



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 21, 2011

- WHAT:** Creole Choir of Cuba
WHEN: Wednesday, October 12 at 7:30pm
WHERE: Fine Arts Center Concert Hall
University of Massachusetts Amherst
TICKETS: Call 1-800-999-UMAS or 545-2511 for tickets or go online to <http://www.fineartscenter.com/>
IMAGES: To download images relating to this press release please go online to <http://www.fineartscenter.com/pressphotos>

CREOLE CHOIR OF CUBA BRINGS CARIBBEAN RHYTHMS AND MELODIES TO THE UMASS FINE ARTS CENTER

On Wednesday, October 12 at 7:30 P.M., the UMass Fine Arts Center hosts the [Creole Choir of Cuba](#) in a Concert Hall performance that will feature impassioned singing and rhythmic dancing by this unique group. Soaring a capella arrangements of Haitian and Martinique merengues, mazurkas, and other styles—sung in Creole and strengthened by tight Afro-Caribbean percussion—come together in a stirring live performance. A pre-performance “Fireside Chat” at the UMass University Club by Grete Viddal of Harvard University’s Department of African and African-American Studies begins at 6:30 P.M. (Park in Lot 62 for easy access to the Club and the Concert Hall.) A cultural celebration of the Creole music from the Oriente de Cuba will be held in the Concert Hall lobby, also beginning at 6:30 P.M.

The Creole Choir of Cuba was founded in 1994 by Emilia Diaz Chavez, who is the choir’s Director, and several current members of the troupe. The Choir’s main objective is to promote Caribbean musical compositions, principally Haitian. They sing in Creole but also count Cuban musical traditions as part of their identity. The choir members themselves are part of the Haitian community in Camagüey and all are professional,

classically trained singers and musicians. They are part of the provincial choir of Camagüey, which has been formed for over 30 years.

Haiti and Cuban history intertwine at many points, beginning in the 18th century when Haitians were taken by French colonists as slaves to Cuba. More migrations to Cuba followed, this time in order to escape oppressive dictatorial regimes at home. Settling in Cuba, the descendants of those immigrants have sought to keep their traditions alive through story-telling, music, and dance.

As professional singers who are actively involved in the Haitian community, the members of the Choir worked hard to find out as much as they could about their ancestral homeland and its musical and cultural traditions. It was very important to them to keep the essence of Haiti in their music while retaining the Cuban element of their identities.

Tickets for the Creole Choir of Cuba are \$30, \$25, and \$15; Five College, GCC, STCC students and youth 17 and under are \$10. For tickets call the Box Office at 545-2511, toll-free at 800-999-UMAS, or purchase online at fineartscenter.com. The performance is sponsored by UnityFirst.com, WACM's "Domingos de Parranda," and *El Sol Latino*.

PHOTOS

Hi-res photos available for download: <http://www.umass.edu/fac/pressphotos>

PRESS PASSES

Limited press passes are available. Please contact Shawn Farley at 413-545-4159 or <mailto:sfarley@admin.umass.edu>

ABOUT THE FAC

The Fine Arts Center, located on the UMass Amherst campus, is a presenter of music, dance, theater and the visual arts, bringing hundreds of outstanding and provocative artists to the Pioneer Valley for over 35 years.

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