



UMass Amherst
FINE ARTS CENTER
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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 8, 2007

WHAT: Center Series presents: Natalie MacMaster
WHEN: Wednesday, February 28 at 7:30pm
WHERE: Concert Hall
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Call 1-800-999-UMAS or 545-2511 for tickets or
go online to www.fineartscenter.com/tickets

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CANADA'S FIDDLING, STEP DANCING SENSATION BRINGS MUSIC OF CAPE BRETON TO THE FINE ARTS CENTER CONCERT HALL.

With a talent that remains both raw and wondrously refined, and backed by a band any top musician would be proud of, Natalie MacMaster brings her brand of traditional and modern Cape Breton music to the UMass Fine Arts Center Concert Hall on Wednesday, February 28 at 7:30pm.

Well-known to international audiences as one of Canada's major talents, MacMaster continues to stun crowds around the globe with her feverish fiddling and mesmerizing step dancing. She's an ambassador for traditional East Coast music, and is credited with lifting the style to its contemporary prominence. While acclaimed for taking Celtic music to new heights, each album MacMaster releases displays a creativity and range that constantly expands the boundaries of the genre.

MacMaster first picked up the fiddle at age nine and hasn't looked back. The niece of famed Cape Breton fiddler Buddy MacMaster (with whom she recorded a tribute album in 2005), Natalie quickly became a major talent in her own right. After winning numerous awards for her early traditional recordings, MacMaster's subsequent releases have been boldly ground-breaking and received with abundant accolades. In July of 2006, Natalie was one of the youngest people ever named a member of the prestigious Order of Canada – Canada's highest civilian honor.

With albums like *In My Hands* (Rounder), which fused Jazz, Latin, and the guest vocals of label mate Alison Krauss, and the Grammy-nominated *My Roots Are Showing* (Rounder),

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MacMaster has proven time and time again that she is making her mark on music history. 2003's remarkable *Blueprint* (Rounder) combined MacMaster's own musical radiance with the cream of American roots instrumentalists, including Bela Fleck, Jerry Douglas, and others and won her "Best Female Artist of the Year" and "Best Roots/Traditional Solo Recording" at Canada's East Coast Music Awards in 2005.

Yours Truly is MacMaster's tenth album and finds her continuing to ingeniously incorporate new sounds and concepts into her rich Cape Breton musical heritage, proudly claiming a place for the timeless strains of her native traditions in today's musical universe. Overall, the sound is steeped in the driving rhythms and soaring tonalities unique to Cape Breton, with MacMaster's trademark intensity and brilliance shining throughout. In 2005, MacMaster played a moving tribute at New York's Carnegie Hall to journalist and news anchor Peter Jennings, who had been one of MacMaster's greatest fans. The bittersweet track "Farewell to Peter" is one of the emotional highpoints of *Yours Truly*.

Natalie's live performances are renowned for their incandescent energy and toe-tapping, rhythmic intensity. During their recent tour, packed houses were treated to performances filled with contagious joy and energy. Some audiences even learned a few dance steps from Natalie herself. Through it all, Natalie's performances have resounded with what the *Los Angeles Times* described as "irresistible, keening passion." The program will be announced from the stage.

Enjoy a Celtic celebration with the music and flavors of Ireland at a pre-show dinner held at the University Club. Local Irish band Tír Na nÓg will add some Celtic charm and succulent Irish lamb stew or the vegetarian savory Irish bean stew will warm the soul. Also includes salad, warm rolls and special desserts, coffee or tea. All for \$25. Seating begins at 5pm. Reservations can be made by calling 545-2511. University Club is located on Stockbridge Rd to the north of lot 62.

Tickets are \$35, \$25, \$15; Youth 17 and under are \$15; and Five College Students are \$15. For tickets and information, call the Fine Arts Center Box Office at 413-545-2511 or 1-800-999-UMAS, or tickets may be safely purchased online at www.fineartscenter.com. This performance is sponsored by CocaCola, The Recorder, 93.9 The River and Valley Kids.

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