

## PROFILE OF ARTISTES

# EKOW ALABI SAVAGE

By Jonathan Gmanyami

**E**KOW Alabi Savage believes he is really promoting Ghana and Africa in general as Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah tutored them as young pioneers.

He is a founding member of Roots Anabo fame which toured the world playing their brand of music they named "Sunlife."

The music comprised of jazz, highlife, funk, reggae, African traditional and it's danceable.

Ghana has produced more than its four share of international stars, but one who has shone more brightly than any other for more than two decades now in the western world is Ekow Alabi Savage.

To those who know him, it is not surprising that Ghana music can describe him as "by far one of the best known Ghanaian musicians of his generation, the most notable music personality to emerge from the whole world music phenomenon to introduce "Sunlife Music."

Despite stiff opposition from his mum and grand mum, Ekow Alabi Savage was born as a gifted singer and has made music his career. Anchored by an album titled "Return to Zion", he is home to launch his album as part of the Golden Jubilee celebrations.

Ekow Alabi Savage is a Fanti, born in Takoradi on March 28, 1957 to the late Isaac Tercy Brown and Madam Adjoa Amoono.

He schooled in Accra in the ghetto of Abossey Okai, Kaneshie, Mataheko and hustled around Accra. He completed the Bishop Boys School, Bubushie. After that he undertook a short course at the

Kaneshie Technical College and went into full time music.

He is single but has four children, two boys and two girls. Ekow loves eating African dishes.

Aske I how he learnt his music, Ekow Alabi Savage said he learnt it the hard way in the street and thanks to God he's been able to make it.

"I am a gifted musician by birth but my mum and grand mum didn't like the idea of me doing music so I had to run from school to go and play music, but now it's a bit easier because musicians have the respect, and great properties and so on."

Asked if from day one, he knew he wanted to sing, Ekow's answer was "I started singing from the first cry when I came out of my mum's womb."

He started playing

need to teach the present now and the next generation through music because it's a great language. I am always on tour with other artistes and this includes the Nigerian artiste, Ade Bantu (2005 Kora Award Winner) as a drummer.

"His new album is called "Going for Gold." "Going for Gold because I am 50 years like Ghana, a real Ghanaba, so our great nation and I celebrated the golden age together. I dedicate my record to all those born this 'time,' 'now' and the 'future' and also our 'past' because if you don't know your past, you won't know your future," he said.

Asked how different his new album is from other albums, Ekow said "there is, my first solo album was "Return to Zion" (Gye Nyame). It's special to me. I was versatile on the album, which I have



■ Ekow Alabi savage.

Morris titled "Asante Sana" (I thank you so much) is so dear to me. We sang in Swahili and Akan. The song is already making headlines here in

Ekow Alabi Savage says he gets his inspiration from Nyame (God).

As to how his first performance or stage was like, he said it was super good but that he was frightened but later everything was flowing like a river.

Ekow Alabi Savage always wants to be single and a low profile artiste loves all good music and good artists, especially those who say something about the world.

He is already collaborating with about four artistes on his new album namely Mariamu Morris (Kenya), Djaton

Toure (Cote d'Ivoire), Charles (Nigeria) and Dr Bizzy (Ghana). Ekow says he would love to do a song with Tinny.

Ekow Alabi Savage has worked with a number of both foreign and local artistes including Pat Thomas, Kojo Antwi, Eeka Mouse (Jamaica), Reality Brothers (International band in Germany), Vitamin X (Ghana) and Jimi Tenor.

Touching on some of the challenges in the music profession, Ekow said "when the people you meet are not professionals they tend to waste your time and this always slows me down so I prefer to go on my own and take the big challenge which is difficult but with God I break through."

Ekow Alabi Savage, who left for Europe in 1978, plans coming home to settle and to give support to the new musicians and all.

"I am an easy loving person and love all; whether you are Hearts or Kotoko, NDC or NPP, white man or black woman. We should learn to love each other," he said.

He concluded by quoting these words of Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah. "If Africa unite the world, it will be free and mankind will live in total peace." "It will be continued when I come to Ghana."



■ Ekow displaying his skills on the guitar.

music as a drum roadie for Pat Thomas and D Sweet Beans before he was employed as a percussion player. He was by then also playing in a spiritual church Aladura.

He says he feels great to be one of the flagbearers in our field of 'entertainment' (Education in Entertainment). "We

crafted as Sunlife music. I also have a special Ghana song, titled "Yen Ara Asase" which I recomposed, praising our leaders with my well thought of lyrics."

