

JAZZ@THE FAC NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 6, 2011

- WHAT:** James Farm, featuring Joshua Redman, Aaron Parks, Matt Penman & Eric Harland
- WHEN:** Saturday, September 24 at 8 PM
- 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 OPENS WITH PERFORMANCE BY JAMES FARM

Who is James Farm? It's not a guy, its J (Joshua), A (Aaron), M (Matt) and E (Eric). On Saturday, September 24 at 8 PM in Bowker Auditorium, the Joy of Sax series begins with a concert by a new project created by four young lions of contemporary jazz: James Farm. Formed in 2009, James Farm is an acoustic jazz quartet consisting of saxophonist Joshua Redman, pianist Aaron Parks, bassist Matt Penman and drummer Eric Harland. Each of these four free-thinking musicians holds a stake in the future of jazz, and together they form a group with a new take on song-based improvisation. There will a pre-performance talk at 7:15pm in the auditorium by WFCR *Jazz à la Mode* host Tom Reney.

In conjunction with the appearance of James Farm, New England Public Radio presents the premier of The Joy of Sax Film Series with Jazz film, live music, and commentary by WFCR *Jazz à la Mode* host Tom Reney. *Texas Tenor: The Illinois Jacquet Story*, will screen on Monday, Sept 19 at 7 PM in the Amherst Cinema. *Jammin' the Blues* and *A Great Day in Harlem*, will be shown on Monday, Nov 7 at 7 PM at the Amherst Cinema. Tickets for the films are available online at www.amherstcinema.org or at the Amherst Cinema box office.

From their first gig at the Montreal Jazz Festival they have been writing and honing music that carries strong melodies and buoyant grooves, but defies facile comparisons. They strive, in their own words "to make new musical

connections for the times we live in, and make new beats for what now surrounds us." Indeed, there is a physicality to their music, as well as an urgency that comes across in the live performances especially. This band wants to move its listeners, and only asks for an open mind.

The press response suggests that the band's appeal is immediate, with the *San Jose Mercury News* describing the music as "hip-hop, rock and North African beats, Radiohead trance textures, classic motifs. Yet somehow this acoustic quartet doesn't give up the post-Miles-Trane-and-all-else attitude of a contagiously interactive jazz band, with small explosions happening from nanosecond to nanosecond." *All About Jazz* calls it "as contemporary and provocative as anything in mainstream jazz today," with "moments of palpable spirituality."

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The Joy of Sax series is a community education and engagement project designed to foster the appreciation and enjoyment of a uniquely American application of an orchestral woodwind instrument, the saxophone. The Fine Arts Center is presenting a stellar lineup of sax-based groups throughout the 2011-2012 season featuring James Farm, the Tia Fuller Quartet, Ernie Watts and Friends, and the Ravi Coltrane Quartet. In addition to residency activities there will also be pre-performance talks by WFCR Jazz hosts Tom Reney and Kari Njiiri, and a film series of sax greats. The series aims to cultivate jazz audiences, both students and adults, and to educate them about the pioneers of jazz saxophone. The James Farm concert is sponsored by Pioneer Valley Periodontics, New England Public Radio and Amherst Cinema.

Tickets for the James Farm concert are \$30 and \$15; Five College/GCC/STCC and youth 17 and under are \$10. Purchase the entire Jazz@theFAC package and save 25%. 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 <http://www.fineartscenter.com/>.

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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.