

# AFRIKAN BOY

## Short Bio

There's no identity crisis in the music of **Olushola Ajose**. Performing under the moniker **AFRIKAN BOY (AB)**, he makes music that totally reflects his life experience, effortlessly combining a spectrum of sounds and influences, from Afro-beat to Jazz, Grime to Spoken word and more. Not many artists can channel the energies of **Fela Kuti**, **Gil Scott Heron** and **2Pac**, and balance them with such perfect cohesion. AB's performance will challenge any other when it comes to the energy and passion displayed on stage.

With a career that has seen him share a stage with the likes of the legendary **Paul McCartney**, **John Paul Jones (Led Zeppelin)**, **Baaba Maal**, **Damon Albarn**, **Seun & Femi Kuti**, **The Noisettes**, **Fatoumata Diawara** and **Mark Ronson**, as well as release two artist albums to date, a plethora of singles and collaborations AND have his music transposed to a successful stage production; AB is definitely a powerful force within music's arsenal. With a unique tone and heart to match, his demeanour, musical dexterity and explosive lyrics prove he is in for the long haul.

## Full Bio

There's no identity crisis in the music of **Olushola Ajose**. Performing under the moniker **AFRIKAN BOY (AB)**, he makes music that totally reflects his life experience. No easy feat for an artist who has been testing his wings independently from the onset of his career.

Born in southeast London he first came to attention as a teenager, with the track *'One Day I Went to Lidl'*. The grime infused track, a humorous ode to the discount supermarket, caught the ear of underground fans and fellow British rapper and Grammy Award nominee, **M.I.A.**, who reached out to him, that soon led to guest appearances on the *'Paper Planes'* remix and *'Hussel'* on her *'Kala'* album as well as a stint on both the *'Kala'* and *'People vs. Money'* world tours. Soon, further collaborators came calling when US hip hop veteran **DJ Shadow** once again created the chance for Afrikan Boy to push his experimental boundaries on the track *'I'm Excited'*, a meeting of minds that didn't go unnoticed by aficionado, **Zane Lowe** who crowned it 'Hottest Record

In *The World*'. AB showed no sign of slowing down the pace, all the while studying for his Psychology degree at the University of Brunel.

These early collaborations paved the way for his critically acclaimed debut *'The ABCD'* in 2014, which earned him a nomination for a **Mobo Award** in the **Best African** Category alongside **Fuse ODG**, **Wizkid** and **Davido**. The first single from this body of work *'Hit Em Up'* achieved heavy radio support in the UK from national BBC stations Radio 1, 1Xtra and 6 Music where it made the station's A list, and was heavily championed by the likes of **Lauren Laverne**, **DJ Semtex**, **Huw Stephens**, **Phil Taggart** as well as **John Kennedy** at Radio X.

In 2015, Afrikan Boy was one of the 10 artists to contribute to the *'Body of Songs'* project curated by Journalist and broadcaster **Gemma Cairney** in conjunction with the Wellcome Trust. The project brought together major musicians such as **Goldie**, **Ghostpoet**, **Bat For Lashes**, **Sam Lee & Llywelyn ap Iorwerth**, **Raf Rundell (2 Bears)** and **Andriana Triana**, as well as a host of clinicians to create a remarkable collection of songs, inspired by the body's organs – to much acclaim from press including Pitchfork, Clash, NME, The Independent, The Sunday Times, Q Magazine, The Quietus and Complex.

Afrikan Boy stepped up his creative endeavors and moved into theatre in 2016 adapting his break out track *'One Day I Went to Lidl'* for the stage with a collaboration with Ballahause productions in Berlin. The stage play opened to rave reviews and ran to a packed house during its entire run.

Fast forward to September 2018, and AB released *'Peppeh Sounds Vol 1'* the follow up to 2014's *'The ABCD'*. The album has a genuine, authentic flavour to it – “If you like Peppeh you will like my sound” says the Woolwich rapper. This 9-track body of work is a showcase of the latest flavours Afrikan Boy has to offer – an intriguing hybrid of Afrobeat, Trap, Hip Hop and Kuduro style vibes over live instrumentation, highlife guitar riffs, and soaring melodies. The album was recorded in Jamaica, Berlin and London and produced by **Konrad Oldmoney**, **Marchissio**, **Ghanaian Stallion**, **Ben Marc**, **Ozferti** and **Delirious**; and released on AB's own **YAM Records** label.

*“Peppeh sounds Vol 1' is as much a feel-good record with songs that would hit a sweet spot with my fans. I wanted to create a bipolar sound that folks can digest and enjoy”.*

Afrikan Boy's live show is something to behold, with AB joined on stage by a full band, who effortlessly combine a spectrum of sounds and influences, from Afro-beat to Jazz, Grime to Spoken word and more. Not many artists can channel the energies of **Fela Kuti**, **Gil Scott Heron** and **2Pac**, and balance them with such perfect cohesion. AB's performance will challenge any other when

it comes to the energy and passion displayed on stage. He has shared a stage with the likes of the legendary **Paul McCartney**, **John Paul Jones (Led Zeppelin)** **Baaba Maal**, **Damon Albarn**, **Seun & Femi Kuti**, **The Noisettes**, **Fatoumata Diawara** and **Mark Ronson** to name but a few, as he continues to make his presence felt on the live circuit

AB's commitment 'paying it forward' has led him to forming his own youth empowerment platform "YAM foundation" in 2019. **The YAM Foundation** (Young, Ambitious & Motivated) will serve as a platform for youths to assert themselves through the Arts and nurture creative expressions.

2019 will see the release of *'Peppeh Sounds Vol 2'*, as well as another full artist album *'Life In The West'* and a steady flow of singles and videos throughout the year. There is also another stage show to come, this time a collaboration with Hassan Hajjaj called *'My Rock Stars Series'* to be held and produced at Ford Theatre in Los Angeles.

If "music is a weapon" AB is definitely a powerful force within music's arsenal. With a unique tone and heart to match, his demeanour, musical dexterity and explosive lyrics prove he is in for the long haul.

Stay tuned!