

R.I.P. Tony Allen



Nigerian drummer Tony Allen, who created the Afrobeat genre with Fela Kuti died in Paris at the age of 79 on Thursday. The cause of death was an aortic aneurysm. Allen was Kuti's drummer and musical director from 1968 to 1979 for the Africa '70 band. The artists had played together in the past on the Lagos scene but Fela chose Allen for his band because he was the only drummer using the highlife sound and blending it with jazz. It was during this time that Fela produced music like the incendiary *Zombie* album that criticized the Nigerian government. The music was so popular that the officials destroyed Fela's Kalakuta Republic commune and threw his mother out of a window. Allen did release three solo albums while he was with Fela; *Jealousy*, *Progress* and *No Accommodation For Lagos*. By the end of the decade, Allen left Fela's band for good and morphed his sound into what he called Afrofunk using R&B, dub, electronic and rap. He recorded over 10 solo albums and made music with many collaborators including Manu Dibango, Damon Albarn, DJ Jeff Mills, Flea and Oumou Sangaré. In 2019, filmmaker Opiyo Okeyo's film about Allen's life *Birth Of Afrobeat* screened at the American Black Film Festival.

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Seun Kutì & Egypt 80 Announce U.S. Tour



Fresh off the mighty *From Africa With Fury: Rise*, Seun Anikulapo Kutì heads up Egypt 80, the extraordinary Afrobeat Orchestra first fronted by his renowned father. The album was not only praised for continuing the musical legacy of his father, Fela Kutì, but also because Seun found his own idiosyncratic voice as songwriter, singer, and band leader, its songs and sonic approach marked by provocative edge and mature self-assurance. Production was provided by the legendary Brian Eno, John Reynolds, Godwin Logie, and Kutì himself. The four worked in unison to masterfully capture Seun and Egypt 80's extraordinary power, fraught with the scorching rhythms and kinetic funk energy that has earned the band – as ever, under the leadership of musical director/keyboardist Lekan Animashaun – worldwide acclaim as one of today's most incendiary live acts. With Kutì's booming vocal stylings at the forefront, songs like "African Soldiers" and "Mr. Big Thief" are fueled by call-and-response hooks, breakneck tempos, and combative, topical lyricism which firmly sets the classic Egypt 80 sound in the modern era.

Born in 1983, Seun first began performing with Egypt 80 at the age of nine, warming up audiences with renditions of his father's songs. After Fela's death in 1997, Seun stepped up to the front of the band, leading the celebrated combo as both lead vocalist and saxophonist. While his father's influence cannot be understated, Kutì was determined to cut his own distinctive musical path, incorporating contemporary influences into the traditional Afrobeat approach.

After a whirlwind summer 2011 tour, Seun Kutì and Egypt 80 return this spring on a mammoth cross country tour – taking in

30+ dates across the breadth and width of the US – distinguished by the variety of venues and events in the tour schedule, with shows in the clubs, theaters, performing arts centers and the spring's biggest festivals: SXSW, Coachella, New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Fest, Houstin I-Fest, International Festival of Louisiana, Lake Eden Arts Festival and many more.

Brian Eno hailed Seun and Egypt 80 for “making some of the biggest, wildest, livest music on the planet.” While the amazing horns, rhythms, and chants of Egypt 80 are bound to excite listeners young and old, it is Seun's larger than life soul that is certain to touch the hearts and minds of all who meet him. Together, Seun and Egypt 80 deliver a musical punch of the most incredible force. Audiences are sure to feel adrenaline rush.

Tour Dates:

3/15 – SXSW – Austin, TX
3/16 – Neumo's – Seattle, WA
3/17 – Mt. Tabor Theater – Portland, OR
3/18 – W.O.W. Hall – Eugene, OR
3/21 – Center for the Arts – Grass Valley, CA
3/23 – Moe's – Santa Cruz, CA
3/24 – Mateel Cultural Center – Redway, CA
3/28 – Belly Up – Aspen, CO
3/29 – Boulder Theater – Boulder, CO
3/30 – Granada Theater – Lawrence, KS
3/31 – Englert Theater – Iowa City, IA
4/1 – House of Blues – Chicago, IL
4/4 – Variety – Atlanta, GA
4/5 – Duke Performances – Durham, NC
4/6- Soundstage – Baltimore, MD
4/7 – Club Helsinki – Hudson, NY
4/8 – Highline Ballroom – New York, NY
4/12 – UW Madison – Madison, WI
4/13 – Rhythm Foundation – Miami, FL

4/14 – The Cedar – Minneapolis, MN
4/15 – Coachella – Indio, CA
4/16 – Campbell Hall – Santa Barbara, CA
4/18 – UC San Diego – San Diego, CA
4/19 – Zellerbach Hall – Berkeley, CA
4/20 – UCLA Royce Hall – Los Angeles, CA
4/22 – Coachella – Indio, CA
4/24 – KTAOS Solar Center – Taos, NM
4/25 – Albuquerque Museum Amphitheater – Albuquerque, NM
4/27 – New Orleans Jazz Festival – New Orleans, LA
4/29 – Houston International Festival – Houston, TX
5/2 – House of Blues – New Orleans, LA
5/13 – Lake Eden Arts Festival – Black Mountain, NC

Happy Birthday Fela!