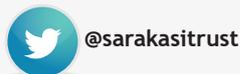
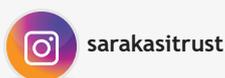
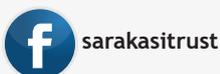


COMPANY PROFILE

Sarakasi Trust is a performing arts development organization that was established in Nairobi in December 2001 in response to the urgent need for further development and growth in the cultural and performing arts sector.

The organization has been working in the field of Culture for Development since its establishment and has grown to be one of the leading organizations in culture and the performing arts in Eastern Africa. "Sarakasi" is the Kiswahili word for Circus or Acrobatics.

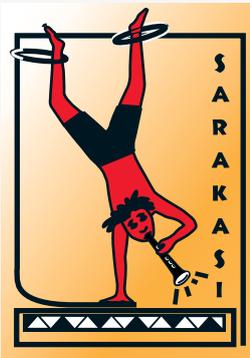
Artists yearn for a creative space within which they can perfect their art and platforms upon which they can build, express and showcase their skill. In Kenya such spaces and platforms weren't (and still aren't) always easily available and accessible, particularly to the youth from low income backgrounds. In a country where unemployment levels were soaring and access to basic education and its accompanying advantages was becoming harder for the low Income groups, alternative methods of income generation were required. Sarakasi recognized this and followed through with the thought that one alternative was to be found in the performing arts. The talent was already there and the only thing missing was the structure within which it could be nurtured; systems through which raw talent could be transformed into globally acceptable and eventually acclaimed quality cultural products and performance work.



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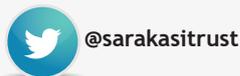
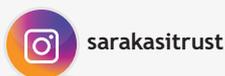
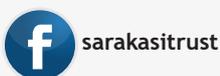


COMPANY PROFILE

Sarakasi Trust provided this opportunity through its creative space and training and capacity building program first at the Godown Art Centre in the Industrial area of Nairobi, where Sarakasi hired office and training space from 2003 to 2008. Having been closely involved with the launch of The GoDown, Sarakasi became a victim of its own success by outgrowing the available space for its rapidly growing training program. The need for a permanent rehearsal space for up to 80 performers each day and the need for a bigger office space led Sarakasi to explore options for expansion. In 2006 Sarakasi acquired and renovated a magnificent building -the Sarakasi Dome, along Ngara Road - to house its lively acrobatics, music and dance training and performance programs as well as the institutional activities of the Trust. The Dome opened its doors in May 2008 as a multifunctional venue housing the Sarakasi offices, training, rehearsal, projects and performance spaces. Now jugglers, dancers, drummers, acrobats and others have a custom made practice space that they can access easily and at low or even no cost. But their needs went beyond space; how could they support themselves in the long run?

The question of space answered, Sarakasi gave the artists access to professional trainers, equipment and performance kits. Sarakasi also facilitated life skills workshops and social awareness programs that allowed the artists to be increasingly aware and involved with their communities as well as giving them the necessary tools to develop themselves. Finally Sarakasi connected them with international culture practitioners; exposure and exchange programs through which they could raise their standards and enhance their repertoires. But most importantly, Sarakasi gave them the ultimate means of turning culture and the performing arts into a livelihood: opportunities and work, contracts and paid concerts, in Kenya, East Africa and beyond.

Training, equipment and exposure to global audiences and standards brought with it professionalism. Suddenly what had been touted as an alternative became the mainstream because Sarakasi as a nurturer of talent and the individuals it had supported were gaining international acclaim. With training centers situated right in the heart of Nairobi's low income neighborhoods Sarakasi was paving the way for a new kind of role model: the performing artist.



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