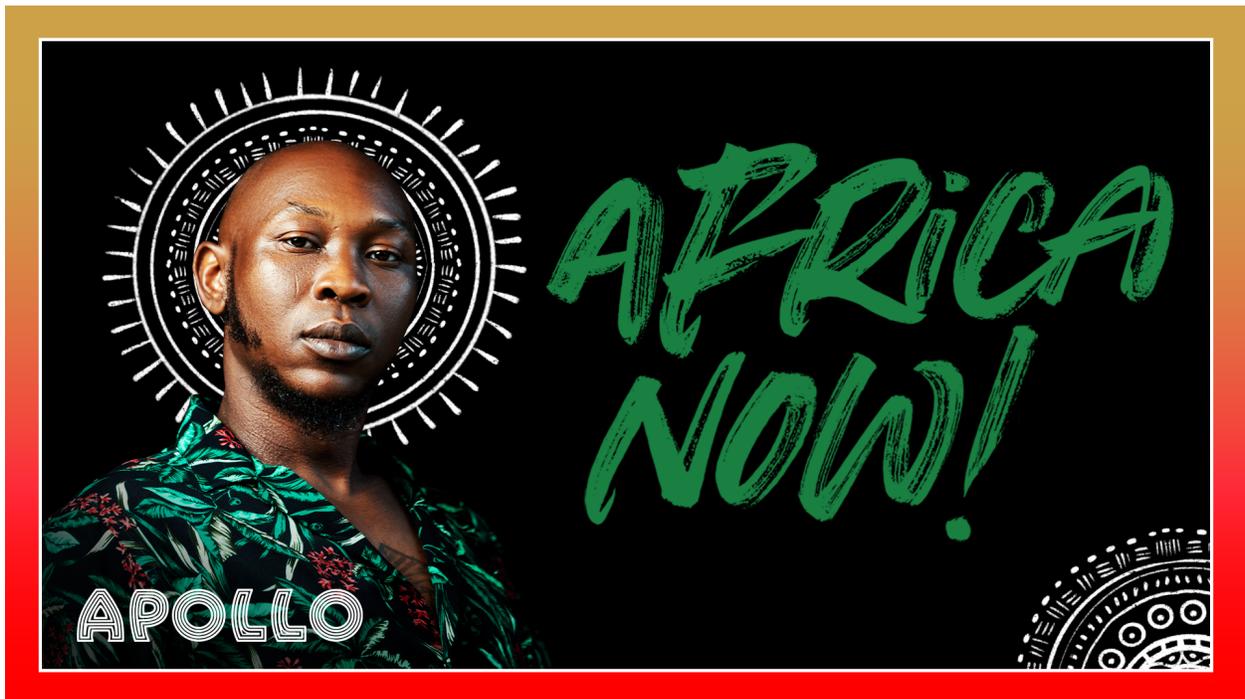


APOLLO

***Africa Now!* Returns To The Apollo with Grammy-Nominated Artist Seun Kuti & Egypt 80**

***Africa Now!* includes a screening of *Tonton Manu* highlighting Cameroonian saxophone legend Manu Dibango, a performance by Afrosoul singer and songwriter Preyé, a panel discussion on Art, Politics and Culture in Nigeria, and more.**



Harlem, NY – (Mar. 9, 2023) - The Apollo announces that Nigerian artist and activist **Seun Kuti**, the youngest son of Afrobeat pioneer Fela Kuti and the legendary band **Egypt 80** will headline The Apollo's *Africa Now!* series on April 15 . For the ninth year, *Africa Now!* will spotlight contemporary musicians, comedians, filmmakers, and cultural innovators from the continent April 13-15, 2023.