On his new album, he said "I have so much songs but the one I wrote with a sister singer from Kenya called Mariamu

Germany.

Other songs that are special to him on the new album include: "Good morning Africa," "Ataa," "Rasta," "Efutu," "Awerekyikyire" featuring Dr Bizzy, and more. This new album has 11 tracks on it and will be launched on Easter Saturday, April 7 at Next Door, Teshie, Accra.



■ Ekow going for gold.



Page 28. THE MIRROR, Thursday, April 5, 2007.



• Ekow "Savage" Alabi

## Ekow Savage goes for gold

By William A. Asiedu

**GHANAIAN musicians love to inject life into their music. This is evident in the pulsating sounds that accompany their songs as well as the names of the genres that they create — highlife, hiplife, raglife etc.**

One "life" that the younger generation may not know much about, is "Sunlife." It was originated by Ekow Alabi a.k.a Ekow Savage who described his maiden work, "Return to Zion" (Gye Nyame) as such.

Sunlife music made a huge impact in the West where Savage rocked many concerts and made a name for himself. Now he is back home from his base in Europe to rejuvenate "Sunlife".

He hopes to accomplish that mission on the back of his latest album, "Going for Gold" which was produced by Tom "Serious Lee" Pettersen and Ekow himself for Last Minute Productions.

"Going for Gold" is a cocktail of roots reggae, a little bit of funk, some hiplife rap and plenty of horns.

To give it an international touch, Savage collaborated with seasoned artistes, Mariamu Morris from Kenya, Djatou Toure from Ivory Coast, Nigerian Charles and Dr Bizzy from Ghana.

The combination of Akan and Swahili lyrics makes "Asante Sana" (I thank you so much) interesting listening. But "Good Morning Africa" which opens the album is really solid.

Other songs on the album are "Ataa", "Rasta", "Efutu" and "Awerekyikyire" all of which show Savage's bias for roots reggae. Those who know Ekow from his days with "Roots Anabo" will appreciate his love for punchy reggae beats.



## Page 6

If you've never heard about Sunille Music, you should listen to *Elbow*. Alabi Savage's new album, *Savage* is not a stage name; it's his family name, taken from a couple of generations away. He took up the name *Savage* because he believes it reflects his "wild personality [in music]". But, he says "I am an easy-going person and love all, whether you are Hearts or Kotex, NDC or NPP, white man or Black Woman. We should learn to love each other."

Now is one of the many Ghanaian musicians who have made a bigger name in Europe than they have in Ghana. Born in Takoradi some fifty (50) years ago, raised in Abossey Okai, Kamehsie and Mankabso, but currently based in Berlin, Germany he started off with music very early contrary to his mother and grandmother's caution against taking that route. He went through with his passion for drumming and soon became a drum rounder with Pat Thomas and *D Sweet Beards* before he was employed as a percussion player. "I am a gifted musician by birth but my mum and grandmum didn't like the idea of me doing

music so I had to run from school to go and play music but now it's a bit easier and because musicians have the respect, and great properties and so on."

And for more than three decades, he has kept it up. At 50 he manages to look 30. "I guess it's the stress, the running around, not sleeping well, marrying and divorcing, just living life to the fullest." He's toured in Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Russia, Hungary, Poland, England, Scotland, Ireland, Holland and Jamaica.

Ekow already has one album. *Return to Zion* (Gige Nyame) to his credit. He's hoping that his latest release, *Going for Gold*, an 11-track album that has a representation of various music forms: socca, calypso, hiplife and his ingenious Sunlife will be more successful than the first. "I had a band called Roots Anabio in Germany and we play up-tempo music, a fusion of jazz, hifi, reggae, all the time and people said the music we made always brought summer and sunshine to them. So we decided to call it Sunlife music."

The album, *Going for Gold*, was launched at Next Door over the weekend and was almost a wash down. The rains kicked in just before he could set the album out, but with the support of Ebo Taylor and Gyedu Blay Ambulay, *Going for Gold* has started its ascent unto the Ghanaian market.

