



Image: Angélique Kidjo. Photo by Fabrice Mabillo

Angélique Kidjo at The Met

Monday, April 25 at 7 pm
Tuesday, April 26 at 7 pm
The Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium

Angélique Kidjo, vocals
Dominic James, guitar
Michael Olatuja, bass
Magatte Sow, percussion
Yayo Serka, cajon

This program is made possible by the Adrienne Arsht Fund for Resilience through Art. Additional funding is provided by the New York State Council on the Arts.

Learn more about the artists at kidjo.com.

Notes on the Program

An integral part of the re-envisioning of the Africa galleries in The Michael C. Rockefeller Wing has been organizing curatorial briefings with an extensive global cohort of leading experts in the arts and humanities. Over the course of the planning process, those extended interdisciplinary conversations on critical dimensions of the works in our care are playing a vital role in shaping the more expansive cultural framework that will re-introduce the significance of the traditions represented in the Africa collection in 2024. Angélique Kidjo has been a leader among the community of some thirty visionaries in fields ranging from architecture, the visual arts, fashion, literature, philosophy, religion, archaeology, and history who have contributed insights to their profound connection to the content relating to the continent's culturally diverse and dynamic legacy. We are in the process of recording illuminating interviews that focus on different facets of that content. A far-ranging conversation with Angélique Kidjo will be among those shared contributions that will vitally enrich our visitors' appreciation of Africa's unrivaled place in the realm of culture.

The performing arts have been an essential context for the original experience of many of the classic sculptural masterpieces from Africa animated as they were by lyrics, musical accompaniment, and dance. This concert is a reflection of Angélique Kidjo's deep and multi-faceted engagement for over a decade with the artistic excellence of the achievements of African masters presented at The Met.

—Alisa LaGamma, Ceil and Michael E. Pulitzer Curator in Charge,
African Art in The Michael C. Rockefeller Wing

About the Africa galleries in The Michael C. Rockefeller Wing

The opening of the galleries devoted to the arts of sub-Saharan Africa, the ancient Americas, and Oceania in 1982 marked a radical expansion of the cultural achievements recognized at this institution. The design of the 40,000-square-foot Michael C. Rockefeller Wing (MCR) at the museum's southern frontier over the course of a decade by Kevin Roche and John Dinkeloo sought to parallel those built to house the Temple of Dendur at its northern end. The very addition of the new wing spurred a surge of art historical studies across the fields presented within its galleries, expanded public awareness of their importance, and contributed to its rapid outdating.

In Akan culture the term "Sankofa" refers to a quest for knowledge visualized as a bird with its feet planted forward while its head is turned backwards. This emphasis on critical examination and investigation of the past as a guide for planning a better future, began with the development of a strategic plan in 2015 by the Museum's curatorial and conservation team to reimagine the presentation of what are three distinct collections situated at what is a global crossroads. With the selection of WHY Architects as a creative partner the following year, that project has taken concrete shape in successive concept (2016–17), schematic (2018–19), and design development (2019–20) phases of a major renewal that represents a rethinking of these collections and their distinct presentations in The Met's galleries. Its implementation is currently underway and scheduled to reopen in 2024.

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Piano by Steinway & Sons

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The Metropolitan Museum of Art is on the island known as Mannahatta—now called Manhattan—in Lenapehoking, the homeland of the Lenape people.

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