

Season 12 Of AfroPoP Starts Opening Night With Documentaries About Fela & Tony Allen



Still from *My Friend Fela* (l-r) Carlos Moore with Fela Kuti—Photo Courtesy of Wide House



Tony Allen as seen in *Birth of Afrobeat*, photo courtesy of Opiyo Okeyo_ restinbeats.com

The 12th season of *AfroPoP: The Ultimate Cultural Exchange* will open with two documentaries about Fela Kuti and Tony Allen, the originators of Afrobeat. Premiering on the WORLD channel at 8 PM ET on January 20th will be Joel Zito Araña's film *My Friend Fela* followed by *Birth Of Afrobeat* from director Opiyo Okeyo. Araña follows Carlos Moore, a close friend and official biographer of Fela's around as he talks about unknown aspects of the late musician's life. The director seeks to challenge the notion that Fela was the "eccentric African pop idol of the ghetto" by looking at archival interviews, photos and Moore's conversations with Fela's wives, family and bandmates. Moore also looks at Nigerian political strife during Fela's lifetime and Pan-African ideology that shaped his beliefs and influenced his music.

The premiere episode will end with the short film *Birth Of Afrobeat*. The live-action and animated feature reveals iconic drummer Tony Allen's story as he records the album *What Goes Up* with the American band Chicago Afrobeat Project in 2017 and

discusses and how and Fela created the Afrobeat genre. "Season 12 launches with two films that pay tribute to the enduring legacy of two cultural trailblazers and the music they created which has done so much to unite people around the world around political struggles and shared realities," said Black Public Media Executive Director and Leslie Fields-Cruz.

Each episode of season 12 of *AfroPoP: The Ultimate Cultural Exchange* will also be available for streaming on worldchannel.org beginning on the day of its broadcast premiere.

For more information on the series and its episodes, visit www.blackpublicmedia.org. For viewing information, check local listings or visit www.aptonline.org