Savage has no doubt

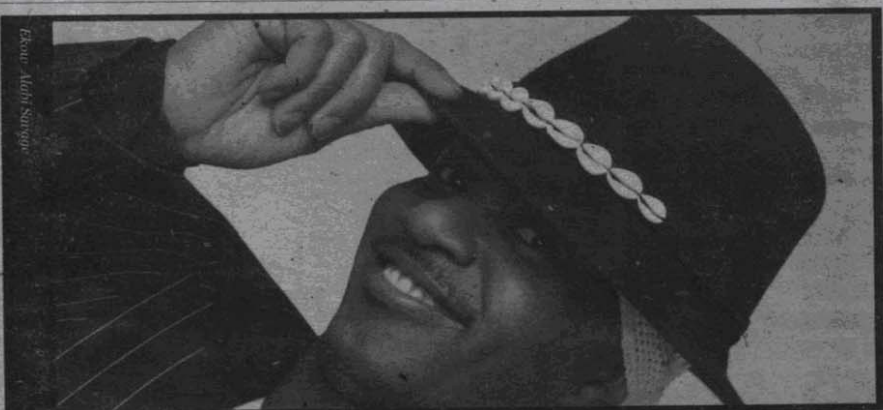
## Local scene

April 10 - April 16, 2007

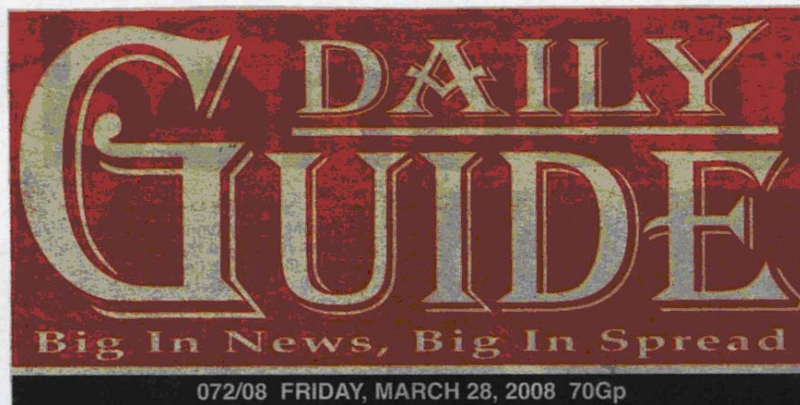
his music will catch on with people. "It's good music," he says. "We do things very naturally, we don't plan every step of our lives. We allow things to go their own way. So I won't go out of my way to do anything extraordinary. We'll do our best to promote it the best way we can, but we just want people to enjoy it by themselves." He has already done a collabo with four artists on his new album -- namely Mariamu Morris (Kenya), Diatou Toure (Ivory Coast), Charles (Nigeria) and Dr. Bizzy (Ghana) -- and would love to do a song with Timmy.

His inspiration comes whenever he is in Ghana. So his trips to Ghana are very important for him since it enables him write his music and he enjoys being a simple and low profile artiste. This new album "Is very versatile. I have something for everybody on it. I have no favorite track but the one I wrote with a sister singer from Kenya called Marianne Morris titled Asante Sana (I thank you so much) is so dear to me. We sang in Swahili and Akan. The song is already making headlines in Germany."

Besides promoting his new album, which is tied into this year's jubilee celebrations (what isn't?), Ekow is here to take it easy, relax and chill. Looking into the crystal ball, he sees a future of him coming home to settle and helping out the younger musicians.



By Winifred M. Mensa



## Savage Relaunches Album Today



Ekow Alabi Savage

By George Clifford Owusu  
"Going for Gold", a ten-track album by German-based Ghanaian musician, Ekow Alabi Savage, will today March 28 be re-launched at Next Door Beach Resort in Accra.

The album, which is laced with refreshing rhythms dubbed, 'Afro-pop' by Savage, is an interesting mix of sounds and beats that boast of dramatic chord progressions.

The occasion, which will witness live performances by Savage, will also mark the 51st birthday of

the artiste.

Ekow Savage shot to fame in the early 1980s with Roots Anabo, a band that managed to create its own rhythmical style known as "Sunshine Music". Determined to showcase their artistic creations, the group participated in a number of music festivals in Europe.

Before moving to Germany where he has lived for three decades, Savage performed with a number of renowned African bands and musicians including the late Afro Beat King, Fela Anikulapo Kuti and the saxophone virtuoso, Manu

Dibango. In 1984, Ekow Savage and Roots Anabo performed at the Reggae Sunsplash Festival in Montego Bay, Jamaica, where they met acclaimed musicians such as Glen Browne, which led to the partial recording of an album titled, "Civilization".

He has performed with musicians such as Ziggy Marley, Kojo Antwi and Eeke Mouse. Savage has also toured extensively with Vitamin X and Africa

Mama, Ghanaian groups based in Germany. In between the performance tours, he managed to record five albums with Vitamin X.

