



## #Support Local: Panache Design and Architects

### Description

Luxurious mansions, private beach condos and tiny mobile homes all have one thing in common: They were all just a drawing on a piece of paper at some point. Thereafter, brick by brick, they were built and brought to life: The manifestation of imagination. They also point to another reality, which is that everyone desires to build their own reality. Whether it is the friends you keep, the places you visit, the movies you watch, you are constantly shaping the world you want to live in. Even if you don't know it. During the lead up to this issue we spoke with Malamulo Banda, the co-founder and one of the directors of Panache Design Architects. As an architect, he shares the same sentiment and in his own words, he believes that, "The home is a sanctuary and everyone deserves to design and build their own."

[Meet the Panache's directors](#)



Bupe Mulenga



Malamulo Banda

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## Ben Mulunga

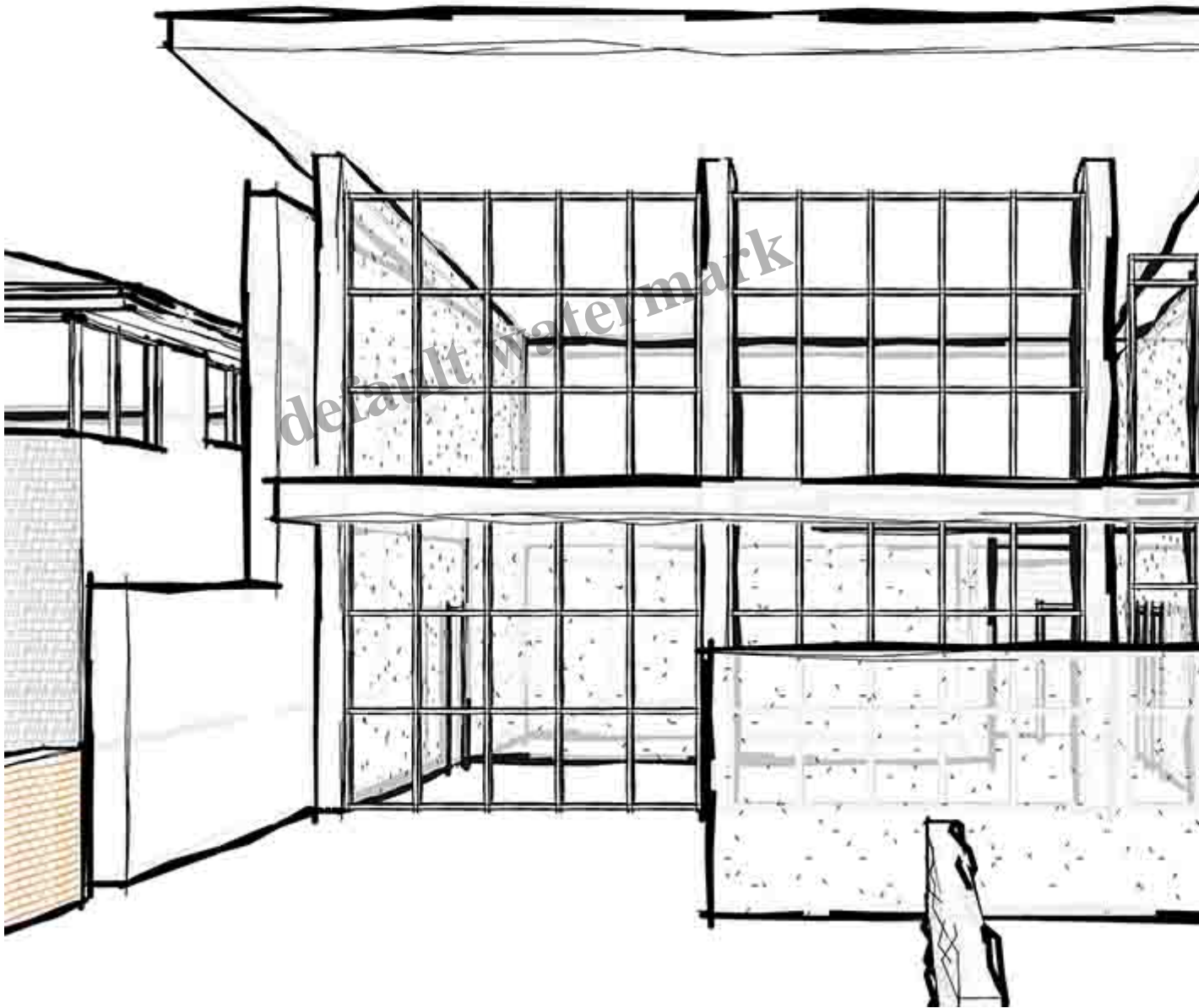
Pananche is the brain child of an entrepreneurial vision. During his university years at Copper Belt University in Kitwe Zambia, Mala, as he is sometimes affectionately called, decided he would start his own architectural design studio. Faced with the harsh reality of an economy in decline and limited employment opportunities in a relatively small industry, the only option was the muster up courage and open up his own shop. The studio opened in 2013 and operated in Zambia until they finally established their headquarters in the city of Cape Town, the design capital of Africa.

Malamulo was and is currently employed for another architectural firm in Cape Town. We asked him why he chose to continue working for them and he illuminated on the importance of mentorship, exposure, networking and the security that comes with a permanent job. To be successful you have to learn from those who have gone before you and employment can be the perfect environment to learn and hone your craft.

