

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 14, 2009

WHAT: Dafnis Prieto Sextet

WHEN: Thursday, October 22 at 7:30 PM

**WHERE: Bowker Auditorium, Fine Arts Center
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Call 1-800-999-UMAS or 545-2511 for tickets or
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DRUMMER/COMPOSER DAFNIS PRIETO BRINGS HIS SEXTET TO FINE ARTS CENTER'S BOWKER AUDITORIUM

Dafnis Prieto has been claimed as "... easily the most impressive young drummer to come on the jazz scene during the past decade" (All About Jazz). On Thursday, October 22 at 7:30 PM at the UMass Fine Arts Center's Bowker Auditorium, the Cuban virtuoso and his sextet take the stage. Prieto's drumming is often greeted with astonishment: his technique is at such a high level that his accomplishments baffle even professional drummers. Prieto is quick to remark: "it's all about the music." His sextet includes Dafnis on drums, Peter Apfelbaum, tenor and soprano saxophones, melodica, percussion; Felipe Lamoglia, alto and soprano saxophones; Ralph Alessi, trumpet; Osmany Paredes, piano and Charles Flores, bass.

Born in Santa Clara, Cuba - Prieto studied classical percussion at the National School of Music in Havana and played extensively outside school, most notably in the experimental collective quartet Columna-B. He assimilated a broad timeline of Cuban street beats into his drumming and worked through the radical harmonic-rhythmic explorations of such post-Revolution Cubans as Emiliano Salvador and Gonzalo Rubalcaba, teaching himself not only to play drums, but also the art of composition. By 2005, his experience included consequential work with Henry Threadgill, Andrew Hill,

Steve Coleman, Eddie Palmieri, Michel Camilo, the Caribbean Jazz Project, Claudia Acuna, Brian Lynch, and Apfelbaum's Hieroglyphics Ensemble, in addition to his own bands.

As a composer, he has created music for dance, film, chamber ensembles, and most notably for his own bands, ranging from duets to his "Small Big Band" and including the distinctively different groups featured on his three acclaimed recordings as a leader, "About The Monks," "Absolute Quintet" (both on Zoho Music), and the 2008 sextet album "Taking The Soul for a Walk," which launched his own record label, Dafnison Music. His next album will be a live recording by his new *Si o Si Quartet*, to be released in the fall of 2009. Prieto also composed the title track of the 2008 Grammy awarded album "Song for Chico" by Arturo O'Farrill and the Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra.

He has received new works commissions, grants, and fellowships from Chamber Music America, Jazz at Lincoln Center, East Carolina University, and Meet the Composer. Various awards include "Up & Coming Musician of the Year" by the Jazz Journalists Association in 2006, a Grammy Award Nomination for "Absolute Quintet" as Best Latin Jazz Album, and a Latin Grammy Nomination for "Best New Artist" in 2007. Also a gifted educator, Prieto has conducted numerous master classes and clinics.

Prieto's most recent recording *Taking The Soul For a Walk* represents a significant step towards seizing more control of his artistic life. "I have a lot of music that I want to put out - music for dance, for film, and other projects," he says. "I no longer want to ask permission to release it from other people who might be interested. I am trying to represent in my music what I am living now and I want the music to sound the way I walk, the way I breathe, the way all of us are living today - with all the emotions, all the questions and answers that we have."

Tickets for the Dafnis Prieto and his Sextet are \$25 and \$15. Youth 17 and under and Five College/GCC students are \$15. Tickets are available at the Fine Arts Center Box Office by phone at 800-999-UMAS or 413-545-2511, or online at www.umasstix.xom. This concert is sponsored by El Sol Latino and WFCR 88.5 FM celebrating 40 years of Spanish programming.

To listen to examples of Dafnis' music, or to watch him deliver master-classes on video, visit his website at www.dafnisprieto.com.