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THE 2006 SOLOS & DUOS SERIES PRESENTS:

Cecil Taylor

The Solos & Duos Series, produced by the Fine Arts Center at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, will celebrate its 5th season with a rare solo concert by pianist **Cecil Taylor** on **Tuesday, September 26**, in **Bowker Auditorium** at **8:00 pm**

Along with John Coltrane and Ornette Coleman, Cecil Taylor is generally acknowledged to be one of the great musical innovators of post-war jazz. Still vibrant at age 76, Taylor has performed at the White House (for Jimmy Carter), has been a Guggenheim Fellow and a MacArthur Genius Award winner. He has collaborated with dancers Dianne McIntyre, Mikhail Baryshnikov and Heather Watts, as well as three generations of improvising musicians.

Born in New York in 1930, Taylor learned piano at six and went on to study at New York College and New England Conservatory. After first steps in R&B and swing-styled small groups in the early '50s with Hot Lips Page and Johnny Hodges, he formed his own band with Steve Lacy. "Taylor's first record (*Jazz Advance*) remains one of the most extraordinary debuts in jazz," writes The Penguin Guide to Jazz, "and for 1956 it's an incredible effort. The pianist's 1950s music is even more radical than Ornette Coleman's, though it has seldom been recognized as such, and while Coleman has acquired the plaudits, it is Taylor's achievement which now seems the most impressive and uncompromised."

Throughout the 50's and 60's Taylor made a series of landmark recordings such as *Jumpin Punkins*, *Unit Structures*, *Nefertiti*, *the Beautiful One Has Come*, and a pairing with John Coltrane (*Coltrane Time/Hard Drivin' Jazz*). From 1961, Taylor often played and recorded with alto saxophonist Jimmy Lyons (until Lyons' death in 1986). Drummers Sunny Murray and Andrew Cyrille were also frequent collaborators. In the 1980s, William Parker and later Tony Oxley made great music with Taylor.

"There's nothing easy about Cecil Taylor's music," writes Kurt Gottschalk. "It's fast and it's furious. It's very nearly incomprehensible and, quite plainly, genius. Sitting in his audience is nothing short of being in the presence of brilliance: one can either try to follow the multiple lines of reasoning, catching some themes and missing others, or simply submerge in the sound and bathe in the enormity of his art."

The Solos & Duos Series continues with performances by the **Joe Morris/Daniel Levin Duo** (Oct. 26) and **Joe McPhee** (Nov. 29). Tickets are \$10 and \$5 (students), and are 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

