

# NEWS RELEASE

UMass Amherst Fine Arts Center [www.fineartscenter.com](http://www.fineartscenter.com)

CONTACT: Martín Meccouri at 413-577-1106 or [mmeccour@student.umass.edu](mailto:mmeccour@student.umass.edu)

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 10, 2009

**WHAT:** Fine Arts Center Presents Earth Day / Día de la Tierra Festival  
Wednesday, April 22 at 4:00 PM

**WHERE:** Fine Arts Center Plaza, in front of Concert Hall  
University of Massachusetts Amherst  
Call 1-800-999-UMAS or 545-2511 for tickets or  
go online to [www.fineartscenter.com/tickets](http://www.fineartscenter.com/tickets)

**IMAGES:** To download images relating to this press release please go  
online to

<http://www.umass.edu/fac/centerseries/pressreleases/photo.html>

### **Earth Day/Día de la Tierra Festival at UMass Fine Arts Center**

On Wednesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> from 4 PM to 7 PM, the UMass Fine Arts Center will host an Earth Day/Día de la Tierra Festival on the plaza celebrating all the Pioneer Valley community has done to conserve its natural resources, improve community development, and raise environmental awareness. This area of Massachusetts has a long history of sustainable agricultural and community development and this festival will celebrate that history. The afternoon will include music, dancing, food, local sustainable energy groups, poetry and fun. At 6PM members of Toumani Diabate's Symmetric orchestra, who hail from all over the African Diaspora, will lead the crowd in a drum circle. Everyone is welcome and is encouraged to bring a percussion instrument and join in the fun. And it's free and open to all.

The celebration begins with meeting and greeting local farmers and community organizations who will be present to share their missions, products, and offer more information to anyone interested in getting involved in going green. There will be a petting zoo provided by Hadley Horse Farm. Dean's Beans will be present with free coffee samples as well as copies of Dean Cycon's book, *JavaTrekker: Dispatches From the World of Fair Trade Coffee* for sale. There will also be an arts and crafts area for kids to make and decorate their own percussion instruments for the drum circle out of

recycled materials (coffee cans, oatmeal containers, tin cans, etc.) that they bring from home. At 4:30PM, our own local musical gem, Naia Kete, will perform an hour set with her band. Naia Kete's music is soulful, inspirational, thoughtful, and her love-promoting lyrics deal heavily with how our actions impact each other and the Earth. At 5:30PM, local poets will recite their work about the planet, and at 6 PM, the celebration will culminate with an open drum circle led by Toumani Diabaté's Symmetric Orchestra. The community is invited to bring their drums, claves, bongos, and other percussion instruments and experience the power of this shared exercise. There will be a limited number of drums for loaning.

The Fine Arts Center's *Earth Day/Día de la Tierra Celebration* on the plaza is the perfect event for families, students, children, and anyone who knows how to party for a cause. We hope to see people from all walks there. Also, don't forget to purchase tickets for the world class West African *kora* player, Toumani Diabaté and his Symmetric Orchestra who are playing the following night, April 23<sup>rd</sup> in the concert hall of the Fine Arts Center. Diabaté is in the vanguard of multiple generations of Malian griots and, as a musician, he is constantly looking for ways to modernize West African music while still honoring the traditions of his region.

Tickets for Toumani Diabaté are \$30, \$25 and \$15. Youth 17 and under and Five College/GCC students are \$15. Tickets are available from the Fine Arts Center Box Office at 545-2511, 800-999-UMAS, or online at [www.fineartscenter.com](http://www.fineartscenter.com). The Earth Day Celebration and Toumani Diabate concert are sponsored by Coca-Cola, *The Green Living Journal*, Dean's Beans and The River 93.9FM.

END