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Anthony "Amp" Elmore, a cultural ambassador & filmmaker, attends FESTAC 2024 to bridge African and African American heritage, fostering unity and cultural pride

MEMPHIS, TN, UNITED STATES, August 12, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- From August 25th to September 1st, 2024, the vibrant city of Kisumu, Kenya, will come alive with the rhythms, colors, and stories of FESTAC 2024—the world's largest Black African Art, Culture, Trade, and Family Festival. Amidst the bustling crowds, one man stands out: Anthony "Amp" Elmore Sr., a renowned 5-time World Karate/Kickboxing champion and filmmaker hailing from Memphis, Tennessee. His mission? To bridge the gap between African and African American heritage, fostering unity, cultural pride, and a shared vision for the future.



Tom Mboya's 60th hosted in the Black Community of Orange Mound in Memphis in Aug. 2016 Historically make Orange Mound Birth Place of African & African/American Cultural Diplomacy connecting Africa Civil Rights movement with Kennedy & Obama elections to Africa & Kenya

“

I know my audience, and they're not people that the studios know anything about.”

Black Filmmaker Tyler Perry

Anthony "Amp" Elmore was personally contacted by Professor Anyang' Nyong'o, the Governor of Kisumu City, Kenya, who extended an invitation for Elmore to attend "FESTAC 24" as a speaker. Although Professor Nyong'o may not be a household name in America, his daughter, Academy Award winner Lupita Nyong'o, is widely recognized for her role in the film "Black Panther."

In 2019, Kenyan Americans recommended that Governor Nyong'o meet with Elmore. A distinguished academic, Professor Nyong'o has contributed significantly to African studies,

having taught at Harvard and introduced the subject to Latin America. His daughter Lupita was born in Mexico City in 1983. Governor Nyong'o completed his postgraduate studies at the University of Chicago, earning his Master's and PhD in political science in 1977. He has fond memories of Memphis, expressing deep gratitude for the hospitality he received, which was unlike anything he had experienced in America.

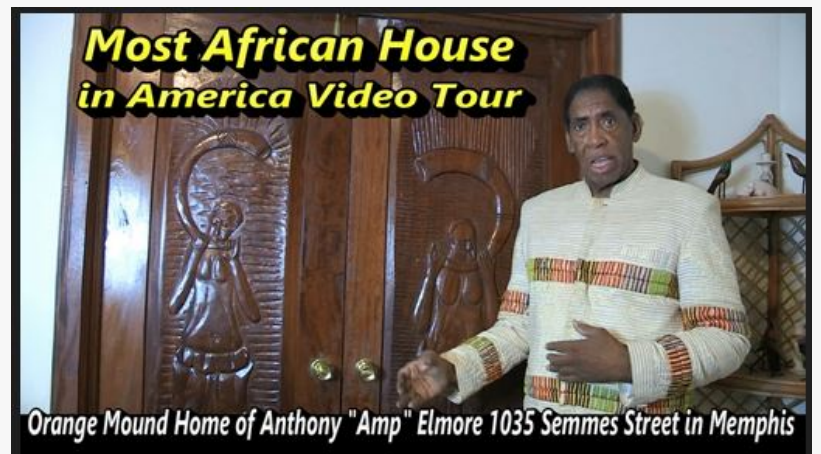
Elmore shared with Governor Nyong'o his profound spiritual encounter in Kenya. In 1986, Elmore wrote, produced, directed, and starred in "The Contemporary Gladiator," a semi-autobiographical film released in August 1988 and premiered in Nairobi in 1990. This experience marked a spiritual turning point for Elmore, who felt acknowledged by Dr. Martin Luther King and other heroes for his return to Africa. Since then, Elmore has been actively involved in Kenya, introducing kickboxing, promoting soul music concerts, and marrying a Kenyan woman in 1995. Although they are no longer together, they share a son, Anthony "Amp" Elmore Jr., now 25 years old.

Following President Barack Obama's election, Elmore felt a spiritual connection to Tom Mboya, a Kenyan labor leader and one of the nation's founding fathers. Elmore's work took him to Ghana in 1998 and back and forth between Ghana and Kenya. In 2013, he met with Mama Sarah Obama, President Obama's grandmother, and six newly elected Kenyan Governors. Since 2007, a Memphis Congressman has supported Elmore's endeavors, introducing him to African Ambassadors and backing his mission to foster trade, family, and cultural ties with Africa.

In 2018, Elmore visited Kenya and engaged with the foreign Ministry. The following year,



Memphis Congressman Cohen at Elmore's Orange Mound Home Celebrating Tom Mboya's 60th 1st Celebration honoring the "Obama Legacy" & Tom Mboya's historic visit to America on his 26th Birthday Aug 15, 1956 Orange Mound is the Birthplace of "African Cultural diplomacy"



African Cultural Diplomacy begins in "Orange Mound" whereas Elmore created "Most Africa House in America" the prototype for the "Made in Africa Movement" Elmore created the Cultural Pathway how Africa & African can trade in America via creating African Styled products

Governor Nyong'o and other Kenyan dignitaries traveled to Memphis, where they learned about Elmore's commitment to continuing the legacies of Dr. Martin Luther King and Tom Mboya by uniting Africans and African Americans. In Memphis, Elmore and local residents paid tribute to Tom Mboya, and Elmore expressed to Professor Nyong'o his dedication to this cause. Elmore has also established the first All-African home in America, located in Orange Mound, Memphis.

