

## Debo Band Ethio-pop to heat things up



NORTH ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS — The eleven-piece **Debo Band** expands upon the repertoire of Ethiopia’s golden era of Afro-pop. The band’s 2012 debut, released on Sub Pop to huge acclaim, offers some of the most infectious groove-based Ethio-funk ever recorded. You will dance! Get grooving up in the club with us on **Saturday, April 16, at 8pm**, after a big day in the galleries as we celebrate 3 new exhibitions.

Fans rave about Debo Band’s intricate styles, funky rhythms, deep guitar riffs, and authentic vibes that comprise the groove-inducing style of “Ethio-pop,” a revolutionary combination of African folk music and traditional funk. Combining saxophone, trumpet, electric violin, 5-string violin, accordion, guitar, sousaphone, bass, drums, and vocals, the band serves up sounds that pull you on the dance floor, guaranteed. About this extravagant aural experience, NPR Music’s *All Songs Considered* exclaims, “What’s amazing about Debo Band is that they play [Ethiopian pop] without any sort of...precious reverence...They play it like it’s *now*, as music of right now, and they play it with incredible energy and passion and excellence. And it just totally rocks. It’s amazing.”

Bandleader Danny Mekonnen grew up surrounded by Ethiopian music and studied ethnomusicology at Harvard University, which further cultivated his love of world music. In 2006, Mekonnen put together Debo Band and began playing older Ethiopian music from the 1960s and 1970s in neighborhood bars, loft spaces, and church basements in Boston. In 2009, the band started writing original compositions, leading to its widely acclaimed self-titled debut album on Sub Pop in 2012. Debo Band has toured Ethiopia twice, and was featured at the largest music festival in East Africa, *Sauti za Busara*.

Debo Band’s appearance at MASS MoCA will be nothing short of remarkable. It’s a night of celebration that begins at 5pm with an opening reception for three new museum exhibitions: *Alex Da Corte: Free Roses*, *Sarah Crowner: Beetle in the Leaves*, and *The Space Between*.

Dance to the groovy beats of **Debo Band** in MASS MoCA’s Club B10 on **Saturday, April 16, at 8pm**. Dinner will be available from Lickety Split before and during the show. A full bar serves Berkshire Brewing Company beers and Berkshire Mountain Distillery spirits. Tickets are \$10 for students, \$16 in advance, \$22 day of, and \$28 preferred. The opening reception is free for members and \$7 for not-yet-members. Tickets for all events are available through the MASS MoCA box office located on Marshall Street in North Adams, open 11am to 5pm every day except Tuesdays through June 24, 2016. Beginning June 25, the box office is open 10am to 6pm every day, with extended evening hours to 7pm on Thursdays

through Saturdays. Tickets can also be charged by phone by calling 413.662.2111 x1 during box office hours or purchased online at [massmoca.org](http://massmoca.org). All events are held rain or shine.

### **Images**

High-resolution images of MASS MoCA's spring 2016 events are available through this link: [bit.ly/1NL6mgv](http://bit.ly/1NL6mgv)

### **Sponsorship**

This performance is sponsored by The Porches Inn at MASS MoCA.

### **About MASS MoCA**

MASS MoCA is one of the world's liveliest (and largest) centers for making and enjoying today's most important art, music, dance, theater, film, and video. Hundreds of works of visual and performing art have been created on its 19<sup>th</sup>-century factory campus during fabrication and rehearsal residencies, making MASS MoCA among the most productive sites in the country for the creation and presentation of new art. More platform than box, MASS MoCA strives to bring to its audiences art experiences that are fresh, engaging, and transformative.

MASS MoCA's galleries are open 11am to 5pm every day except Tuesdays through June 24, 2016. Beginning June 25, MASS MoCA's galleries are open 10am to 6pm every day, with extended evening hours to 7pm on Thursdays through Saturdays. The Hall Art Foundation's Anselm Kiefer exhibition is seasonal and reopens April 30, 2016. Gallery admission is \$18 for adults, \$16 for veterans and seniors, \$12 for students, \$8 for children 6 to 16, and free for children 5 and under. Members are admitted free year-round. For additional information, call 413.662.2111 x1 or visit [massmoca.org](http://massmoca.org).