



2-5 June 2020, Palais des Festivals, Cannes

PRESS RELEASE

AFROBEAT LEGEND FEMI KUTI DEBUT LIVE MIDEM SHOW



© Optimus Dammy

Paris, February 24 2020 – [Midem](#), the home of the global music community, today announces that Afrobeat legend, Femi Kuti, will make his Midem live concert debut at the event, 02-05 June 2020, Palais des Festivals, Cannes.

Afrobeat legend, Femi Kuti, will make his debut live performance at Midem during this year's edition. An auspicious occasion, this will be the first concert of any Kuti Family member at Midem in its 54 years. Continuing Femi's involvement in Midem's initiatives in Africa, including the 3 day **African Tour** within the continent, and the **African Music Forum** in Cannes, for which he was **Artist Ambassador** in 2019, the concert will mark his premiere on the Midem Beach.

The son of Fela Kuti, another of Africa's most iconic artists, Femi has freed himself from his father's legacy and is now the heart and soul of modern Afrobeat, continually expanding the music's vocabulary, adding hints of punk and hip-hop to the sound, while maintaining its traditional roots and political message.

Femi and his band, Positive Force, are at the forefront of the tour de force that is the Afrobeat movement. A multiple Grammy nominee, he is also recognised as a community leader and an inspiration for African resistance to the remnants of colonial mentality and economic hardship. His work as a campaigner has led him to become a spokesperson for UNICEF. An artist with a global outlook and appeal, [his recent collaborations have included working with artists such as Coldplay and Stromae](#). Femi Kuti was also one of the performers of the official song at the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) Opening Ceremony.

Having welcomed the Midem African Forum press conference and showcase at the Shrine in Lagos, the iconic venue and dancehall built by his father, Fela Kuti, in April 2019, Femi became a dedicated supporter of Midem's initiative for Africa at Midem in Cannes last year. Delivering his first keynote at the 2019 conference, Femi said, "I'm a pan-Africanist, meaning, I very much believe in the development of Africa." The sentiment is perfectly aligned with the objectives of Midem's Africa programme. His support of the Midem African Forum is motivated by his strong belief in the need for structuring the music industry in Africa through solid foundations such as training and education.

The Midem African Tour (February 25 - 28) & African Music Forum (02-05 June)

Inspired by the phenomenal influence African music has on the world's current music trends and tastes, the **African Music Forum** involves a dedicated event during Midem, but also, crucially, a series of events across the African continent to collaborate with the key players in the region driving the market's music industry forward.

This year sees events take place in **Lagos**, Nigeria on **25 February**, **Cape Town**, South Africa on **28 February** and the **African Music Forum** itself happens over three days in **Cannes, 2-5 June**. In addition to Femi, other Iconic musicians have been **Artist Ambassadors** for the initiative over the past 3 years - **Yemi Adele, Black Coffee, Davido and Maleek Berry**. **More details can be found [here](#)**

Midem Director, Alexandre Deniot says, "We are so happy to keep building the relationship with Femi and to welcome his inaugural concert on the Midem Beach this year after his inspirational keynote in 2019. This is a reflection of our long-term approach to supporting Africa, African music and the region's artists. We look forward to announcing more African talent within the Midem lineup soon."

About Femi Kuti, Artist (Nigeria)

Those who have followed his career and have experienced his music know this: Femi Kuti never felt just satisfied with being the king's heir. He freed himself from his father's legacy in '85 by putting together his own band, The Positive Force, and thereby working to find his own voice. Femi's father, Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, created the style - a blend of traditional Nigerian drum patterns, the smooth groove of highlife and American soul, funk and R&B - and took it to the world, inspiring people with insistent dance beats and lyrics bristling with political statements. Afrobeat moved several generations of musicians, in Nigeria and around the world, to follow Fela's dictum and use music as a weapon to fight for justice and freedom. Femi and his band, Positive Force, are at the forefront of that movement.

As a spokesperson for UNICEF's crusade for the rights of children and an advocate for HIV/AIDS education and prevention, Femi is recognised as a community leader and an inspiration for African resistance to the remnants of colonial mentality and economic hardship. Most of his albums have been nominated for Grammy Awards and Femi Kuti has had too many international collaborations on wax or stage to count, with artists as diverse as Coldplay, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Wizkid, Eriqah Badu, Damon Albarn, Thievery Corporation, Hugh Masekala, Mos Def, Angélique Kidjo.

To Editors

About Midem – Home of the Global Music Community, Midem is the world's leading music business event, which unites, connects, serves and supports the global music ecosystem to exchange, create, play, forge relationships and shape the future of the industry. With a rich 4-day programme of conferences, competitions, networking events and live performances, music makers, cutting-edge technology companies, brands and talent come together to enrich the passionate relationship between people and music, transform audience engagement and form new business connections.

REED MIDEM PRESS CONTACTS:

Philippe LE GALL, Press Manager: +33 1 79 71 96 48 > philippe.legall@reedmidem.com
Edith YAHIAOUI, Press Officer: +33 1 79 71 94 34 > edith.yahiaoui@reedmidem.com