

Shawn 'Jay-Z' Carter, Will & Jada Pinkett Smith, And Questlove Bring FELA! The Musical Back To Broadway + FELA! Announces Partnership With Tupac Foundation

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Producers Shawn 'JAY Z' Carter, Will & Jada Pinkett Smith, Ruth & Stephen Hendel, Ahmir 'Questlove' Thompson and The National Theatre of Great Britain today announced the return of the critically acclaimed, award-winning production of Fela!, currently on a multi-city world tour, for a limited run of 32 performances ONLY at the Al Hirschfeld Theatre (302 West 45th Street) from July 9 – August 4. Get tickets here. The world renowned Antibalas and other members of the NYC Afrobeat community, under the direction of Aaron Johnson, again perform Kuti's rousing music live onstage. Recipient of three 2010 Tony Awards (Best Choreography, Best Costumes, Best Sound Design), Fela!, features the music and lyrics of Fela Kuti as conceived by director and choreographer Bill T. Jones.

As Michelle Obama, Kanye West, Kofi Annan, Madonna, Prince, and many more celebrities take to the theatre to profess their love of Fela Kuti's Afrobeat message, Knitting Factory Records continues to release rare recordings and special editions of Kuti's work, in addition to new albums by his sons Seun Kuti, Femi Kuti, and his cousins the marvelous Lijadu Sisters. Over the past 2 years, Knitting Factory Records has reissued the entire Fela Kuti catalogue digitally and on CD, and has released one vinyl boxset, curated by Questlove of The Roots.

This year, a second vinyl boxset will be released in addition to a number of rare and live recordings. Knitting Factory Records is also in the process of reissuing monumental recordings by Kuti's cousins, The Lijadu Sisters, which have been unavailable for almost three decades. Fans can purchase these releases and more the Knitting [Factory Records](#) website.

FELA! is proud to announce a partnership with the Tupac Amaru Shakur Foundation. Founded in 1997, originally as the Shakur Family Foundation by Afeni Shakur, mother of Tupac. Since its inception TASF has offered performing arts camps, essay competitions, youth book clubs, visual arts workshops, community development projects, and scholarships to students pursuing undergraduate degrees. Recently Joakim Noah of the Chicago Bulls compared Fela to Tupac, saying "For my generation, there hasn't been anyone since Tupac who spoke up with a real powerful, impactful message. And to me, Fela is the real pioneer of that." Upon attending a birthday party for President Obama, Joakim brought him a group of Fela Kuti CD's to which Obama responded, "Now I'm 45 years old, do you think I don't know who Fela is?" Watch the entire segment [here](#).

Critics around the world have been effusive in their praise for Fela!. Upon the show's original opening on Broadway in 2009, the kinetic energy pulsing from the music and dancing of Fela! prompted Ben Brantley of The New York Times to say "There should be dancing in the streets." The London critics were no less enthusiastic, with the Evening Standard honoring the production with four stars and proclaiming it "a bold new direction for musical theater!" Back in the U.S., Peter Marks of The Washington Post described it as "electroshock therapy for the soul," and Charles McNulty added in The Los Angeles Times that Fela! was "the most exuberant musical I've seen. The fusion of Fela's sound is rapturously celebrated with a pinwheel parade of pelvises." Boston's influential entertainment reporter, Joyce Kulhawik, demanded that her readers see the show calling it "one of the most exhilarating

and enlightening evenings I've ever spent in a theater!" And, as the Don Aucoin exclaimed in the Boston Globe, "Don't miss the electrifying, explosive and sensational Fela!," making its triumphant return to Broadway for a limited 32-performances, as part of its current world tour, from July 9 – August 4.

Fela! returns to Broadway for 32 performances ONLY beginning Monday, July 9 at 7pm and playing through August 4 at the Al Hirschfeld Theatre, 302 West 45th Street at 8th Avenue. Tickets can be purchased online at www.Telecharge.com, by phone (212) 239-6200 or in-person at the Al Hirschfeld Theatre, 302 West 45th Street at 8th Avenue (beginning June 18).

FELA! Tickets: <http://www.Telecharge.com>