Orange Mound stands as a monumental testament to African American resilience and ingenuity, being the first planned community in America built for and by Black people. Its roots extend deep into history, anchored by two Black churches established in 1879. This community is not just a place but a symbol of unity and strength.

In the heart of this historic enclave, Elmore, a trailblazer in many respects, is championing a noble cause. As Memphis's first independent 35mm theatrical filmmaker, a world champion in kickboxing, and a chronicler of "Black Memphis History," Elmore is dedicated to securing Orange Mound's recognition as the "Birthplace of African Cultural Diplomacy" in America. His efforts are a tribute to the enduring legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., whose life was tragically cut short in Memphis in 1968, but whose spirit continues to inspire the fight for justice and equality.

The year 2016 marked a significant milestone with Elmore hosting "The Tom Mboya 60th Celebration" at his Orange Mound residence. Tom Mboya, a pivotal Kenyan figure, left an indelible mark on American history and culture. His contributions, particularly through the "Airlift America" program, have had a lasting impact, shaping the educational landscape for African students and influencing the Civil Rights Movement.

The presence of Memphis Congressman Steve Cohen at the event underscored its significance, affirming its official status, while the documentation of the celebration on YouTube allows people everywhere to witness this historic moment. To delve deeper into the profound legacy of Tom Mboya and the celebration that honored him, one can explore the available resources for a comprehensive understanding of his influence on American society. [Click Here to see Video and learn more about our 2016 Event.](#)



Elmore is creating the Film "Rock & Roll A Black Legacy" whereas early scenes will be shot in Kisumu Kenya we unite Orange Mound & Africa & Black America Elmore ask Memphis Mayor Paul Young to support a Memphis Black Filmmaking Culture great like Tyler Perry in Atlanta

Anthony "Amp" Elmore who was personally invited to attend and speak at "FESTAC 2024 has a simple message for FESTAC 2024: 1.8 trillion African/American GDP. FESTAC 2024, also known as the Festival of Black and African Arts and Culture, is an event with a rich history that celebrates Africa's heritage, creativity, and identity. It began in 1966 in Dakar, Senegal, and has since been a platform for uniting nations and showcasing Africa's cultural diversity.

The festival is making a comeback, highlighting its significance as a global cultural phenomenon. After successful events in Zanzibar in 2022 and Arusha in 2023, FESTAC 2024 will be hosted in Kisumu, Kenya from August 25th to September 1st, 2024. The theme for the 2024 festival is "Sustainable Growth Trajectory for Africa through Culture, Trade, Travel, and Tourism." It aims to educate, empower, and embrace using various platforms like health, education, sports, leadership, entrepreneurship, trade, fashion, art, music, and dance.

This event is particularly special as it marks the 5th World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture, a monumental milestone in the festival's journey. It's a celebration of Africa's rich cultures and an opportunity for networking, business opportunities, and fun. Kisumu, the host city, is known for its robust youth and sports culture, vibrant arts, and cultural scene, making it an ideal location for such a significant event.

In April 1966, The First World Festival of Negro Arts, which is now known as FESMAN, launched its debut as the first modern cultural event celebrating global Black culture. The Festival took place in Dakar, Senegal and was initiated by Senegalese president Léopold Sédar Senghor who saw it as a way to emphasize the importance of cultural development of newly independent African nations. While FESTAC can trace its beginnings to 1966 in Dakar Senegal it was August 15, 1956 whereas Tom Mboya arrived in America whereas this date connects the most influential African and African/American relationship whereas we are asking FESTAC and FESTAC Leaders to formally adopt "The Building of the Tom Mboya African & African/American Museum, Education Cultural and Entertainment Center in Nairobi, Kenya.

The African American community, with its robust GDP of 1.8 trillion U.S. dollars, stands as a testament to its economic vitality. Elmore, a visionary in cultural advocacy, emphasizes the need to institutionalize and celebrate FESTAC, Africa's grandest festival showcasing the rich tapestry of culture, fashion, music, dance, and more. He advocates for the establishment of permanent structures across Africa where African Americans can immerse themselves in the continent's vibrant culture and heritage. The proposed support from FESTAC for the construction of the "Tom Mboya African and African American Museum Education Cultural Economic and Entertainment Centers" would be a monumental step in honoring and preserving our intertwined histories.

Memphis has a storied history with FESTAC, marked by Elmore's pioneering efforts in promoting the first kickboxing bouts in 1979, bringing national television exposure to the city in 1981, and clinching the "Professional Karate Association World Heavy Kickboxing title" on May 29, 1982, among his five world titles. His production of kickboxing shows on Black Entertainment

Television in 1986 further solidified his influence.