His first solo album, "Return to Zion", which caught the eyes of critics and promoters, was recorded in Germany and Jamaica. His recent album, "Going for Gold", was released in 2007 in Accra to mark Ghana's 50th independence celebrations.



Elivava





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**You Need To Know**

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## Savage Re-launches "Going For Gold"

"GOING FOR GOLD", a ten track album by the German-based musician, Ekow Alabi Savage will on Friday March 28 be re-launched at the Next Door Beach Resort in Accra.

The album, which is laced with refreshing rhythms dubbed Afro pop by Savage is an interesting mix of sounds and beats that boast of dramatic chord progressions. The occasion, which will also witness live performances will also mark the 51st birthday of Savage.

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Ekow Alabi Savage





# New Vision

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## Defining A Bright Future For Ghana

### Mojo Klub To Host Live Band Music

By Baba Abdulai

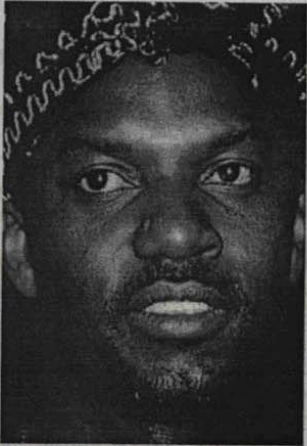
Germany based musician Ekow Alabi Savage of Roots Anabo fame is bringing together acclaimed musicians like De Roy Ebow Taylor, Pat Thomas, Amandzeba Brew, Shasha Marley and Kwame Yeboah for a regular live band show at the Mojo Klub in Accra. It will begin on Wednesday, March 5, 2008.

Mojo Klub is located at the Next Door Beach Resort in Accra and the regular Wednesday performance will be backed by members of the Afrikan Unity Band, who are determined to revive the culture of live band music in Accra.

Coordinated by Ekow, the programme is expected to be extended to other parts of Accra and Ghana in a bid to unearth hidden talents and offer quality entertainment to Ghanaians at all times.

Ekow shot to fame in the early 1980s when as the drummer of the African reggae band Roots Anabo, their songs were a must-play at parties and other social events. Roots Anabo was a band that managed to create its own rhythmical style known as "Sunshine Music". Determined to showcase its artistic creations the band participated in a number of music festivals in Europe.

Before moving to Germany where he has been living for almost three decades, Ekow performed with a number of renowned African bands and musicians including the late Afro Beat King Fela Anikulapo Kuti and the Cameroonian saxophone virtuoso Manu Dibango.



**Ekow Alabi Savage**

In 1984, Ekow and Roots Anabo performed at the Reggae Sunsplash Festival in Montego Bay, Jamaica, where they met acclaimed musicians such as Glen Browne, which led to the partial recording of an album titled "Civilization".

He has also performed with musicians such as Ziggy Marley, Kojo Antwi and Eke Mouse. Ekow has also toured extensively with Vitamin X and Africa Mma, Ghanaian groups based in Germany. In between performances and tours, he managed to record five albums with Vitamin X.

His first solo album "Return to Zion", which caught the eyes of critics and promoters was recorded in Germany and Jamaica. His recent album, "Going for Gold", was released in 2007 in Accra to mark Ghana's 50th independence celebrations.





# DAILY GUIDE

Big In News, Big In Spread

NO. 042/08 WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2008 70Gp

## Live Band Music At Mojo Klub

**Shasha Marley**

**By George Clifford Owusu**

GERMAN-BASED musician Ekow Alabi Savage together with acclaimed musicians such as De Roy Ebow Taylor, Pat Thomas, Amantseba Brev, Shasha Marley and Kwame Yehosh will on Wednesday March 5 commence a regular live band show at the Mojo Klub in Accra.

Located at the Next Door Beach Resort in Accra, the regular Wednesday performance will be backed by members of the African Unity Band, who

are determined to revive the culture of live band music in Accra.

Coordinated by Savage, the programme would be extended to other parts of Accra and Ghana in a bid to attract hidden talents and offer quality entertainment to Ghanaians and foreigners in the country at all times.

Ekow Savage shot to fame in the early 1980s with Roots Ambo, a band that managed to create its own rhythmic style known as "Sunshine Music".

Determined to showcase its artistic creations the group participated in a number of music

festivals in Europe.

