

NEWS RELEASE

UMass Amherst Fine Arts Center www.fineartscenter.com

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 27, 2008

WHAT: UMass FINE ARTS CENTER Center Series
WHERE: Fine Arts Center Concert Hall
 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>

UMass Fine Arts Center Announces Its 2008-2009 Season

Art for a Change is the watchword for the UMass Fine Arts Center's (FAC) 2008-2009 season. Art for a Change in how we all connect with our communities, different cultures and our planet. Artists who will raise their voices, their bodies, and their instruments for a better understanding of our world and who will engage with our community on a deeper level when they're here. Art for a Change for a healthier environment -- you'll be seeing the Fine Arts Center go a lot greener this coming year, from the printing of our materials to the use of recycled products whenever possible. The Center will have a microsite with tips and links on how we can all be greener. The Fine Arts Center believes that going green involves more than just recycling. With a program called **The Arts Give Back**, the FAC will provide opportunities for its audience to donate and to learn more about local charities at selected events.

What better way to kick off such a season than with our **Latin Fest**? On Saturday, September 20, we'll inaugurate the year's festivities with a dynamic performance by the Puerto Rican chanteuse **La India**, who was named "The Princess of Salsa" by no less an expert than Tito Puente himself. The Concert Hall will thrill to the Latin rhythms of La India's top-flight band as they cover the range of Puerto Rican music. The evening begins early on the plaza at 5 PM with free salsa and meringue lessons and demonstrations, live music by Amherst Regional High School's Bomba Ensemble and dance music provided by well-known local DJ, Bongohead There will be Puerto Rican food for sale (children 10 and under eat for free), and free craft activities for children. A cash bar will also be available. Opening for La India at 8 P.M. will be **Jesús Pagan and his Orchestra**. This is a great family event and fun for all. On Friday, September 19, 5-8 PM there will be an open screening of the work of the **Latino Youth Media Institute**

in the Concert Hall Lobby. It will showcase the completed projects of young local Latinos that were selected to participate in the Institute. Using various media, each project conveys an important personal experience relating to their family, their community and to society as a whole. Visit www.fineartscenter.com/calendar/centerseries/events/India.html for more on La India.

2008-2009 promises to be a dance-lovers dream, as the Fine Arts Center brings in troupes from around the world to entertain our audiences with their grace and athleticism. From **Ailey II**, the junior company of the renown **Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** on October 23, to the exhilarating Alvin Ailey dancers themselves, who will provide our season finale on May 13, 2009. In between you'll experience the dynamism and grace of dance companies from across the globe: the **Paul Taylor Dance Company** on November 13, **Hubbard Street Dance Chicago** on February 4, 2009, Luis Bravo's passionate **Forever Tango** on February 27, 2009, and the hard-driving **Trinity Irish Dance Company** on March 27, 2009.

In celebration of the Fine Arts Center's long collaboration with 88.5 FM WFCR and its long-running program **Jazz à la Mode**, we'll be bringing you the Jazz à la Mode series in the spectacular new Top of Campus Marriott Center venue, where jazz lovers can take in stunning views of the Valley and enjoy the power, elegance, and energy of contemporary jazz. The series starts off with saxophonist **Dave Pietro**'s inventive *Chakra Suite* on October 3, followed on November 7 by Israeli sax and clarinet sensation **Anat Cohen** and her quartet. The series ends with a performance by master bassist **Avery Sharpe** and his trio on November 21. A cash bar and light fare will be available at each of these events.

