IDEAS CENTRAL

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KIVUMBI RECYCLES OLD WINE BOTTLES

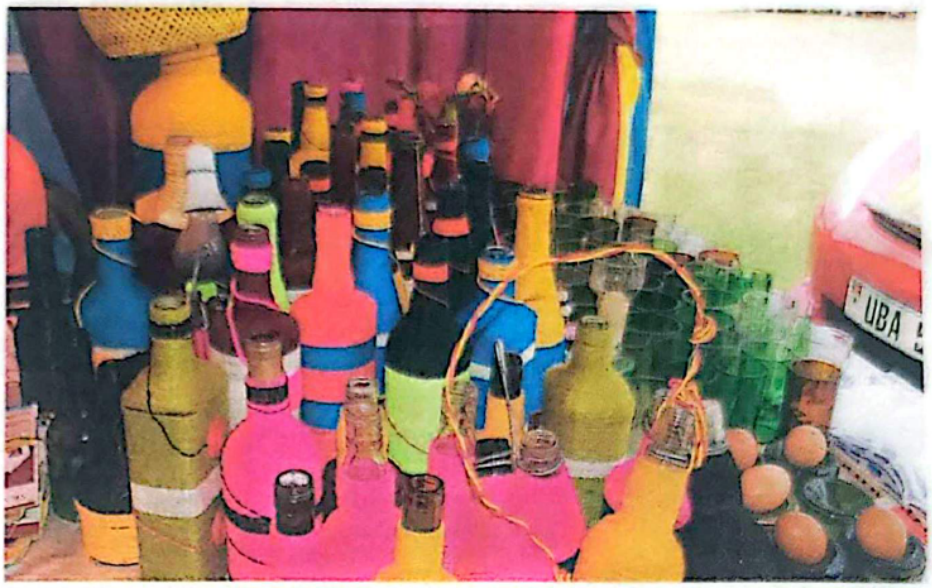
By Emmanuel Affedda

Meet Peter Kivumbi, who was the best student in the industrial art and design graduating class of 2015 at St Lawrence University.

Besides conserving the environment through art, Kivumbi sought to be a job creator. From childhood, Kivumbi loved to participate in drawing competitions and his class teachers tended to assign him projects which enabled him get extra knowledge.

St Lawrence University has the Miss and Mr Job Creator entrepreneurship competitions which encourage ideas that have a positive impact on the environment. Kivumbi got interested when he joined.

"I approached Daniel Mugaru who was in charge of the competition and through his advice, I concentrated on recycling waste materials," he says. He opted for recycling wine bottles and reusing cloth off-cuts to add value to book covers, which is what he still does today, even after graduating with a first class degree.



Some of the products that Kivumbi makes from old wine bottles

OLD WINE BOTTLES, NEW USES

To make tumblers, Kivumbi collects wine bottles from bars and other places and cleans them thoroughly, because they will be used for drinking water or beer. He puts a bottle in warm water, followed by icy water in order to weaken the strength of the bottle for easy cutting. He then marks the cutting line and places the bottle in a circular frame for easy handling.

"I burn the marked place with a candle in two-and-a-half minutes in order to weaken the bottle, then I will steadily cut along the line using a glass cutter. After that, I will dip the bottle in the icy water and the bottle will separate in two."

The edges are sanded smooth, for about 50 minutes. After cleaning, he has a 'new' glass, which he sells at sh4,000 each, or at sh48,000 a dozen. They are mostly bought by individuals at exhibitions, though he is looking to widen the market.

Using the same method, he also makes candle holders, lampshades and chandeliers out of the old wine bottles.

Kivumbi also uses cloth pieces with nice patterns to cover books and make them more attractive. He buys ordinary books from Kikuubo and the cloth off-cuts from Kiyembe Lane in Kampala. He then stitches up some pieces, then measures to match the book cover. He then applies the cover on a book with glue, and the book will look new after it has dried properly.



Kivumbi with one of his products

The prices range from sh2,500 for small books and sh5,000 for medium to sh10,000 for a big-sized (A4) book.

Talking of his achievements, Kivumbi says: "I have met important people like the Kabaka of Buganda and the Katikkiro, through my art, especially during exhibitions, like Buganda's PEWOSA. I was in position to win a car during the 2015 Miss and Mr Job Creator at St Lawrence University and I have inspired more youth to be job creators instead of job seekers."

In the coming years, Kivumbi hopes to register a company and protect his work from being plagiarised by other artists.

He also wants to teach others to earn a living through using available resources instead of being idle in the name of lacking employment.

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