



## NEWS RELEASE

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 23, 2012

- WHAT:** NATALIE MACMASTER  
**WHEN:** Saturday, December 1 at 8 p.m.  
**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 <https://fac.umass.edu/Online/article/Images>

#### VIRTUOSO FIDDLER NATALIE MACMASTER PRESENTS “A CAPE BRETON CHRISTMAS” AT THE FAC CONCERT HALL

Virtuoso fiddler Natalie MacMaster returns to the UMass Fine Arts Center Concert Hall on Saturday, Dec. 1, at 8 p.m. with “Christmas in Cape Breton.” In this spirited performance, the acclaimed Canadian artist takes audiences on a musical sleigh ride through Nova Scotia at Christmastime, performing traditional and contemporary Celtic melodies and Christmas carols, complemented by fiddling fireworks and ferocious step dancing. Macmaster will get some help on a few carols from the award-winning Hampshire Young People’s Chorus, under the direction of K. C. Conlan and Reka Peterson. MacMaster’s band includes pianist Mac Morin, drummer Eric Breton, cellist Nathaniel Smith, and Nate Douglas on guitar. Macmaster’s performance is one of the FAC’s “The Arts Give Back” events. Ticket holders are urged to bring non-perishable food items to donate to the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts. This performance is family friendly with tickets for youth 17 and under only \$10.

“To call Natalie MacMaster the most dynamic performer in Celtic music today is high praise, but it still doesn’t get at just how remarkable a concert artist this Cape Breton Island fiddler has become,” raves the Boston Herald about MacMaster, who picked up her first fiddle at age 9. The niece of famed Cape Breton fiddler Buddy MacMaster, she quickly became a talent in her own right, capturing audiences’ attention with her signature bluegrass, folk and contemporary acoustic sounds blended with jazz, rock and even classical music. MacMaster has collaborated with a diverse collection of artists, including master violinist Mark O’Connor, legendary cellist Yo-Yo Ma, banjo

prodigy Bela Fleck, fellow fiddler Alison Krauss, renowned tenor Luciano Pavarotti and celebrated guitarist Carlos Santana, among others. In November 2011, she released her latest album, "Cape Breton Girl," recorded at Glenn Gould Studios in Toronto. In addition to 11 critically acclaimed albums (which have earned her a Grammy nomination and two Juno Awards), MacMaster also recently released her first book, "Natalie MacMaster's Cape Breton Aire," a musical journey through Cape Breton, featuring beautiful landscape images by photographer Eric Roth.

The last time MacMaster was at the FAC she was pregnant with her fourth child, Julia Elizabeth, whom she gave birth to at the beginning of 2011 (she is married to fiddler Donnell Leahy, who performs with the Leahys – a group that includes seven of his brothers and sisters.) MacMaster said her music has not changed, but that having a family and being a mother has reinvigorated her commitment to the stage and her audience. "I like being on stage even more," MacMaster said. "When I appear onstage, that's my departure from Momhood – and I transform into Natalie MacMaster: the entertainer, the fiddler, the performer. I relish that now more." And she loves to cook. Visit her [website](#) for recipes from A to Z. Plus fans can send her one their own recipes to share.

Tickets for Natalie MacMaster's performance at the FAC Concert Hall are \$40, \$35, 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 Applewood at Amherst, 93.9 The River, the Hampshire Hospitality Group, and *The Recorder*.

## **PHOTOS**

Hi-res photos available for download: <https://fac.umass.edu/Online/article/Images>.

## **PRESS PASSES**

Limited press passes are available. Please contact Shawn Farley at 413-545-4159 or [sfarley@admin.umass.edu](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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