FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 4, 2003

WHAT: Fine Arts Center Series presents Rhythm in Shoes and The Red Clay Ramblers in Rambleshoe

WHEN: Thursday, May 1 at 7:30 p.m.

WHERE: Fine Arts Center Concert Hall
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Call 1-800-999-UMAS or 545-2511 for tickets or go on-line to www.fineartscenter.com/tickets

(Rascalism Runs Rampant for Center Series Season Closer)

On Thursday, May 1, the Center Series closes it's season with Rambleshoe featuring Rhythm in Shoes, a company of dancers and musicians performing old-time mountain tunes and flatfoot dancing, and the Red Clay Ramblers, the Tony Award-winning American roots music group. The performance begins at 7:30pm at the Fine Arts Center Concert Hall.

Rambleshoe breaks new artistic ground with its energetic blend of dance and traditional and original music. Described by its creators as "a tangled tale of wanderlust and wonder with slaphappy tappin'," the performance will no doubt live up to its billing of "Rascalism Runs Rampant." Combining American vernacular elements such as tap, blues, clogging, juggling, ragtime, old-time music and a variety of acoustic musical instruments, Rambleshoe explores traveling themes, the notion of carrying "home" on the road and the notion of "ports" as points of interest and also as ports through which lives are changed. Space, place and time will be completely fluid as musical themes glide by like the view from a fast moving train.

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Rhythm in Shoes has gained national renown for its fresh, inventive take on traditional music and dance created by artistic directors Sharon Leahy and Rick Good. Critics around the country have praised the company’s work as "really smart stuff" (Village Voice) and "intelligent, tasteful and provocative" (Dance Magazine), while The Boston Globe applauds the "first-rate dancers and superb musicians" of Rhythm in Shoes.

The Red Clay Ramblers, on stage throughout the 90-minute production, bounce through a set that includes as much "O Brother, Where Art Thou" as it does B.B. King's Memphis blues. It's a stage-full and more. Formed as an old-time mountain string band in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, some thirty-five years ago, The Red Clay Ramblers have been described by the Nashville Tennessean as "acoustic music greats." Through a brilliant series of albums for Folkways, Flying Fish and Sugar Hill, the Ramblers have expanded its musical palette to such an extent that they have been referred to as a "fantasy roadhouse band from a vanished rural America."

Don’t miss out on this one-of-a-kind theatrical experience when the Center Series presents Rambleshoe, Thursday, May 1, at 7:30pm in the Fine Arts Center Concert Hall. Tickets for the performance are $35, $25, & $15; $10 for youth 17 and under and $10, $7 and $5 for Five College students. Call the Box Office at 413-545-2511 or 800-999-UMAS or go online to www.fineartscenter.com/tickets.

For those that want to do some square dancing of their own, the Fine Arts Center and company members of Rambleshoe will be hosting a social square dance on Tuesday, April 29th at the Red Barn at Hampshire College. Several members from Rhythm in Shoes and the Red Clay Ramblers will be there providing the music, dance instruction and calling. The evening will include squares and round dances, running sets and fun social dances - all called. Dance lessons start at 7:30pm, the dance party begins at 8pm and goes until 10pm. Tickets are only $7 general; $5 students and ages 17 and under. Tickets available through the FAC Box Office or at the door. Rhythm is Shoes and the Red Clay Ramblers are in residence at UMass throughout the week and will be providing dance workshops and a matinee performance for area school children. Rambleshoe is sponsored, in part, by The Recorder and Valley Kids.

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