

NEWS RELEASE

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WHAT: Imani Winds with special guest Stefon Harris
WHEN: Wednesday, February 3 at 7:30 PM
WHERE: Bowker Auditorium
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Call 800-999-UMAS or 545-2511 for tickets or go online to
<http://www.fineartscenter.com/>
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GRAMMY-NOMINATED IMANI WINDS AND SPECIAL GUEST STEFON HARRIS BRING ACCLAIMED COLLABORATION TO BOWKER AUDITORIUM

"We will blur the lines between improvisation and composition, and in turn, between classical and jazz, by introducing improvisation to the woodwind quartet." That's how vibraphonist Stefon Harris characterizes the groundbreaking musical performance that the audience will experience on Wednesday, February 3 at 7:30 PM in Bowker Auditorium at UMass, when Grammy-nominated Imani Winds blend their dazzling musicality with the luminous talent of Stefon Harris, who has been heralded as "one of the most important young artists in jazz" (*The Los Angeles Times*).

In an adventurous program of 20th-century music that includes *Red Clay Mississippi Delta* by Imani Winds flautist Valerie Coleman and *Homage to Duke* by French horn player Jeff Scott, the quintet will open the evening's performance and set the stage for a post-intermission collaboration with Stefon Harris in *The Anatomy of a Box: A Sonic Painting in Wood, Metal, and Wind*, one of Harris's own compositions.

Since 1997, Imani Winds has established itself as much more than a conventional wind quintet. The Grammy-nominated ensemble has taken a unique path, carving out a distinct presence in the classical music world with its dynamic playing, culturally poignant programming, genre-blurring collaborations, and inspirational outreach programs. With two member-composers and a deep commitment to commissioning new work, the group is enriching the traditional

wind quintet repertoire while meaningfully bridging European, American, African, and Latin American traditions.

The quintet's excellence and influences have been recognized with numerous awards including the 2007 ASCAP Award, 2002 CMA/ASCAP Award for Adventurous Programming, as well as the CMA/WQXR Award for their debut and self-released CD, *Umoja*. At the 2001 Concert Artists Guild International Competition, Imani Winds was selected as the first-ever Educational Residency Ensemble, in recognition of their superb musical abilities and innovative programming.

A graduate of The Manhattan School of Music, Stefon Harris received a BA in Classical Music and an MA in Jazz Performance. Harris is a recipient of the prestigious Martin E. Segal Award from Lincoln Center and has earned back-to-back to back Grammy nominations for Best Jazz Album, including *The Grand Unification Theory* (2003) and the 2001 release, *Kindred*. His 1999 release of *Black Action Figure* was nominated for Best Jazz Instrumental Solo.

There will be a post-performance discussion with the artists immediately following the concert.

Tickets for Imani Winds with special guest Stefon Harris are \$25 and \$15; admission for Five College/GCC/STCC students and youth 17 and under is \$15. Tickets are available through the Fine Arts Center Box Office at 545-2511 or 800-999-UMAS, or online at the [FAC ticket webpage](#). Additional information, including video of Imani Winds and Stefon Harris in performance, may be found at the [Fine Arts Center website](#).

This performance is sponsored by WFGR/WNNZ. Funded in part by the Expeditions program of the New England Foundation for the Arts, made possible with funding from the National Endowment for the arts, with additional support from the six New England state arts agencies.

Images suitable for publication are available at the Fine Arts Center [online Press Room](#).

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