World Music fans will be well provisioned in the coming season. In addition to season-opener La India, the FAC will be hosting **Lura**, a young singer who carries on the unique musical traditions of her native Cape Verde, on October 9. Perennial favorites **Sweet Honey in the Rock** will bring their spirited message of hope, love, and justice to the Concert Hall on November 1. **The Soweto Gospel Choir** makes a return visit to the Fine Arts Center on December 3. This glorious 25-member troupe sold out the Concert Hall three years ago and visits again to perform its inspirational blend of tribal, traditional, and popular African gospel music in eight different languages. Next up on the world music stage is the reigning ambassador of the Portuguese fado, **Mariza**, on February 19, 2009. Our world music presentations culminate with the appearance of the **Toumani Diabaté Symmetric Orchestra**. Diabaté is rightfully called "the Jimi Hendrix of the kora," the 21-string harp unique to Africa. Visit www.fineartscenter.com to view a film clip of his astonishing virtuosity. His jubilant sound will certainly rock the Fine Arts Center on April 23, 2009!

Lovers of theater and opera will have their pick of incomparable masterworks with **Shakespeare & Company**'s production of **Hamlet** on October 8 and **Carmen**, Bizet's indelible portrait of the willful gypsy woman brought to the stage by the **Teatro Lirico D'Europa** on October 28. In conjunction with the live performance of Hamlet, the Massachusetts Center for Renaissance Studies will present a **Hamlet Film Series** offering ten films from Olivier's Hamlet to Ethan Hawke's and everything in between beginning September 25th. Free and open to the public. Go online to fineartscenter.com/centerseries for a complete listing.

More sonic delights are in store from **Cantus** on March 12, 2009. Cantus is America's newest full-time vocal ensemble whose brilliant sound and innovative programming have garnered the highest praise from critics and audiences alike. If your tastes run to chamber orchestras and full symphonies, you'll have your appetites satisfied by visits from **I Musici de Montréal** on April 5, 2009,

and the **National Philharmonic of Russia** on April 19, 2009. I Musici de Montréal will perform the orchestrated *Pictures at an Exhibition* in a production choreographed with digital large-scale projections of paintings by acclaimed artist Natasha Turovsky, while the National Philharmonic of Russia offers a program of Russian masterpieces, including the Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2 with 1998 Tchaikovsky Competition Gold Medal Winner **Denis Matsuev** at the piano.

There's great fun in store for the family as we bring you an evening with **Tomáš Kubínek** on February 13, 2008. Kubínek has been described as "the wildest thing to fly out of Canada since geese!" His one-person show has captivated audiences of all ages, leaving them with a comically altered view of life's creative possibilities. There's more in store for families on February 6, 2009, when the FAC celebrates Mardi Gras with New Orleans' own **Hot 8 Brass Band** bringing the rhythm and pulse of the city's magnificent celebratory street music to Bowker Auditorium. Longtime featured artists at the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, the Hot 8 Brass Band was recently featured in the Spike Lee documentary *When the Levees Broke*. On March 9, 2009, prepare to be dazzled as the **National Acrobats of China** bring their stunning display of the best in Chinese martial arts, illusion, and acrobatics to the Concert Hall.

In addition to great performances, the Fine Arts Center is offering patrons additional opportunities for educating their minds and palates with pre-performance discussions by company or area scholars, films about the artists or their art forms in advance of selected events and a series of **Global Gourmet Dinners** where audiences can make reservations for a pre-performance themed dinner at the University Club when they call for their tickets. The University Club is a short walk to the Concert Hall, located on Stockbridge Road.

Tickets for all Fine Arts Center events are available by phone, by mail, in person, or online. Simply call 413-545-2511 or 1-800-999-UMAS, or log into www.fineartscenter.com, where tickets may be purchased with a VISA or MasterCard. A 15 percent subscription discount is available with the purchase of three or more events (excluding the appearance of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater). UMass Amherst employees, Alumni members, and seniors may deduct 10 percent from their purchase even if ordering single tickets for fewer than three events. Substantial discounts for all performances are available to Five College and Greenfield Community College students.

Tickets for La India are also available at:

Sonido Musical

331 High St
Holyoke, MA 01040-6514
413-532-4116

L&E Music and Creation

169 White St
Springfield, MA 01108

413-737-9953

Salsarengue

392 High Street
Holyoke, MA 01040
413-533-1894

Imperio Musical

2460 Main St
Springfield, MA 01107-1925
413-827-8452