

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
**NOVEMBER 17, 2006**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**  
**Karen Gutloff, Marketing Manager**  
**(340) 693-1563**

## **REICHHOLD CENTER GOES GLOBAL WITH ANGÉLIQUE KIDJO**

West-African songstress Angélique Kidjo takes music to new heights with her fusion of West-African rhythms, pop, rock, jazz, soul, calypso, Latin and much more. Kidjo performs at Reichhold Center for the Arts on January 13, 2007 at 8 p.m.

Benin-born Kidjo sings in her native language, Fon, as well as in English and French. She is globally recognized for merging African rhythms with other musical forms. Like her idol, Miriam Makeba, Kidjo wows audiences with her passionate, energetic and captivating music.

Since the release of *Parakou* in 1989, Kidjo has released six studio albums, including *Logozo*, *Ayé* and *Fifa*, and one compilation. Her last three albums, *Oremi*, *Black Ivory Soul*, and *Oyaya!* are considered a trilogy traversing the African Diaspora in the west.

Her latest studio album, *Oyaya!*, which means “joy” in Yoruba, is dedicated to the connection between African and Caribbean rhythms and lyrics. Kidjo said, the album “follows the main routes of the music that the slaves brought with them. Calypso is in there. Merengue is in there. You have the Puerto Rican rhythm *pleña* there.” The song *Oulala* is sung to the Haitian compass rhythm; whereas *Conga Habanera* is reminiscent of Cuban rumba. The album also features the song *Mutoto Kwanza*, which means “children first,” inspired by HIV/AIDS orphans Kidjo met in Tanzania, East Africa.

Before exploring the music of the Caribbean, Kidjo had first explored the bond between Benin and Bahia, Brazil, known for its vibrant African culture. The 2002 *Black Ivory Soul* album features a duet, *Iwoya*, with Dave Matthews, lead singer for the soft-rock group the Dave Matthews Band. Kidjo also covers Brazilian Gilberto Gil’s *Refavela*.

On the 1998 album *Oremi*, which means “my friends” in Fon, Kidjo focused on the friendship between West African rhythms and the soulful sounds from the United States. On the album, she performs with R&B singer Kelly Price and jazz greats Cassandra Wilson and Branford Marsalis.

Kidjo’s diverse repertoire of music has appeared in numerous films, including the soundtrack for *Street Fighter* with Jean-Claude van Damme. In 1995, *Ife*, from the *Fifa* album was the title track on Jim Carey’s *Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls* soundtrack.

During the 1980s, Kidjo performed as a lead singer in Pili Pili, a jazz group that also incorporated African and funk rhythms. While performing at jazz festivals in Europe, Kidjo earned the “Afro-funk” label for her singing style. She continues to perform at jazz festivals, including the St. Lucia Jazz Festival and the 2006 Newport Jazz festival.

This African songstress also uses her talent to promote socially conscious activities. On Nov. 9, 2006, Kidjo performed alongside R&B singer Alicia Keys at the Black Ball concert, benefiting the Keep a Child Alive campaign, which raises funds and awareness for children infected with HIV/AIDS.

Kidjo previously performed at tributes to Nelson Mandela and the 2002 Nobel Peace Prize winner. She is also a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador; raising awareness about Girls Education, a UNICEF program helping to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education.

Kidjo’s visit to Reichhold Center is sponsored by First Bank, First Insurance, Marriott Frenchman’s Reef Resort, Tropical Shipping, Theodore Tunick Insurance Company and the Virgin Islands Council for the Arts.

Tickets are available at Modern Music, Parrot Fish, UVI Bookstore, V.I. Bridal & Tuxedo and the Reichhold Center Box Office at 693-1559.

###