

# NEWS RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 19, 2008

- WHAT:** The 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Friends of the Fine Arts Center Benefit Event  
**Global Gala: An Evening of International Intrigue**
- WHEN:** Saturday, January 31st, 6:30pm-11:30pm
- WHERE:** Hotel Northampton, Northampton, MA  
Call 1-800-999-UMAS or 545-2511 for tickets or  
go online to [www.fineartscenter.com/tickets](http://www.fineartscenter.com/tickets)
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### **(20<sup>th</sup> Annual Friends of the Fine Arts Center Gala Offers International Intrigue)**

Cue the James Bond theme music (the old James Bond as in Sean Connery); now imagine four international hot spots that are full of intrigue, romance and yes, perhaps a little danger. Now imagine visiting them all in the course of one evening. Disco in Casablanca, tango in Buenos Aires, karaoke in Tokyo and Celtic music in a London pub - it's the Friends of the Fine Arts Center's Annual Benefit Gala and Auction at the Hotel Northampton, Saturday, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 6:30 PM to 11:30 PM. It's a gala evening that is full of great entertainment, food, and auction items donated by local businesses. The Gala will be held throughout the entire hotel with entertainment options in four rooms. There is no reserved seating so that patrons can mingle and move easily throughout the venue. Returning this year is the online auction that everyone, not just Gala attendees, will have the opportunity to bid on the many wonderful items offered through the auction. The online auction begins Thursday, January 1<sup>st</sup> and ends at 6 PM Sunday, February 1<sup>st</sup>. To access the online auction go to [www.umassfineartscenter.cmarket.com](http://www.umassfineartscenter.cmarket.com).

In addition to bidding on items online in advance of the Gala, patrons will be able to bid on selected auction items via laptops stationed throughout the hotel that evening. There will also be several outstanding wine and liquor baskets available to bid on at the Gala event donated by Whole Foods Market, Spirit Haus, AnnMarie Harding/Pravda Vodka and Four Seasons Wine. The Gala and auction will benefit artist community educational residencies providing artist access through workshops and master classes to area schools and communities.

This year's theme around international intrigue promises just that with a variety of entertainment options available throughout the hotel all evening long. First stop, Buenos Aires

(ballroom) where tango sets the mood transporting patrons back to a Milonga in the 40's. The Octavio Brunetti Quintet will provide authentic music from Argentina while actors and dancers from Estudio Tango will provide an ambiance that is theatrical, dramatic, and passionate. There will be tango lessons, demonstrations and dancing for all. Octavio Brunetti is one of the most sought after tango pianists of our times. His recordings, among others, include *Soledad* by Astor Piazzolla with world-renowned cellist Yo-Yo Ma and the Grammy Award Winning CD "Te amo Tango" with Raul Jaurena. Most recently he has performed with Yo-Yo Ma at the international Tango Conference at Harvard, Cambridge. If it's a dance groove you are looking for then visit Casablanca (Hampshire Room) where DJ Thonsey spins at the hottest discotheque in Morocco with global fusion and funk. If you care to chill in a London pub (Wiggins' Tavern,) then there's the Celtic sounds of Rosemary Caine and Trina Cheile (Gaelic for " a little confused ") offering an eclectic mix of personalities and instruments. Their repertoire also roves around the globe with a starting point in the Celtic and British Isles. For those who want to cut loose and take control of the mic, there's karaoke at Tokyo's Shibuya Station (Coolidge Café) provided by Cloud Nine.

The auction is busting with over 100 treasures of fine arts, original creations, getaways, catered parties, vacation homes, and more all donated from local businesses and artists. Highlights include a one week stay at the exclusive Sloane Club in London, a Dell Laptop computer, a catered meal for up to 20 from the Log Cabin, a day on the set of "Rescue Me," a ten-day Eurail pass, a day at Kripalu and more.

Hotel Northampton owner Mansour Ghalibaf has once again inspired his chefs to create an exciting array of menus for the evening representing the cuisine of each of the cities of London, Tokyo, Casablanca and Buenos Aires. Cash bars will be available throughout the hotel.

Ticket price for the Gala event is \$100 per person and includes a \$25 tax-deductible contribution. Individual sponsor tickets are available at \$150 and corporate sponsorships are available starting at \$500. For more information, please call the Friends of the Fine Arts Center at 413.545.3671. For tickets to the event, call the box office at 413.545.2511 or 1.800.999.UMAS. For more details about the event go online to [fineartscenter.com](http://fineartscenter.com).

Lead sponsors for the Gala are Northampton Cooperative Bank and the Hotel Northampton. In-kind sponsors include the Daily Hampshire Gazette, WEIB 106.3FM and Tiger Press. Sustaining sponsors include Fallon Community Health, Finck & Perras Insurance, Motoko Inoue, Juster Pope Frazier, Architects, PeoplesBank, Prudential Sawicki Real Estate, Mark & Sarah Tanner, 106.3 Smooth.FM WEIB

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