

FAU'S MUSIC LIBRARY HOSTS SOLD OUT CONCERT FOR KLEZMER MUSIC FESTIVAL

FAU FAU MUSIC LIBRARY JAZZ JEWISH MUSIC FESTIVAL by Joseph Fields | on March 5, 2014 | in Features | Like it

FAU's music library is hosting The Klezmer Music Festival and kicked off the week-long event with a sold-out Jubano Jazz concert.

To headline the Klezmer Music Festival 2014, FAU's Wimberly Library presented its main event, Jubano Jazz in the Barry Kaye Auditorium.

Each year the Klezmer Music Festival hosts a concert with Klezmer music — traditional Jewish music. However, this year the library decided to feature Klezmer music adapted to Latin jazz.

The Jubano Jazz concert is part of the music library program known as Shelf to Stage, that is the only one of its kind in the world. Shelf to Stage takes older music from the sheet music library and brings it back to be rearranged and performed.

The concert was performed by the FAU faculty member, Aaron Kula and his Klezmer Company Orchestra.

The concert featured over 23 pieces of Klezmer music, majority of which premiered for the first time ever. Many of them were arranged by members of the orchestra, including Kula and trumpet player Chaim Rubinov.



The Klezmer Company Orchestra playing Jubano Jazz at the Barry Kaye Auditorium
Photo: Sabrina Martinez

The concert honored the past, while still looking toward the future of Klezmer music. The orchestra performed two pieces — Carnival Klezmer by Eric Benaim from FIU and Frevo Freilach by Diego Lyra from University of Louisville — the first and second place winners of the KCO composition competition — a contest for student composers.

Benaim, winner of the competition, was in attendance. Born and raised in Venezuela, his composition was influenced by the carnivals and music of his childhood. He incorporated not one, but three different Klezmer melodies into his piece.

In addition to jazz arranging, he wishes to compose video game music and cinematic scores.



From left to right: Dean of Library William Miller; Conductor Aaron Kula; Eric Benaim, winner of the Klezmer Company Orchestra competition; and Evelyn Solomon
Photo: Sabrina Martinez

Over the driving Latin rhythms of the orchestra, it is easy to hear the vibrant Klezmer melodies being played on the violin by soloist Randi Fishenfeld and trumpeter Rubinov.

Fishenfeld sways her hips to the rhythm as she plays her virtuoso solos. She also solos to metal music and is an electronic violinist in the band Blue Fire.

Throughout the concert Graham Fandrei — the guest vocalist and baritone of the Florida Grand Opera company — sung in Yiddish, Hebrew and Spanish. He closed the night with the first ever famous Klezmer-Latin piece, "Miami Beach Rumba," written in 1954 by composer Irving Fields.

While most FAU students were away on spring break, about 2,400 of Boca Raton's elderly citizens flocked to the sold out concert in Barry Kaye Hall.



Klezmer Company Orchestra member Randi Fishenfeld performing on the violin
Photo: Sabrina Martinez

Most members of the audience were drawn to the concert to hear the music of their Jewish Eastern European Ashkenazi heritage fused with Southern Jewish Sephardic Latin American jazz.

"Culturally its something very close to us. Our great grandparents came from Russia and from different places and we're used to Klezmer music, but we understand that this music, this Klezmer is more Sephardic and Cuban," said Barbara Fellner, a Boca community member. "That's what we've come to see, we've never heard it before."

Among the 2,400 people at the Barry Kaye auditorium was FAU student Mengsen Zhang. She is currently in the pursuit of her doctorates in complex systems in brain science.



Attendees of the Jubano Jazz Festival sit at the video game booth in the Student Union
Photo: Sabrina Martinez

She heard about the event because she is former roommates with one of the concert composers, Julia Alford Fowler, an adjunct professor at Temple University.

"I don't understand, this a good concert, why is nobody [FAU students] coming?" said Zhang.

To check out all of the events being hosted by The Klezmer Music Festival during Spring Break visit the FAU [events calendar](#) for more details.