Before moving to Germany where he has lived for three decades, Savage performed with a number of renowned African bands and musicians including the late Afro Beat King Fela Anikulapo Kuti and the saxophone virtuoso Mann Dibiaho.

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In between the performance tours he managed to record five albums with Vitamin X.

His first solo album "Return to Zion", which caught the eyes of critics and promoters was recorded in Germany and Jamaica. His recent album, "Going for Gold", was released in 2007 in Accra to mark Ghana's 50th independence celebrations.

**Ekow Savage**





## Ekow Alabi for Zanzibar

By John Owoo

**G**ermany-based Ghanaian musician, Ekow Alabi Savage together with the Afro-German musician Ade Bantu, left Accra yesterday for Zanzibar to participate in the 2008 edition of the Sauti Za Busara Music Festival.

Ekow told this writer in a chat that the three-day festival, which takes off today Thursday February 7, will feature over 20 groups from 12

countries selected from East and West Africa, Europe and Japan.

Ekow will play drums when Ade Bantu's Afrobeat Academy mounts the stage in Zanzibar, which is noted for its rich and diverse culture owing to influences by Arab, Persian, South Asian and African traditions.

Ekow shot to fame in the early 1980s with Roots Anabo, a reggae-biased band that created its own mixture of reggae and high-life known as "Sunlife Music".

Before moving to Germany where he has lived for nearly two decades, Ekow played drums for renowned African bands and musicians including the late Afro Beat King, Fela Anikulapo Kuti and saxophone virtuoso, Manu Dibango.

In 1984, Ekow and Roots Anabo performed at the famous Reggae Sunsplash Festival in Montego Bay, Jamaica, where they met some top-flight musicians including the Jamaican bassist extraordinaire, producer and bandleader Glen Browne, which led to the recording of their debut album titled *Civilization*.

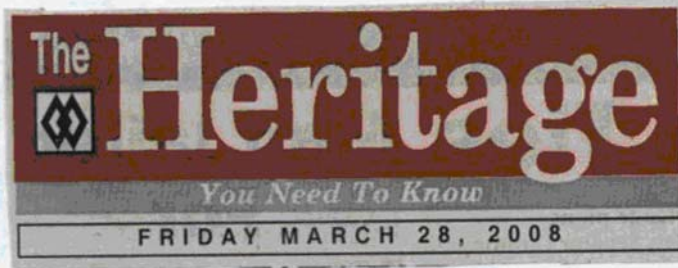
Ekow, who intends to commence a live band show at the Mojo Night Club in Accra soon, has also performed with musicians such as Ziggy Marley, Kojo Antwi and Jamaican reggae star Eek-a-Mouse. He has also toured extensively with Vitamin X and Africa Mma, two Ghanaian groups based in Germany.

Ekow's first solo album *Return To Zion*, which caught the eyes of critics and promoters alike was recorded in Germany and Jamaica. His latest album, *Going for Gold*, was released in Accra last year to mark Ghana's 50th independence anniversary celebrations.



• Ekow Alabi Savage





## Glitz And Glamour At MTN /GMA Launch

IT WAS ALL glitz and glamour at the poolside of the Golden Tulip Hotel in Accra during the launch of this year's MTN Ghana Music Awards. It was a nite that saw an array of all those who matter in the music industry in Ghana from the artistes to managers, producers, arts writers and television crew to fans of the various musicians as well as ministers of state who had graced the occasion.

The event also marked the formal unveiling for the artistes vying for awards in the various categories of the competition, which is in its ninth year.

This year's event could pass for one of the most keenly contested in recent years looking at the crop of musicians nominated for awards especially the nominations for the public awards.

Interestingly again this year the gospel artistes top the charts of the artistes with highest number of nominations and are also keenly contesting for the topmost

award, which last was narrowly missed by gospel artiste of the year, Kwaku Gyasi when King Ayisoba piped him.

New kid on the block on gospel scene Cee together with another gospel sensation Ohemaa Mercy top the list with six nominations each with Ohemaa Mercy being nominated for the Artiste of the Year award.

Ofori Amponsah who has five nominations including the Artiste of the Year Award closely follows them. Other leading artistes hotly contesting for honours in this year's award are 5five, Shasha Marley, K.K Fosu, Irene and Jane, daddy Lumba, Pastor Lenny Akpadie, Becca, Daasebra Dwamna, Kwaw Kesse and Adane Best.

Looking at the list of nominations for this year's awards one can not afford to be at the grand in Accra come Saturday April 26 to see who goes home smiling and who gets disappointed.



Some of the musicians who graced the occasion