Africa Now! kicks off on **April 13** with Apollo Comedy Club featuring **Learnmore Jonasi, Quadir Yussuf, and Karmen Naidoo; hosted by Alfred Kainga.** The celebration continues with an Apollo Music Café performance featuring Nigerian Afrosoul singer and songwriter **Préyé** on **April 14**, a screening and post film discussion of **ImageNation's Cocktails and Sol Cinema - *Tonton Manu*** by **Thierry Dechilly and Patrick Puzena** and an intimate panel conversation **At *The Crossroads: Art, Politics and Culture in Nigeria*** on **April 15.** The festivities culminate that evening with **Seun Kuti & Egypt 80.** Tickets start at \$15 and are available for purchase at apollotheater.org/africa-now-2023.

“We’re thrilled to welcome back our *Africa Now!* celebration,” said **Leatrice Ellzy, Senior Director of Programming, The Apollo.** “The music, film, theater and creative forms from the continent are so alive and layered with texture and context. African artistic expression has always been in vogue, and continues to drive cultural trends across the globe. When curating this year’s *Africa Now!* series, art and activism were central to our decision making process. Seun Kuti and Egypt 80 were at the top of our

list. Beyond the strength of the music, Seun's uncompromised messaging against oppression and unwavering support of the people is exactly what we want to amplify."

As a developing saxophonist and percussionist, Seun entered the formal ranks of Egypt 80 before he was 12. Fela Kuti passed away in 1997, and Seun, in fulfillment of his father's wishes, assumed the mantle as head of Egypt 80; Since then, Seun has continued the family tradition of fusing music and politics into something transcendent. With his music, weekly radio show, and mythical gigs, Seun is a towering figure in Nigeria and revered worldwide. His mission is vast: "Inspire Africa to be what it is supposed to be." In December, Seun Kuti & Egypt 80 released *African Dreams*, a musical collaboration with **The Roots'** lead MC, **Black Thought**. Most recently they were featured on **Janelle Monae's** single "Float".

"The Apollo's rich history of honoring artists in performance and dialogue affirms its place as a beacon for the global African community. This year's artists are outspoken contemporary voices of African culture and it's a great honor to center them on Apollo's stages for the *Africa Now!* series." said, **Sinat Giwa, guest curator and founder of Capital Goods**.

Africa Now! is a continuation of the Apollo's 2022-2023 season, The Next Movement, an exploration of what's new, now and next in music, dance, art and ideas. Tickets start at \$15 and are available for purchase online and in-person. The Apollo continues its Half off for Harlem programming, enabling Harlem residents, employees, business owners, and students to save 50% on tickets on select performances throughout the season including Seun Kuti & Egypt 80.

For the complete *Africa Now!* line-up, details about Half-off-for-Harlem, and more information about the Apollo, please visit www.ApolloTheater.org.

About The Events

Thursday, April 13 – Apollo Comedy Club featuring Learnmore Jonasi, Quadir Yussuf, and Karmen Naidoo; hosted by Alfred Kainga
10:00PM

Apollo's Soundstage

Tickets start at \$26.50

This edition of the legendary Apollo Comedy Club, curated by Bob Sumner (producer of Def Comedy Jam, creator of Laff Mobb on Aspire), celebrates the rich and unparalleled influence of the African Diaspora on the global community. The Festival kicks off with Apollo Comedy Club on the intimate Apollo Soundstage for a night of laughter featuring Learnmore Jonasi, Quadir Yussuf and Karmen Naidoo; hosted by Alfred Kainga.

Friday, April 14 – Apollo Music Café: Preyé

10:00PM

Apollo's Soundstage

Tickets start at \$28.50

The journey through the continent continues with Africa Now! edition of Apollo Music Café. Nigerian Afrosoul singer and songwriter Preye makes her New York City debut at The Apollo with a sensual night of music set to warm Afrobeats and harmonious, velvety smooth vocals. Curated by Capital Goods.

