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LOCAL

Klezmer band moves 'Beyond the Tribes'

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Aaron Kula looked like an energetic child joyously playing his accordion and leading the music during the entire concert at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton. It was a big day for Kula, the music director who founded FAU's Klezmer Company Orchestra 11 years ago. The afternoon of Jan. 6 was the release party and concert celebrating the Klezmer Company Orchestra's first studio album, "Beyond the Tribes."

The concert was the debut performance of soloist Elena Correjia as a core member of KCO, the first vocalist in the group's 11-year history to be named a permanent, core

member.

She said the CD is like nothing else, that it's a unique mix of *klezmer* with a variety of ethnic twists.

"You're going from Dixieland music to salsa to all sorts of types of Arabic and Moroccan influences and Spanish influences, and it's unbelievable what you're going to hear," she said. "The CD is titled 'Beyond the Tribes,' because it's universal. So anybody can listen to this CD and will absolutely enjoy it and be a part of who we are and be one with us, and that's our goal."

The selections performed on the CD were chosen by Kula, who can't pick a personal favorite.

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Klezmer Company Orchestra trumpet player Chaim Rubinov performs during a CD Release Party at the Carole and Barry Kaye Performing Arts Auditorium at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton.

Staff photo/Lindsay Moore

▼ KLEZMER

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"I review several thousands of pieces of music per year. There are 12 tracks, and I picked my favorite 12 pieces that I've been composing over the past decade," Kula said. "In other words, each piece is my favorite."

Terri Burns co-produces all KCO concerts, as well as creating the artwork on "Beyond the Tribes," including the CD cover.

Burns said what is most remarkable about the CD is the way Kula infused aging Jewish music with multiculturalism, that he gave traditional *klezmer* music a new attitude.

"What you hear is maybe something from a Jew-

ish melody from a piece from our collection that's 100 years old, but on top of that there's mambo, there's salsa, there's all sorts of different layers of sounds from all over the world," she said. "When you think of *klezmer* music you think of *bar mitzvah* music, wedding music, but when you hear this CD, you don't hear any of that."

About 1,000 people attended the concert/CD-release party in the Kaye Performing Arts Auditorium. Among them was Boca Raton resident Stan Goldberg. He said it was his first time at a KCO performance but he has always enjoyed the excitement of *klezmer* music and wanted to support the local performers.

"I think it's wonderful that they have a *klezmer* band right here in Boca Raton," Goldberg said.

Virtually all of the concert audience was older South Floridians, but not 16-year-old Luiza Sirotsky, who attended the performance with her grandfather. She is from Brazil, where she is a lyrical singer and studies music.

"I sing opera. I'm Jewish, so *klezmer* is part of my heritage," she said after the show.

While the CD was publicly released at the concert, it hasn't been under lock and key, and all of the feedback Kula has heard so far points to a successful release, even from people with no affiliation with the orchestra.

"A 21-year-old Latino

student here at FAU accidentally walked in to my office [while the CD was playing] and said, 'Wow, what is that?' He thought it was a great CD. He's not Jewish, doesn't know the library collection, and just hearing it for the first time, and he loved it," Kula said. "The whole concept behind this CD is that it would be the ultimate universal musical recording. By that, I mean the music on the CD represents musical and cultural plurality."

To purchase and download the Klezmer Company Orchestra's debut studio CD, "Beyond the Tribes," visit www.klezmercompany.com. For more information, call 561-297-3787.