



Solos and Duos Series
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THE 2008 SOLOS & DUOS SERIES PRESENTS:

Nicole Mitchell/Jeff Parker Duo

The Solos & Duos Series, produced by the Fine Arts Center at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, continues its 7th season with a duo concert by flutist **Nicole Mitchell** and guitarist **Jeff Parker** on **Thursday, October 30, in Bezanson Recital Hall at 8:00pm.**

“**Nicole Mitchell** is a compelling improviser of wit, determination, positivity, and tremendous talent,” writes Peter Margasak in the Chicago Reader, “on her way to becoming one of the greatest living flutists in jazz.”

For the past three years, Mitchell has placed first in Downbeat’s “Rising Star” on her instrument, and was awarded “Chicagoan of the Year 2006” by the Chicago Tribune. The founder of the critically acclaimed Black Earth Ensemble, the Nicole Mitchell Quartet and the Indigo Trio, Mitchell’s compositions reach across jazz, gospel, pop, and African music to create a fascinating synthesis of postmodern jazz. Mitchell has performed with George Lewis, James Newton, Bill Dixon and Muhal Richard Abrams and has ongoing projects with Anthony Braxton, Ed Wilkerson, and Hamid Drake. She is currently Co-President of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians – the legendary Chicago-based musician centered self-help organization. “She’s the most exciting player on the instrument for a generation,” says Brian Morton.

Last year she premiered a number of commissioned works, including, “Many Paths to the Sea: A Tribute to Alice Coltrane”, “Qualities of My Father”, “Xenogenesis Suite: A Tribute to Octavia Butler”, and new music for award-winning poet Haki R. Madhubuti. Mitchell directs the Jazz Ensemble at Wheaton College and teaches jazz history at University of Illinois, Chicago.

“If you went looking for a poster-child for Chicago’s multidirectional, cross-pollinating, interstylistic music scene,” writes John Corbett, “you couldn’t find a better one than **Jeff Parker**.”

Jeff Parker is a widely-traveled jazz guitarist, equally at home in soul-jazz, hard-bop, dub, hip-hop, electronic and free jazz. He studied at Berklee College of Music beginning in 1985 and moved to Chicago in 1991. Once in the Windy City, Parker joined forces with cornetist Robert Mazurek and drummer Chad Taylor to form the Chicago Underground Trio, and he has also invigorated the bands of Ernest Dawkin’s New Horizon Ensemble, Fred Anderson, Ken Vandermark and Nicole Mitchell’s Black Earth Ensemble. He is a member of Isotope 217 and one of the leading post-rock bands, Tortoise. His debut CD as a leader is the acclaimed *Like-Coping*, released on Delmark in 2003, featuring Chris Lopes and Chad Taylor. His sophomore effort, *The Relatives*, came out in 2005 on Thrill Jockey.

“Even though there’s often an ‘out’ element to the music Parker performs,” writes Guitar Player magazine, “his own guitar playing is usually rather ‘in’ by comparison. No matter how treacherous the harmonic terrain, Parker provides enough recognizable landmarks for the listener to remain oriented and involved. Perhaps that root sensibility is the reason Parker receives calls from the likes of Branford Marsalis, Joshua Redman, and a host of other top-shelf jazzbos.”

The Solos & Duos Series continues with a performance by the Dave Douglas/Marcus Rojas Duo (Nov. 20). Tickets are \$10 and \$5 (students), and 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



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