



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 5, 2012

**WHAT: Dancing with the Arts
23rd Annual Friends of the Fine Arts Center Gala & Auction**

WHEN: Saturday, February 4th, 2012, 7 - 11:30 PM

**WHERE: Hotel Northampton, Northampton, MA
Call 1-800-999-UMAS or 545-2511 for tickets or
go online to www.fineartscenter.com/tickets**

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DANCING WITH THE ARTS AT THE 23rd ANNUAL FRIENDS OF THE FINE ARTS CENTER GALA

It's time for the 23rd Annual Friends of the Fine Arts Center's Benefit Gala and Auction at the Hotel Northampton, Saturday, February 4th, 7 PM to 11:30 PM. The evening includes entertainment, karaoke, dancing, fabulous food and the ever popular on-line auction. More importantly the evening raises funds that help the FAC to broaden its cultural footprint throughout the Valley as it works to expose, engage, educate and inspire generations to experience the visual and performing arts. And if tickets are purchased before Wednesday, January 11th, ticket holders will be entered into a contest to win luxury accommodations at the hotel the night of the event and press seats to three events of choice throughout the remainder of the Fine Arts Center's spring season. Volunteers and board members JoAnne Finck and Mary Ellen Anderson are co-chairing this event.

For the last several years, proceeds from this annual benefit have supported the Center's work in arts education. The proceeds from this year's benefit will support the Center's jazz initiative that in recent years has seen substantial growth including the formation of the community oriented Valley Jazz Network. The center also hosts the

renowned Jazz in July program started 30 years ago by Dr. Billy Taylor, the Billy Taylor Jazz Residency, the Center Jazz Series and the Solos & Duos and Magic Triangle Jazz Series for those more adventuresome jazz lovers.

The Gala will be held throughout the entire hotel with entertainment options in every room. There is no reserved seating so that patrons can mingle and move easily throughout the venue. Going into its fifth year, the online auction returns this year so that everyone, not just Gala attendees, has the opportunity to bid on the many wonderful items offered through the auction. The online auction goes live January 22nd and ends at 4 PM, Sunday, February 5th, just in time for the Super Bowl kick-off. To access the online auction go to www.biddingforgood.com/UMassFineArtsCenter.

The evening gets started **Samirah Evans and Her Handsome Devils** with their soulful mix of jazz in the Hampshire Room—magically transformed into a Jazz/Blues nightclub by CJC Event Lighting. The ever popular **Cloud Nine Karaoke** also returns to the Coolidge Bar and Café. To showcase the jazz giants of the future, the Gala will host **The Free For All**, UMass' very own jazz quintet playing jazz standards as well as their original compositions. And finally, in the ballroom the **All-Star DYNO-O-MYTE Disco Review** will offer the most authentic 70's music.

The auction is busting with over 100 treasures of fine arts, original creations, getaways, vacation homes, and more all donated from local businesses and artists. Highlights include incredible works of art, Majestic Resort getaways, Center Ice Bruins tickets, WB Mason Luxury Box Yankee tickets, spa and hotel packages, unique experiences and much more.

Hotel Northampton owner Mansour Ghalibaf has once again inspired his chefs to create an exciting array of menus for the evening with each room offering up a different kind of fare. Cash bars will be available throughout the hotel. For parking and directions to the hotel, visit www.hotelnorthampton.com. The Hotel Northampton is also offering a special rate on overnight stays. Call 413-584-3100 or 800-54-RELAX and ask for the Gala's special package.

Ticket price for the Gala event is \$125 per person and includes a \$25 tax-deductible contribution. Corporate sponsorships are available starting at \$500. For more information, please call the Friends of the Fine Arts Center at 413.545.3671. For tickets to the event, call the box office at 413.545.2511 or 1.800.999.UMAS. For more details about the event go online to www.fineartscenter.com/gala.

Lead sponsor for the Gala is the Hotel Northampton. Sponsors include the *Daily Hampshire Gazette*, WEIB 106.3FM, CJC Event Lighting and TigerPress. Additional sponsor support comes from Finck & Perras Insurance, Florence Savings Bank, Motoko Inoue, PeoplesBank, Mark & Sarah Tanner, United Bank, Bacon & Wilson, Fallon Community Health, Pioneer Valley Periodontics, UMass Alumni Association.

Press release text and press-quality images are also available on our website at www.fineartscenter.com/press.

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Calendar Listing:

Dancing with the Arts

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