To start your own firm is no easy feat. You have to be resilient, consistent and driven. What drives Malamulo is the opportunity to serve the community and create jobs. The studio operates across the Central and Southern region of the continent, with current projects in South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia respectively. Architecture provides a perfect platform to fulfill that vision because design and construction is a labour intensive process that pools together different professions and ultimately puts food on many tables. For example, a typical building project will normally have an architect, a sight manager, electrical engineer, mechanical engineer, structural engineer, sight foreman and actual builders to name a few of the players involved.

Establishing their headquarters in Cape Town has afforded them access to a well developed architectural and design industry. South African architectural style is diverse, from Cape-Dutch gable facades and parapet walls, historic European inspired inner-city buildings and modern monstrosities in Gauteng. It also offers a well regulated industry and governing body, which makes a career in architecture all the more worth pursuing.

"IB Residence" – A conceptual design with photorealistic visuals



IB Residence Sketch (2018)





IB Residence Photorealistic concept 2018)

Looking back at Panache studio's success, Malamulo reminisced about the journey, which has been nothing short of adventurous. In 2013, Panache was crowned as the first winners of the Zambian Ecohome Green Design Competition. Design competitions are worth their weight in gold in the architecture industry. Exhibitions and competitions are the main avenue for growing your architectural



business. And this so in Zambia particularly because the law prohibits studios from advertising their business. Furthermore, because it is such a small industry, your main source of recognition is through networking and references, and that marginalizes newcomers and budding entrepreneurs.

However, the Covid-19 pandemic leveled the playing field somewhat. All firms, big or small did not have access to in-person interactions, and could not woo clients with lavish business lunches and networking events. With everyone limited to their homes, social media became a useful tool to interact with potential clients. Instagram images of completed projects were as good as references. Currently, Mala has been flying back and forth between Dar es Salam, supervising a building project for a client he met through Instagram. But with all the success that comes with easier advertising and improved business, also comes the challenges and practicalities of running a business. For example the difference between the gratifying **work in the business** which for him is the creative work of designing and the more difficult **work of a business** that includes the administrative tasks, managing finances, advertising and sales. His strategy is to take it all one day at a time, focussing on the bigger picture and being grateful for how far they have come.

Panache is a beacon of light across an African continent facing issues of unemployment and adequate housing. Their work epitomises excellence and is highly commendable. Building projects create jobs and the continent need more and more jobs to enable people to look after their families. At present, Panache is getting ready to launch a new project in the next 6 months that aims to provide simple house plans at an affordable price that do not require expert hands or expensive material. It is safe to predict the joy that this project will bring as more people get the opportunity to build and shape their own reality.

All that is left to say is watch the space.

**A selection of photos from Panache Architectural Design Gallery**









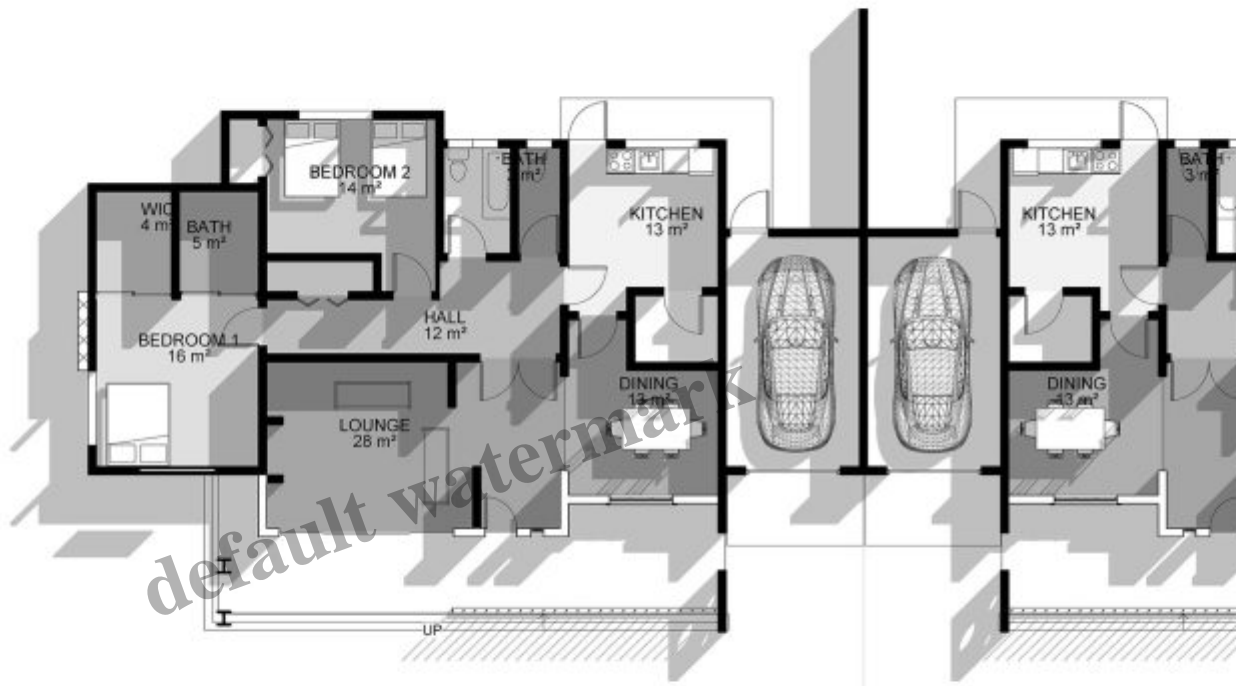






























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