had studied architecture, the environment, especially during the era of Idi Amin and Obote II could not allow them to practice their trade.

One of the admirable architects that emerged with Uganda's economic recovery, was Paul Kagimu. Over a decade since he succumbed to cancer, Kagimu is still remembered for his classic works.

Kagimu worked on projects like the renovation of State House, Nakasero, Uganda Industrial Research Institute in Nakawa, the Pepsi Cola Plant in Nakawa, Rubaga Cathedral, Christ the King Church, Kampala, Mapeera Bakateyamba's Home in Nalukolongo and the tomb of Emmanuel Cardinal Nsubuga at Nalukolongo. Other projects include Kampala Parents' School, Kampala Hospital, St. Henry's College Kitovu Chapel and the Catholic Martyrs Shrine, Namugongo.

Kagimu was also a smart businessman/entrepreneur. He was one of the pioneer Ugandans to venture into floriculture. After attending a flowers expo in London in 1995, Kagimu established a 25-acre horticulture farm for Tropical Flowers at Namulanda.

Kagimu is also on record as a pioneer Ugandan mobile telephone user. He bought the first three cellular phones (Motorola, Erikson and Nokia), which Celtel Uganda sold on its inauguration in 1997. He had to part with sh7m for them.

Despite his success, Kagimu had an unpleasant end. Some malicious people deliberately sabotaged his floriculture business, which eventually was taken over by a financial institution. Kagimu's posh houses in Ntinda and Munyonyo were also attached. Edith, Kagimu's wife says that these woes affected her husband, sparking off an irreversible illness, which killed him in 2003.

Kagimu's sweet memories still remain in the hearts of his relatives, friends and contemporaries 12 years on. Edith says of him: "My husband Paulo was the best human being God has ever created. He was so social that he threw parties for his friends at home every weekend. My husband rejuvenated the profession of architecture. Whoever wanted a beautiful plan would look for Paulo."

"As his spouse, Paulo gave me everything I wanted. In fact, I had no reason to work because I had everything. If I needed to change a car, he would give me the money to go to Dubai and select the one I wanted. If I needed to do business, he would just give me the money. Surely, I worked just to keep myself busy, not because I lacked money," she says.

"I believed in Paulo and he believed in me. If I wanted to go out to dance, he would give me the money. Even if I came back late, he would not suspect me to have done any mischief. Throughout my stay with him, I never saw any mischief in him. He took care of me and my entire family after the death of my parents. It is because of his goodness that I did not replace him with any other man when he died," she adds.

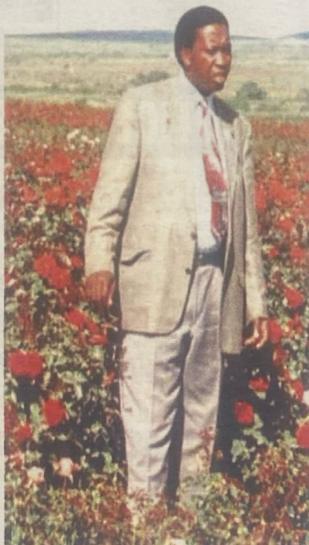
Kagimu's son, Herbert Kagimu, also praises his dad: "My father was a calm, principled, astute, precise and principled architect. He was also a committed generous Catholic, who helped many needy people and Church-affiliated institutions, such as Mapeera Bakateyamba's Home in Nalukolongo."

The alumni of St. Henry's College, Kitovu



Kagimu with his wife Edith during the good times. Although Kagimu was an architect, he was one of the pioneer Ugandans to venture into floriculture

Kagimu worked on projects like the renovation of State House, Nakasero, Uganda Industrial Research Institute in Nakawa, the Pepsi Cola Plant in Nakawa, Rubaga Cathedral and Christ the King Church, Kampala, among others.



Kagimu in his flower garden at Namulanda in the 1990s

honoured Kagimu (posthumously), with a meritorious award, which they handed to his wife Edith on July 11, 2015.



Kagimu (centre), Edith and a friend during a social event

KAGIMU'S LIFE

Paul Kagimu was born in 1943 at Misanvu, Kibinge, Masaka, to the late Constanca Namugenyi and Yoana Mukadde. He went to Bukalasa Seminary and St. Henry's College, Kitovu, where he completed S.4 in 1962.

Kagimu was then admitted to study architecture at Royal College, Nairobi. He proceeded to Liverpool School of Architecture in England, for practical industrial training.

From 1967 to 1968, he attended Copenhagen School of Tropical Architecture and then returned to University College, Nairobi, where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in architecture in 1969.

Kagimu was then appointed senior architect in the then Kampala City Council, where he worked under architect Henry Ssentongo, probably Uganda's most respected architect. Kagimu also worked as a senior partner with

Associated Architects Consultancy Firm and as partner with Design Group Associates from 1974 to 1995.

Architect Stanley Mulumba said the projects Kagimu designed or supervised include the 10-storeyed office block on Plot 1, Pilkington Road, renovation of Kampala Club, Lake View Hotel, Mbarara, renovation of Kampala Hotel and Kampala International Conference Centre, renovation of Entebbe Airport Terminal Building in 1991 and the National Teachers College, Naggongera.

Mulumba described Kagimu as a "perfect, ever-smart smiling gentleman," who also had immense passion for the piano and the game of lawn tennis.

Kagimu is survived by children: Immaculate Wendy Kagimu, Herbert Kagimu, Victor Kagimu, Francis Nabudde, Anthony, Sharon Nampoza and Clare Nakitto Kagimu.