

## **Imani Winds Return With Follow-Up to Grammy-Nominated Debut**

**"Virtuosic Thrills That Stay True to Traditional Chamber Music While Nodding to Spicier African and American Elements" Essence Magazine**

NEW YORK, NY -- (MARKET WIRE) -- 01/31/2006 -- Koch International Classics is proud to announce the highly-anticipated self-titled Imani Winds follow-up release to the Grammy-nominated debut recording "The Classical Underground" by the groundbreaking African/Latino woodwind quintet. The group -- Valerie Coleman, flute; Toyin Spellman-Diaz, oboe; Mariam Adam, clarinet; Jeff Scott, French horn; Monica Ellis, bassoon -- has been perfecting this pan-dialectical music-making since they formed in 1997. Exploring the links between European, African and American musical traditions is at the heart of their mission. Their self-titled recording marks the second commercial release for the ensemble, which was released at retail on January 24, 2006.



Praised by Gramophone and Essence Magazine for "taking the wind quintet where it rarely ventures," Imani Winds' Grammy nominated 2005 breakthrough recording "The Classical Underground" successfully introduced the unique Imani style of classical music, one that's infused with cultural references, effortless elegance and profound honesty. The ensemble's equally representative self-titled follow-up, contains music ranging from Maurice Ravel's "Le Tombeau de Couperin" to Astor Piazzolla's "Fuga e Misterio."

The Imani Winds have a special relationship to Argentinean Tango-master Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992), himself a boundary-pusher. They join this legacy, assaying two works on this disc: the vibrant "Fuga e Misterioso" and the wildly ethnic "Oblivion," both here in excellent arrangements by Imani hornist Jeff Scott. Both of these works had prior successes in their original versions -- the former for solo guitar, the latter as a film soundtrack that Piazzolla wrote for his band -- but they also, in these persuasive arrangements, not only make complementary works to be included on this record, but stand as one more step in the evolution of the wind quintet. Mr. Scott's arrangements allow the wind quintet to be sexy and provocative, coy and ebullient -- a much-desired direction for this ensemble, one that may do some small bit to aid its continued viability.

One of the most potent aspects of the Imani Winds is that much of their repertoire is written by resident composers and arrangers Scott and Coleman, and the pieces on this disc are no exception. Jeff Scott offers his original "Titilayo," and Valerie Coleman contributes "Umoja," which is one of the ensemble's signature pieces. "Titilayo," whose title means "eternal happiness," is an uplifting call and response. "Umoja," whose title is Ki-Swahili for "unity," is an African spiritual that contains elements of the traditional drum circle.

On tour in 2006, the Imani Winds traverse much of the United States. They recently kicked off their winter/spring tour appearances at New York's Lincoln Center. Additional performance highlights for 2006 include appearances in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Washington DC, Pittsburgh, and St. Louis.

Imani Winds, a soulful blend of classical, world, Latin and jazz music, is one of the most exciting and innovative ensembles to have emerged on the classical music scene. The award-winning ensemble is the first classically-based woodwind quintet comprised exclusively of young African-American and Latino performers. Their passion for innovation and pushing the boundaries of the traditional wind quintet is embodied in every performance. For more information go to <http://www.imaniwinds.com/>.

KOCH International Classics, now in its seventeenth year, has recorded music of every nation and time period, but it is the label's commitment to the works of contemporary American composers that has earned acclaim from both critics and champions of new music. For more information go to [www.kochentertainment.com/classical.htm](http://www.kochentertainment.com/classical.htm).