Solos & Duos Series continues with Joe Maneri/Mat Maneri Duo

The UMass Fine Arts Center’s Solos & Duos Series continues its 3rd season with a duo concert by Joe Maneri, alto and tenor saxophone, clarinet and piano, and Mat Maneri, violin, on Thursday, October 28, 2004 at 8:00 pm in Bezanson Recital Hall, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

The father-and-son team of Joe and Mat Maneri play improvised chamber music, bringing together the yearning passions of jazz and blues with lessons learned from Schoenberg, microtonalism, and a dozen world music traditions, to produce experimental jazz at its most warm-hearted and inviting.

Joe Maneri is a true American original. "...One of the most advanced improvisers in jazz today...one of the great innovators in jazz history", writes Harvey Pekar in The Journal News. Born in Brooklyn to Sicilian parents in 1927, Maneri spent 10 years studying with Joseph Schmid, a student of Alban Berg. Throughout the 1950's and early 60's he performed Greek, Syrian, Jewish and Turkish music at weddings and other social gatherings. In 1965, Maneri recorded an album for Atlantic that remained unreleased until John Zorn heard it and enthusiastically issued it as Paniot's Nine (Avant, 1998).

Maneri has been on the faculty of the New England Conservatory since 1970, teaching harmony, counterpoint, composition, saxophone, improvisation and microtonal theory and composition. But although Maneri was commissioned by Erich Leinsdorf to write a piano concerto, and he premiered David Reck’s dedication to Ornette Coleman at Carnegie Hall, he largely operated on the fringe of the creative music world until a series of startling recordings for ECM, Leo Records and HatArt in the last decade brought his name to a wider public. Maneri's ECM debut Three Men Walking was an album-of-the-year selection in The Guardian (England), Jazz Magazine (France) and Jazzthetik (Germany).

"Original and deeply compelling," is how Gary Giddins, describes Joe Maneri in The Village Voice. “Maneri is a communicative player: His sounds on tenor, alto, and especially clarinet are impressively his own, his phrases logical and meaningful.”

Mat Maneri was largely responsible for the late musical "coming out" of his father, who began playing again in public in 1990 with Mat's group Persona. Born in 1969 in Brooklyn, Mat Maneri has been playing violin since he was five. He studied with Juilliard String Quartet co-founder Robert Koff from age 11, before expanding his knowledge with later studies with Miroslav Vitous and Dave Holland.

Since the mid-1990s, Mat has been at the epicenter of new jazz creativity in America. A leader of his own groups, Mat Maneri has played music with a broad range of partners including Cecil Taylor, Borah Bergman, Connie Bauer, William Parker, Matthew Shipp, Joe Morris and Bern Nix. “Maneri’s virtuosity is everywhere apparent,” says The Boston Phoenix, “in his beautiful control of tone, in the moment-to-moment details that unfold in his playing, in what visual artists might call the variety of his ‘mark-making’.”

The Solos & Duos Series concludes December 9, with a performance by the William Parker/Hamid Drake Duo. Tickets are $10 and $5 (students), available through the Fine Arts Center box office, 545-2511 or 1-800-999-UMAS.

The Solos & Duos Series is produced by the UMass Fine Arts Center and made possible by the: Student Affairs Cultural Enrichment Fund and UMass Alumni Association. Thanks to the Campus Center Hotel and WMUA, 91.1FM