



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 24, 2011

- WHAT:** The Tia Fuller Quartet
WHEN: Wednesday, November 16, at 7:30pm
WHERE: Bowker Auditorium
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>

JOY OF SAX SERIES CONTINUES WITH THE TIA FULLER QUARTET

Alto saxophonist Tia Fuller has been gaining attention as a member of Beyoncé's touring band but she's a hard-core jazz musician, composer, and educator as well. She brings her quartet to the Fine Arts Center's **Bowker Auditorium** on **Wednesday, November 16 at 7:30pm as part of the FAC's Joy of Sax series**. Fuller will be in residence as part of the Billy Taylor Jazz Residency Program. The residency includes conversation, workshops and a performance. There will be a **pre-performance talk lead by WFCR's Jazz Safari host Kari Njiri and visiting filmmaker Janice Littlejohn at 6:30pm** in the auditorium.

In conjunction with the appearance of the Tia Fuller Quartet, New England Public Radio will present another installment of The Joy of Sax Film Series with jazz film, live music by high School jazz student Tess Domb Sadof and her combo, and commentary by WFCR *Jazz à la Mode* host Tom Reney. ***Jammin' the Blues* and *A Great Day in Harlem*, will be shown on Monday, Nov 7 at 7pm at the Amherst Cinema**. Tickets for the films are available online at www.amherstcinema.org or at the Amherst Cinema box office.

As part of Fuller's residency she'll participate in a lunch-time **panel with Janice Littlejohn titled *Women in Jazz: From Hep Girls to Grammy Winners* on Tuesday, November 15 at noon in room 1001 in the UMass Campus Center.** Admission is \$7 and includes lunch. Littlejohn is currently producing a documentary film titled *....but can she play?* about women horn players in jazz which features Tia Fuller. The discussion will touch on the important contributions women instrumentalists have made to the genre, beginning with the first lady of jazz, pianist Lil Hardin Armstrong as well as why record companies and radio stations are culpable in keeping women horn players under-recognized, how to find and support women sax and brass players, how Esperanza Spalding's unexpected Grammy win foreshadows a burgeoning transformation of jazz, and why public school education is crucial in fostering an appreciation and awareness of jazz for future generations and enabling us to preserve the legacy of America's only true indigenous music.

Fuller writes and plays compositions of dramatic uplift, often highly modal, with thrashing rhythms that dance with great physicality and athleticism. She is very much in the line of inspired players like Billy Harper and Kenny Garrett. A teacher at the Jazz Institute of New Jersey, she comes from a well-known musical family group, *Fuller Sound*, where she began her music education in piano and flute at the early age of three. She studied saxophone with Joe Jennings and received her bachelor of arts in Music from Spellman College, where she graduated Magna Cum Laude. She also received a Master's degree in Jazz Pedagogy and Performance from the University of Colorado at Boulder. She has studied with music greats Wessell Anderson, Javon Jackson, and Jesse Davi. She has also performed with numerous jazz luminaries including Ed Thigpen, Mikey Roker, Charles Fambrough, Tony Reedus, John Swanna, Benny Powell, Joe Ford, and Ndugu Chancellor, and with such big bands as the Jon Faddis Jazz Orchestra, Duke Ellington Orchestra, Gerald Wilson Big Band, Charlie Persip Big Band, DIVA Jazz Orchestra and as a featured artist with Don Byron in Stravinsky's "Ebony Concerto."

Fuller has been a featured artist in *Jazz Improv Magazine's "Saxophone Edition"* (2004-2005), New York's *All About Jazz Magazine* and *Hot House*. Other honors include her performances at the Detroit Jazz Festival, *Jazz Fest Vien* (Vienna, Austria), and the *Clifford Brown Jazz Festival*. Fuller was the winner of the 1999 IAJE's *Sisters in Jazz Collegiate Competition*, a winner of Vail Jazz Party's *Young Talent All-Stars*, featured in

a DOWNBEAT article for *Up and Coming Musicians* and was chosen as TA/ Clinician for IAJE's Sister's in Jazz Quintet (2000).

...*but can she play?* is the first feature-length documentary centered on the lives and music of women sax and brass players who are challenging gender biases and influencing the transformation of contemporary American jazz. The film spotlights a year in the life of 21-year-old alto saxophonist Hailey Niswanger, who is now attending Berklee College of Music in Boston, as she prepares for the follow-up to her 2009 straight-ahead debut, *Confeddie*, which solidified her as a rising star in jazz.

The Tia Fuller concert is sponsored by the UMass Hotel at the Campus Center, New England Public Radio, UnityFirst.com, the Valley Advocate and Amherst Cinema. Tickets for The Tia Fuller Quartet are \$25 and \$15; Five College/GCC/STCC and youth 17 and under are \$10. Tickets are available from the Fine Arts Center Box Office at 545-2511 or 1-800-999-UMAS, or on the secure Fine Arts Center ticket website at www.fineartscenter.com/.

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PHOTOS

Hi-res photos available for download: www.fineartscenter.com/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.