

Contact: Glenn Siegel, Ken Irwin, (413) 545-2876
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THE 2007 MAGIC TRIANGLE JAZZ SERIES PRESENTS:

Michele Rosewoman & New Yor-Uba featuring Orlando 'Puntilla' Rios

The Magic Triangle Jazz Series, produced by WMUA, 91.1FM and the Fine Arts Center at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, continues its 18th season on Thursday, March 29, 2007 in Bezanson Recital Hall at 8:00pm with **Michele Rosewoman & New Yor-Uba**, featuring **Howard Johnson, Aaron Stewart, Loren Stillman**, reeds; **Eddie Allen**, trumpet, **Orlando ('Puntilla') Rios, Pedro Martinez** and **Gene Golden**, vocals and percussion, **Henry Cole**, drums, **Ricky Rodriguez**, bass and **Michele Rosewoman**, piano.

The name New Yor-Uba reflects the progression of the music of the Yoruba people from Nigeria, through Cuba, to present-day New York. Pianist and composer Michele Rosewoman's music salutes the Orishas (Yoruban deities) in a contemporary jazz setting using original compositions and contemporary arrangements of traditional Yoruban (Nigeria) and Arara (Dahomey) chants. The 10-member ensemble integrates brass, saxophones and a rhythm section with master Cuban folkloric musicians, including Orlando 'Puntilla' Rios, a master elder Havana-style bata and conga player, who has lived in the New York area since 1983.

"New Yor-uba is soulful evidence that Rosewoman is on to something significant," writes Downbeat. "The music was energetic, propulsive and especially noteworthy largely because it did not use either jazz melodies or Cuban rhythms as mere embellishments. Rosewoman's concept fully integrated orchestrated brasses, saxophones, and a jazz back line, with traditional Yoruban chants sung to the heavy rhythmic accompaniment of congas and bata drums, ceremoniously arriving at sumptuous Ellington-like orchestrations..."

Ms. Rosewoman's professional career began in Oakland, California where she started playing piano at age six, and studied jazz traditions with the great pianist/organist Edwin Kelly. In her late teens she began playing percussion and studying African-based drum and vocal traditions, specifically Cuban and Haitian folkloric styles. Her experience as a percussionist continues to shape many aspects of her musicality, as composer, performer and bandleader. The Village Voice called hers "...the first purely jazz playing I've ever heard that meshed with Latin rhythms instead of riding above them."

Her quintet, Quintessence, has served as a main vehicle for her evolution as pianist, composer and bandleader. Over the years Quintessence has included saxophonists Steve Coleman, Greg Osby, Gary Thomas and David Sanchez, bassists Anthony Cox and Lonnie Plaxico, and drummers Terri Lyne Carrington and Gene Jackson.

"Ms. Rosewoman's music- dissonant melodies, brass chorales, chromatic ballads and orchestrated vamps- was jazz that didn't simply use Afro-Cuban rhythms as decoration," writes The New York Times, "but layered melodies and rhythms with equal force and weight."

Tickets are \$12/general public and \$7/students and are available through the Fine Arts Center Box Office, 1-800-999-UMAS. The Magic Triangle Series concludes with a concert by the Roscoe Mitchell Trio (April 26).

The Magic Triangle Jazz Concert Series is produced by WMUA-FM and the Fine Arts Center, and funded by the: UMass Arts Council, Student Affairs Cultural Enrichment Fund, Alumni Association and Commuter Area Government. Additional support from: Campus Center Hotel and 88.5 WFCR, Public Radio for Western New England.

