

NEWS RELEASE



UMass Amherst Fine Arts Center

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 24, 2007

WHAT: UMASS FINE ARTS CENTER, CENTER SERIES

Miguel Zenón Quartet

WHEN: Thursday, October 18 at 7:30pm

**WHERE: Bowker Auditorium
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Call 1-800-999-UMAS or 545-2511 for tickets or
go online to www.fineartscenter.com/tickets**

**IMAGES: To download images relating to this press release please go online to
<http://www.umass.edu/fac/centerseries/pressreleases/photo.html>**

(Jazz Powerhouse Miguel Zenón Returns to the Bay State to Show Off His Chops)

As part of its Hispanic Heritage Series, The UMass Fine Arts Center's Center Series brings saxophonist, Miguel Zenón and his quartet to Bowker Auditorium on Thursday, October 18 at 7:30pm. Zenón is also in residence at UMass as part of the Billy Taylor Jazz Residencies program. His quartet includes Luis Perdomo, piano, Matt Penman, bass, and Jeff Ballard, on drums.

On Wednesday, October 17, the Center hosts a free salsa party at Open Square in Holyoke from 7-11pm. Entertainment will be provided by Combo Sabroso, a band based in Boston that follows in the traditions of Eddie Palmieri and Tito Puente. Their repertoire includes compositions that range in style from Cha Cha to Danzon, from Bolero to Salsa, from Latin jazz to Plena. Zenón used to play with members in the band back in his Berklee days. This is also an opportunity to meet the sponsors of this event and the people behind El Planeta, a new Latino news source in Western Mass. Cocktails and food provided by Artisan Café will be available for purchase.

A native of San Juan, Puerto Rico, Zenón studied saxophone at the famed Escuela Libre de Musica; an institution that boasts distinguished alumnus throughout the musical world. Although Zenón listened to and explored the music of Charlie Parker and other jazz greats while in high school, it wasn't until he began his studies at the Berklee School of Music—where he

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received a scholarship from the Puerto Rico Heineken Jazz Festival—that his formal jazz training began.

Zenón excelled at Berklee and received the Berklee Best Scholarship Award, the Frederic Cameron Weber Award and a grant from the Corporation of Musical Arts while in attendance. It was also during this time that he became active in the Boston area jazz scene and gained professional experience with the drummer Bob Moses' Mozamba and the Either/Orchestra. Upon his graduation in 1998, Zenón received a scholarship to attend the prestigious Manhattan School of Music in New York City where he received his Masters in Saxophone Performance in 2001. The distinguished list of musicians/educators he has studied with include: Angel Marrero, Leslie Lopez, Rafael Martinez, Danilo Perez, Dick Oatts, Dave Liebman, George Garzone and Bill Pierce.

In his very short, but rather illustrious career, the 29 year old Zenón has performed and/or recorded with a quite a diverse array of artists and groups including David Sanchez, Danilo Perez, William Cepeda's Afrorican Jazz, Bob Moses' Mozamba, The Either/Orchestra, The Guillermo Klein Big Band, The Mingus Big Band, Charlie Haden, Branford Marsalis, and Ray Barretto among others.

He has released three CD's as a leader. The first one, "Looking Forward" for the Fresh Sound Talent label, was selected by both The New York Times and TomaJazz Magazine as one of the top 10 Jazz CD's of 2002. The second one, "Ceremonial", was released in 2004 by Marsalis Music. This made Zenón one of the first artists signed by this label, founded by saxophone great Branford Marsalis. Miguel topped the prestigious "2004,2005 and 2006 Downbeat Magazine Critics Poll" for "Alto Saxophone Deserving Wider recognition".

"Jibaro", Zenón's second CD for Marsalis Music, was released in the Spring of 2005 to critical acclaim(read [Reviews](#)). The CD serves as a tribute to the "Musica Jibara" of the island of Puerto Rico, and it's music was commissioned by a grant from the New York State Council for the Arts. "Jibaro" was chosen as one of the "Best Recordings of 2005" by sources including The New York Times, Latin Beat, El Nuevo Dia, Descarga.com, and The Chicago Tribune to name a few.

Zenón and his quartet will perform at the Bowker Auditorium, Thursday, October 18 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25, \$15; youth 17 and under are \$12 and Five College Students are \$10 and \$7. For tickets and information, call the Fine Arts Center Box office at 413-545-2511 or 1-800-999-UMAS, or go online to www.fineartscenter.com/centerseries. This performance is sponsored by Bank of America, El Planeta, Allison, Bartmon and Angier LLP, Open Square, and WEIB 106.3FM.

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