Elmore's groundbreaking work continued with the production of "The Contemporary Gladiator," Memphis's first independent 35mm theatrical film and the world's first kickboxing film, in November 1987. The film's premiere in Nairobi, Kenya, in July 1990, symbolized a pioneering trade agreement between an African government and an African American. Elmore's initiatives, such as introducing kickboxing to Kenya in 1994, promoting a soul music concert in December of the same year, and his travels to Ghana in 1998, culminated in the creation of the first All-African Home in America in 2006. His establishment of "Elmore African Imports" caters to the African American community's desire to connect with their African roots through authentic products and experiences.

Elmore, through his venture Elmore African Imports, has forged a significant collaboration with an African designer to tailor products specifically for the American market. This partnership has led to the creation of designer African-styled attire, which gained notable attention when actor Wesley Snipes was seen adorned in these unique pieces. The influence of Elmore's work extended into the sports realm as well, with the boxing manager of World Champion Lennox Lewis purchasing an African coat and vest directly from Elmore.

In Memphis, Elmore's creations became a symbol of prestige among the elite, crafting a jean outfit for the late D.J. Bobby Ojay of Memphis' WDIA radio, a custom suit for WMC sports caster Jack Eaton, and a leisure suit for the renowned attorney Leslie Ballin. These bespoke pieces not only served the who's who of Memphis but also stood as a testament to the viability of African-made products in the American marketplace.

Despite the challenges of high shipping costs, often exceeding the value of the items themselves, Elmore remained undeterred. He envisioned establishing a robust trade infrastructure, positioning Memphis as a pivotal distribution center for African goods. This vision aimed to foster job creation on both continents, strengthening economic ties between America and Africa. Ultimately, Elmore closed Elmore African Imports with the ambition of orchestrating a trade deal that would ensure products made in Africa met "American Quality Standards," thereby cementing a sustainable and mutually beneficial trade relationship.

Elmore African Imports has made significant contributions to cultural preservation and representation, notably through the establishment of "The 1st All African Home in America." Located in the historic Orange Mound neighborhood of Memphis, this impressive 5000 square foot residence showcases furniture crafted entirely by African artisans. In a gesture that intertwines politics with cultural artistry, Elmore commissioned his Ghanaian designers to create an African Styled Mud Cloth Tuxedo in honor of Barack Obama's 2008 presidential victory.

Although President Obama did not wear the garment, it was graciously accepted by the White House. Congressman Steve Cohen of Memphis had the honor of delivering the tuxedo, which President Obama assured would be displayed in the forthcoming Barack Obama Presidential

Museum. In recognition of this cultural tribute, President Obama expressed his gratitude to Elmore with a personal thank you note. The African Styled Mud Cloth Tuxedo stands as a testament to Elmore's dedication to celebrating African heritage and craftsmanship, [Click here to see to see Video of Tuxedo and other Elmore African Styles.](#)

"Orange Mound," the first planned community in America built by and for Black residents, has played a vital role in bridging the gap between African and African American heritage. Notably, it was once the second-largest community of Black homeowners in the United States, following Harlem in New York. In 1990, the groundbreaking film "The Contemporary Gladiator," produced in Black Memphis, premiered in Nairobi, Kenya, making "Orange Mound" the birthplace of the first independent 35mm theatrical film to premiere in Kenya and possibly all of Africa. Additionally, "Orange Mound" holds several other distinctions: it is the birthplace of the first All African Home in America, the "Made in Africa Movement," and the first community worldwide to honor Kenyan founding father Tom Mboya's 60th birthday.

Unknown and untold to African Americans is the amazing phenomenon of Sub-Saharan Africa, where, as noted by the United Nations, 70% of the population is under 30 years old. Elmore mentions that his trip to FESTAC is a prayer that he is on the right side of history regarding Africa. On May 13, 1959, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. quoted at the Tom Mboya Freedom Dinner, "Our struggle is not an isolated struggle," insisting, "We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality." Elmore explains that when he looks at Africa and its youth, he feels like a father, grandfather, and great-grandfather to many of them. He believes that trading with Africa and creating jobs and wealth is possible.

Elmore notes that during his travels to Ghana, he hired young people to make furniture, clothes, and art. He mentions that his "Orange Mound Home is the prototype," with the goal of making Memphis "Africa's Distribution Center." Elmore feels that the gods made it possible for him to be selected as an honored guest at FESTAC 2024, and he refers to the Kisumu Governor as his uncle. [Click here to learn more details about FESTAC 2023 In Kisumu City Kenya.](#)

Elmore has carved "A Cultural Pathway" to initiate a trade deal between Kenya and Memphis, with the support of Memphis U.S. Congressman Steve Cohen. Elmore is asking Congressman Cohen and other Shelby County elected officials to travel to Kenya in August of 2026 for the Tom Mboya 70th and the first African American Family Reunion in Africa. Elmore has asked his family to join him in Kisumu, Kenya, in August 2026, where they will invite other families to join them for the first Black Family Reunion in Africa in Kisumu City Kenya August 2026.

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