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## **Africa's inspirational premiere diva brings an electrifying one night only performance of joyous and exuberant music to Melbourne Recital Centre**

One of the greatest forces in African music, Benin-born songstress **Angélique Kidjo** brings her unique brand of world music to Melbourne Recital Centre for one performance only on **Thursday 5 April 2012**. ".....dynamic and unstoppable" (*NY Times*)

The explosive growth in the popularity of world music during the past several decades has broadened the boundaries of our world, reminding us of the vast cultural wealth and diversity in this wired age. Kidjo's music offers another perspective: that the world is much smaller than we think. A creative energy with eleven international albums she sings as easily in French as she does in English and her mother tongues, Fon and Yorùbá.

**Grammy Award winning Angélique Kidjo** has cross-pollinated the West African traditions of her childhood in Benin with elements of American R&B, funk and jazz, as well influences from Europe and Latin America. She has collaborated with diverse groups of international artists like Santana, and Gilberto Gil. Her duet with Dave Matthews on the song 'Iwoya' on her album *Black Ivory Soul*, was a critical success that helped diversify her fan base. Matthews went on to say, "If God had a voice it would sound like Angélique." When **Angélique Kidjo** sings music's ability to cross borders transcends boundaries and unites people is one of her key inspirations. Ultimately, that theme of interconnection and universalism is the glue that binds the disparate threads of her music.

"Without music I don't think I would have had the adolescence and the childhood that I had," says **Angélique Kidjo** recalling that she was just six when she first appeared on stage. She added "There's only one humankind – I believe that to my gut, the reason I believe this so strongly is because I was raised in Africa, and if you're raised in nature, you understand and respect every life. That's something that some people try to keep away from one another, because once you understand that, there's no need to hate anybody anymore. There's no need to say 'they' and 'we' – we are all one." [www.kidjo.com/melbourne](http://www.kidjo.com/melbourne)

One of the '100 most inspiring women in the world', (*The Guardian UK*), with a richly powerful voice, commanding stage presence and a dramatic past, **Kidjo** is an icon, and, according to *Time Magazine*, 'Africa's premier diva'. "Her spirit is irrepressible, and she brings life to everything she touches," says Peter Gabriel.

African musician-activist **Vusi Mahlesala** whose songs of hope connect Apartheid-scarred South Africa with its promise for a better future will appear with **Angélique Kidjo**. Known simply as 'The Voice' in Africa, **Mahlesala** is celebrated for his distinctive, powerful voice and his poetic, optimistic lyrics. [www.vusimahlasela.com](http://www.vusimahlasela.com)

### **EVENT DETAILS**

Thursday 5 April, 2012

Melbourne Recital Centre, Elisabeth Murdoch Hall

7.30pm - Tickets - \$35 (\$25 concession)

Book at [www.melbournerecital.com.au](http://www.melbournerecital.com.au) or call the Box Office on 03 9699 3333.

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