Saturday, April 15 – At The Crossroads: Art, Politics and Culture in Nigeria

2:00PM

Apollo's Soundstage

Tickets start at \$15

Join an intimate panel discussion (curated by Capital Goods) including artist Seun Kuti, author and medical doctor Dr. Uzodinma Uweala and hosted by award-winning journalist, Ivie Ani, as they discuss the contemporary convergence of art, politics, and culture in Nigeria and how it is reverberating on the global stage.

Saturday, April 15 – ImageNation's Cocktails & Sol Cinema: Tonton Manu

5:00PM

Apollo's Soundstage

Tickets start at \$26.50

The Apollo continues its collaboration with ImageNation by co-presenting the Cocktails & Sol Cinema Series, a social gathering that includes a film screening, cocktail reception, and a post-show conversation with the filmmakers.

This special Africa Now! edition of Cocktails & Sol Cinema features Thierry Dechilly and Patrick Puzenat's 2021 documentary, *Tonton Manu*, which follows the daily life of composer, musician, journalist, and ambassador of the Francophone world, Manu Dibango.

Saturday, April 15 – *Seun Kuti & Egypt 80*

8:00PM

Apollo's Historic Theater

Tickets start at \$28

Africa Now! closes with an explosive performance from Seun Kuti & Egypt 80. The youngest son of Afrobeat pioneer Fela Kuti, Seun has continued his father's commanding legacy since 1997. After touring the globe relentlessly, Kuti and the legendary Egypt 80 make their way to The Apollo stage.

About Africa Now!

Celebrate the rich and unparalleled influence of the African Diaspora on the global community in a weekend-long celebration like no other. For its ninth season, *Africa Now!* spotlights cultural innovators and global thinkers from the continent in a celebration of contemporary musicians, comedians, filmmakers, and cultural innovators on the world-famous Apollo stage. Tap in and check out this year's lineup of artists who are revolutionizing and driving trends across all facets of culture. Previous performers include Somi, Black Coffee, Yvonne Orji, and Luvvie Ajayi.

Africa Now! is a continuation of the Apollo's 2022-2023 season, *The Next Movement*, an exploration of what's new, now and next in music, dance, art and ideas.

About The Apollo

The legendary Apollo—the soul of American culture—plays a vital role in cultivating emerging artists and launching legends. Since its founding, The Apollo has served as a center of innovation and a creative catalyst for Harlem, the city of New York, and the world. In 2023, The Apollo will open The Apollo's Victoria Theater, which will include two new theater spaces, and begin the renovation of its Historic Theater, marking the first ever expansion and renovation of The Apollo in its nearly 90-year history. Read more about the project here: www.apollotheater.org/renovation-restoration-and-transformation/

With music at its core, The Apollo's programming extends to dance, theater, spoken word, and more. This includes the world premiere of the theatrical adaptation of Ta-Nehisi Coates's *Between the World and Me* and the New York premiere of the opera *We Shall Not Be Moved*; special programs such as the blockbuster concert *Bruno Mars Live at the Apollo*; *100: The Apollo Celebrates Ella*; and the annual *Africa Now!* Festival. The non-profit Apollo is a performing arts presenter, commissioner, and collaborator that also produces festivals, large-scale dance and musical works organized around a set of core initiatives that celebrate and extend The Apollo's legacy through a contemporary lens, including the *Women of the World (WOW)* Festival as well as other multidisciplinary collaborations with partner organizations.

Since introducing the first *Amateur Night* contests in 1934, The Apollo has served as a testing ground for new artists working across a variety of art forms and has ushered in the emergence of many new musical genres—including jazz, swing, bebop, R&B, gospel, blues, soul, and hip-hop. Among the countless legendary performers who launched their careers at The Apollo are Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holiday, James Brown, Stevie Wonder, Gladys Knight, Luther Vandross, H.E.R., D'Angelo, Lauryn Hill,

Machine Gun Kelly, and Miri Ben Ari; and The Apollo's forward-looking artistic vision continues to build on this legacy. For more information about The Apollo, visit www.ApolloTheater.org.

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