



## **NEWS RELEASE**

Contact: Jorge Luis Gonzalez at 413-545-4482 or at [jlg@admin.umass.edu](mailto:jlg@admin.umass.edu)

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 8, 2011**

- WHAT:** The Guthrie Family Rides Again  
**WHEN:** Friday, November 18 at 8pm  
**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>

### **The Guthrie Family Rides Again**

**Four generations of Arlo Guthrie's family come together to share stories and the songs they've written, learned together and come to love.**

For the last four decades, Arlo Guthrie has embodied a spirit of sharing timeless stories and unforgettable classic songs to audiences across the globe. Upholding a long-standing Guthrie Family tradition of traveling to communities far and wide, "Guthrie Family Rides Again" brings four generations of voices together to the Fine Arts Center Concert Hall stage on Friday, November 18 at 8pm, just in time for the Thanksgiving holiday. The entire family will perform songs they've written, learned together, and come to love. Along with Arlo's standards, the evening will include a selection of unpublished Woody Guthrie lyrics put to music by friends and family. This concert is an Arts Give Back event so patrons are asked to bring a non-perishable food item for the Amherst Survival Center.

"Guthrie Family Rides Again" features Arlo alongside his son Abe, who has contributed keyboards and backing vocals to his father's live shows since the '80s. His daughters Cathy, Annie and Sarah Lee Guthrie, all of whom have their own bustling music careers, provide support by singing songs and accompanying on acoustic guitars. Sarah Lee's musical partner

and husband Johnny Irion will lead songs and lend his stalwart guitar playing. The youngest generation of Guthrie kids will join in the fun on select songs.

**Arlo Guthrie:** “Well, I've got four children and seven grandchildren with me and we're concentrating on two things. First we're performing family originals—songs that my children Sarah Lee, Cathy and Annie and my son Abe and son-in-law Johnny Irion have written. We're also doing new material that my dad wrote. He wrote lyrics, but my dad could not write music, so if he had tunes for these words, they went with him when he left us. And so over the last 15 years some other musicians like Billy Bragg and Wilco, Janis Ian and the Native American group Blackfire have brought these songs to life. I've written music for this material, too, but I've been doing it forever. This tour we're trying to introduce it to people that haven't heard it before.”

Arlo Guthrie is the eldest son of America's most beloved singer/writer/philosopher, Woody Guthrie, and Marjorie Mazia Guthrie. His mother was a professional dancer with the Martha Graham Company and founder of The Committee to Combat Huntington's Disease. He grew up surrounded by dancers and musicians: Pete Seeger, Ronnie Gilbert, Fred Hellerman and Lee Hays (The Weavers), Leadbelly, Cisco Houston, Ramblin' Jack Elliott, Sonny Terry and Brownie McGee, all of whom were significant influences on Arlo's musical career.

Arlo gave his first public performance at age 13 and quickly became involved in the music that was shaping the world during the 1960s. Arlo practically lived in the most famous venues of the "Folk Boom" era. In New York City he hung out at Gerdes Folk City, The Gaslight and The Bitter End. In Boston it was Club 47 and in Philadelphia he made places like The 2nd Fret and The Main Point his home.

Arlo witnessed the transition from an earlier generation of ballad singers like Richard Dyer-Bennet and blues-men like Mississippi John Hurt, to a new era of singer-song writers such as Bob Dylan, Jim Croce, Joan Baez, and Phil Ochs. He grooved with the beat poets like Allen Ginsberg and Lord Buckley, and picked with players like Bill Monroe and Doc Watson. He learned something from everyone and developed his own style, becoming a distinctive, expressive voice in a crowded community of singer-songwriters and political-social commentators.

Arlo Guthrie's career exploded in 1967 with the release of his album, “Alice's Restaurant,” whose title song premiered at the Newport Folk Festival and helped foster a new commitment to social consciousness and activism among the '60s generation. Arlo went on to star in the 1969 Hollywood film version of “Alice's Restaurant,” directed by Arthur Penn.

Though Arlo's definitive rendition of Steve Goodman's "City of New Orleans" may have been his only 'hit' song in the traditional sense, he has never the less achieved international

stature. The 18-minute "Alice's Restaurant," while too long for radio airplay, has become an American classic. The song "Coming into Los Angeles," though banned from many radio stations when first released, had become a favorite by the time he played it at the 1969 Woodstock Festival and it remains a favorite today.

Over the last four decades Arlo has toured throughout North America, Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia, winning a broad and dedicated following. In addition to being an accomplished musician, playing the piano, six and twelve-string guitar, harmonica, and a dozen other instruments. Arlo is a natural-born storyteller whose hilarious tales and anecdotes are woven seamlessly into his performances.

Guthrie's undertakings include community projects as well as artistic pursuits. In 1991, Arlo purchased the old Trinity Church, the very location where events took place on Thanksgiving 1965 that inspired Arlo to write the song "Alice's Restaurant." The church is home to The Guthrie Center, named for his parents, and The Guthrie Foundation.

Tickets for the Guthrie Family Rides Again Concert are \$35, \$30, 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](http://fineartscenter.com). The performance is sponsored by the *Daily Hampshire Gazette*, the Hampshire Hospitality Group, and 93.9 The River.

## **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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