

NEWS RELEASE

UMass Amherst Fine Arts Center

www.fineartscenter.com

CONTACT: Jorge Luis González at 413-545-4482 or jlg@admin.umass.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 4, 2008

WHAT: LATIN FEST AT THE UMASS FINE ARTS CENTER
Latino Youth Media Institute Showcase, Friday, September
19, 5-8 PM, Fine Arts Center Concert Hall Lobby

Festival Celebration featuring India the Princess of Salsa,
Saturday, September 20, 8 PM Fine Arts Center Concert Hall
Free Festival on the Plaza, 5-8 PM

Exhibit: Nuestras Abuelas (Our Grandmothers): Their Hope,
Our Strength
Photographs and Essays, Central Gallery, University of
Massachusetts Amherst
September 25 through October 25. Opening Reception:
Friday, September 26, 5-7 PM

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 to Celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month with Latin Fest

Hispanic Heritage Month begins on September 15, the anniversary of independence for five Latin American countries—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico declared its independence on September 16, and Chile on September 18. With that in mind, the UMass Fine Arts Center will offer several events that celebrate Hispanic culture, food, music and art. This is a great opportunity for families to share and to learn more about Latino culture.

**THE LATINO YOUTH MEDIA INSTITUTE OPEN SCREENING AND
RECEPTION**

On September 19, from 5-8 PM in the Concert Hall Lobby, the Fine Arts Center will host a showcase of work by young local Latinos that have been selected to participate in the Latino Youth Media Institute. Using various media, each project conveys an important personal experience relating to their family, their community and to society as a whole. The Institute is a partnership of WGBY, WFCR Public Radio, The Republican Newspaper, José Garcia (Independent Filmmaker and Photographer,) and TOLD: "Telling Our Legacies Digitally". The goal of the institute is to increase public broadcasting's service to and engagement of the Latino communities within our region. At the personal level, it teaches participants the essential skills needed in today's media environment and gives them hands-on experience in television and radio broadcasting, online content, print media and interactive gaming. Participants build their media experience and develop their skills with three major media assignments. Finally, these stories will be broadcast on public media; and published online and in print. This will both engage the Latino community with public media and share those communities' experiences with regional audiences as a whole. This event is free and open to the public. Light Latin fare and music will also be on hand.

INDIA: "THE PRINCESS OF SALSA"& JESUS PAGAN Y SU ORQUESTA, Sat, September 20, 8 PM, Concert Hall, Free Festival on the Plaza, 5-8 PM

The festivities begin on the Fine Arts Center Plaza at 5PM with Salsa lessons and demonstrations, live music by Amherst Regional High School's Bomba Ensemble and dancing to music by DJ Bongohead (Pablo Yglesias). There will be Latin food provided by Salsarengue (children 10 and under eat for free) and free craft activities for children. A cash bar will also be available. The festival on the plaza is free and open to the public. A post-show dance party will be held in the lobby with music by DJ Bongohead. Masters of Ceremonies will be Victor and Marta Guevarra.

Internationally celebrated diva of Latin soul and dance music, India has earned the respect and admiration of music lovers worldwide earning her the title "The Princess of Salsa," so named by the late legendary bandleader Tito Puente. Embracing her cultural heritage, this Puerto Rican chanteuse will take the audience on an energetic and powerful musical journey—from inspirational and rocking music to soulful jazz to deep and intimate ballads. India evokes with great respect and admiration her mentors, the "Queen of Salsa" Celia Cruz and Latin Jazz legend Tito Puente. In 1996 she collaborated with Puente in the

historical recording titled, "Tito Puente/India Jazzin' with The Count Basie Orchestra" for the label Tropi Jazz, a favorite among Latin Jazz lovers worldwide and it was again in 1999 that she had the honor to perform along side her mentors, Tito Puente and Celia Cruz under the musical directorship of Maestro Johnny Pacheco in a tribute to the "Queen of Salsa" titled "Celia and friends." The highlight of this televised PBS special was the performance of India and Celia's duet, "La Voz De La Experiencia" lyrics written by India as a tribute to her godmother. On the personal side, India is a strong supporter and advocate for health and social issues, such as, the fight against Breast Cancer, Domestic Violence, Abused and Neglected children, AIDS, LOLA, The Juvenile Diabetes Foundation, and The Humane Society. Among numerous civic and professional obligations she is involved in NARA's New York Chapter board of governors for a second year, and is the national spokesperson for the Grammy's Concert Series for Young People participating as a super panelist on several occasions for the Grammy's in School Programs.

Opening for India will be Jesus Pagan and his Orchestra. With his own distinct brand of "Salsa Dura," Pagan moves his audiences to tears and in the next moment has them dancing in the streets. He is at once, both a masterful interpreter of the repertoire of Salsa, and an innovative songwriter in his own right. Carrying the torch passed on by the likes of Hector Lavoe, Ismael Rivera, and Tito Rodriguez, Jesús Pagan y su Orquesta are carrying the light of Salsa Dura into the 21st Century.

General Seating Tickets for India are \$35, \$25, \$15; Five College/GCC Students and Youth 17 and under, \$15. They are available through the Fine Arts center Box office at 545-2511, 1-800-999-UMAS and online at fineartscenter.com. They are also available at L& E Music and Creation, 169 White Street, Springfield 413-737-9953. Imperio Musical , 2460 Main Street, Springfield, 413-827-8452, Sonido Musical, 331 High Street, Holyoke, MA, 413-532-4116, and Salsarengue, 392 High Street, Holyoke, MA 413-533-1850.

PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT AT UMASS CENTRAL GALLERY

A photography exhibit that reveals how the legacy of the Latina *matriarca* influences her granddaughters today will be on view at the Fine Arts Center's Central Gallery Sept. 25-Oct. 25. A reception, featuring guitarist [Lorena Garay](#), will be held on Sept. 26 from 5 to 7 p.m. at the gallery, located in the Central Residential Area of the campus, off Clark Hill Road. **Nuestras Abuelas: Their Hope, Our Strength** marks the beginning of an ongoing mixed media (photographs, essays and online site at <http://www.LaPrensaMa.com/LaPrensaNuestrasAbuelas.htm>) exhibit that gathers the stories and photographs of Latinas of all nationalities to honor their *abuelas* (grandmothers).

Nuestras Abuelas includes photographs from the 1930s, 40s and 50s, key decades in which American foreign policy influenced or imposed political development across Latin America. Grandmothers from Guatemala, Puerto Rico and Mexico are among the countries represented in this exhibit, whose premiere at the Central Gallery is the first stop of several planned for 2008-2009. More photographs will be added to the exhibit when it moves to the Holyoke Public Library and the Westfield Athenaeum later this year.

The three Latina members who created the project discovered that their own grandmothers helped shape who they are today and the work that they do in the community. Their stories are included in Nuestras Abuelas. An essay written by the granddaughter that describes the relationship between her and her grandmother accompanies every photograph.

The project was created and is sponsored by Northampton resident Natalia Muñoz, founder of La Prensa del oeste de Massachusetts (<http://www.LaPrensaMa.com/>), which each month publishes photographs of grandmothers. Longtime Puerto Rican community advocate Noemí E. Valentín, also of Northampton and assistant editor for La Prensa, is a curator of the exhibit along with art researcher Waleska Santiago of Springfield. Writer Revan Schendler of Northampton serves as project advisor.

Latin Fest is sponsored by Bank of America, WGBY TV 57, El Sol Latino, La Prensa, the UMass Office for Student Affairs and Campus Life and Salsarengue.

--END--