

With pulsating rhythms, a captivating voice and dazzling stage presence, Angélique Kidjo transforms her many musical influences into a riveting Afro-pop tour de force. She is touring in support of her recording *Oyaya!*, a red hot fusion of African and Caribbean music.

Angélique Kidjo grew up in Benin, a country in West Africa between Togo and Nigeria. While her music is steeped in the traditional and pop rhythms of her West African heritage, Kidjo crosses musical boundaries by blending tribal fon rhythms, chants and godagado drum patterns with funk, R&B, salsa, samba, rumba, makossa, jazz, zouk, house and hip-hop. Her collaborations have also varied widely, including such luminaries as Dave Matthews, Cassandra Wilson, Miriam Makeba, Carlos Santana and former Prince sideman David Z, but her culture-bridging fusions are as seamless as they are sincere. Her passionate songs contain poignant social messages about modern issues such as race and independence. Her music glorifies individual cultures while also underlining their universal similarities. The result is a fervent pop music that calls with an equal urgency to both Western and African listeners.

Since emerging in the late 1980's, Angélique Kidjo has released nine albums, produced several hit singles and garnered three Grammy nominations. In December 2003, she shared the stage with Bono, Peter Gabriel, Dave Steward and others in Cape Town, South Africa as part of the 46664-The Concert. The event was part of Nelson Mandela's worldwide music-led campaign to raise awareness of the devastating impact of AIDS in Africa. In May 2004, Kidjo participated in the We Are the Future Concert in Rome produced by Quincy Jones which also featured Alicia Keys, Andrea Bocelli and Norah Jones, to name a few. With fellow African stars Youssou N'Dour, Salif Keita, Baaba Maal and Manu Dibango, Kidjo recorded the song *Africa 2015* which is being used to support the work of the brand of the United Nations devoted to development (UNDP). As a UNICEF Good Ambassador, Kidjo continues to travel the world. She has recently been helping to raise awareness of a new UNICEF Program, Girls Education, which has been designed to help eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education.

In the fall 2005, Angélique Kidjo will be featured in the Antoine Fuqua's upcoming film *Lightning in a Bottle* which features a soundtrack recorded at the historic Salute to The Blues concert in February 2003, at New York City's Radio City Music Hall. The concert featured legendary blues royalty ranging from B.B. King and Buddy Guy to India Arie and Kidjo.

Angélique Kidjo is touring in support of her most recent album, *Oyaya!*, released in May 2004 on Sony Music/Columbia. Produced by Steve Berlin, *Oyaya!* is the third part of a trilogy exploring African roots in music from the United States (*Oremi*, 1998), Brazil (*Black Ivory Soul*,

Angelique Kidjo Tours The US Europe

Written by Staff ID1222

Wednesday, 20 April 2005 04:19 -

2002), and now the Caribbean (Oyaya!). The album includes 13 original songs penned by Kidjo and her husband, Jean Hebrail and features indigenous Caribbean styles such as salsa, calypso, meringue and ska.

Thursday May 12th @ 9:00 PM (Doors @ 6:00 PM)

B.B. King's Blues Club and Grill

237 West 42nd Street, New York

Complete confirmed U.S. tour dates include:

Sun May 08 Lebanon NH Lebanon Opera House

Tue May 10 Philadelphia PA World Café Live

Wed May 11 Hartford CT Bushnell Center for the Performing Arts

Thu May 12 New York NY B.B. King's

Fri May 13 Princeton NJ McCarter Theater

Sat May 14 Somerville MA Somerville Theater