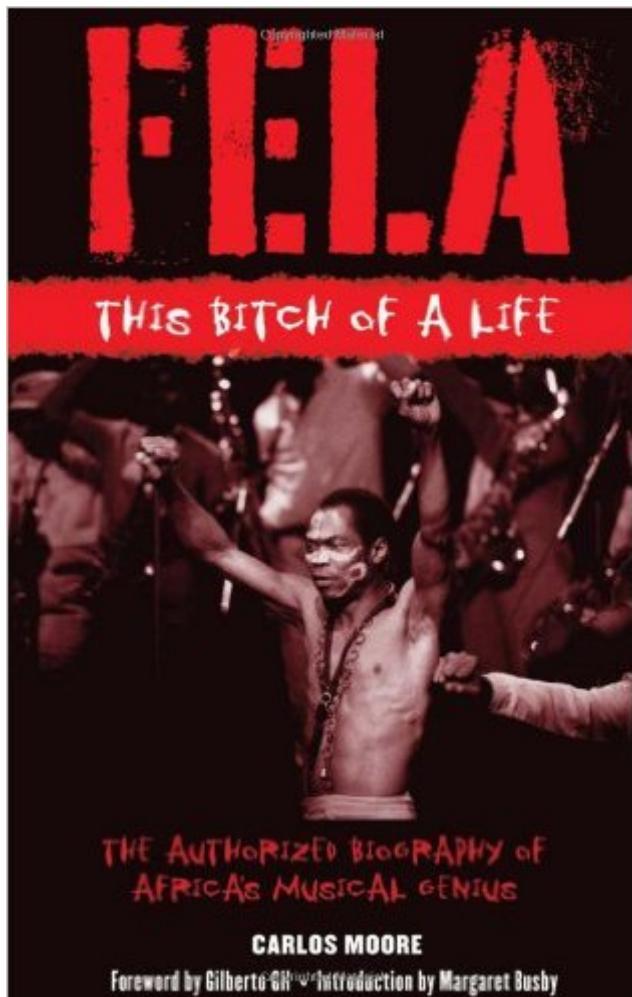


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# Fela: This Bitch Of A Life



## Synopsis

African superstar, composer, singer, and musician, as well as mystic and political activist, Nigerian Fela Kuti, born in 1938, was controversy personified. He was swept to international celebrity on a wave of scandal and flamboyance, and when he died of AIDS in 1997, more than a million people attended his funeral. But what was he really like, this man who could as easily arouse violent hostility as he could unswerving loyalty? Carlos Moore's unique biography, based on hours of conversation and told in Fela's first-person vernacular, reveals the icon's complex personality and tumultuous existence. Moore includes interviews with fifteen of his queens (wives); photos; and an updated discography.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

FELA is a biography of the Nigerian musician and political activist Fela Kuti, originally published in 1982. The Cuban ethnologist Carlos Moore spent hours interviewing Fela and produced an overview of Fela's life and values that Fela authorized. Generally the biography proceeds in the first person, a sign that it was transcribed from interviews. Moore's biography doesn't speak much of Fela's music, but rather Fela's life and times, especially his numerous run-ins with Nigeria's military regime. There is some good coverage of his formative years, namely his early studies in England, his 1960s doldrums, and his trip to the United States that changed everything. The term "authorized biography" might lead on to expect that sordid and risque details are left out, but Fela was so sexually flamboyant that he insisted Moore cover his relationships with women in depth. The singer

believed in free love and would bed any groupie who came to his compound, usually enjoying multiple women a day. A few years before, Fela had infamously married 27 female members of his entourage and he invited Moore to interview the 15 "queens" who now remained with him. While Fela's lack of restraint and misogyny are appalling, one does have to admire the tenacity of these women who stayed with their man through parental disapproval, beatings by police and soldiers and imprisonment. The 1982 text has been left unchanged, but Moore has added a poignant epilogue that describes Fela's deterioration over the 1980s and 1990s. First, Fela became increasingly paranoid, believing that spirits were talking to him and that close friends were CIA agents out to get him.

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