

Kula seeks new audience for klezmer show



Maestro Aaron Kula, director and accordionist for the Klezmer Company Orchestra, will present "Bernstein's Jeremiah Symphony + Klezmer Jazz" on Sunday, March 6 as the main event for FAU Libraries' Kultur Festival. (Submitted photo)



By **Randall P. Lieberman · Contact Reporter**
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Maestro Aaron Kula does not want you to be scared of the term "klezmer music."

"The type of klezmer we play is not just for those who love that particular style, but for everybody who loves music," Kula said. "Jewish rhythms are behind many different musical styles."

Kula is therefore hoping to see many new faces at the innovative crossover concert, "Bernstein's Jeremiah Symphony + Klezmer Jazz," his ensemble — the Klezmer Company Orchestra — is performing on Sunday, March 6.

The concert will take place at 3 p.m. on Sunday, March 6 at the Carole and Barry Kaye Performing Arts Auditorium — located at 777 Glades Road on the **Boca Raton** campus of Florida Atlantic University.

"We know we are going to get a large crowd," Kula said. "We've been doing these concerts for 19 years with much success. But, I want to get people to come who have never been to one of our shows."

"We don't just put on concerts — we create experiences," Kula continued. "Music is a temporal experience. You can always not come next year. But, try the show this year. If you don't come, you'll miss the chance to experience something that has never been done before."

According to Kula, what is unique about this show is that he will lead two Klezmer Company Orchestra (KCO) ensembles in a concert with two halves combining two complimentary styles.

The program opens with Kula conducting an expanded 60-member symphony orchestra with guest vocalist Jouvanca Jean-Baptiste performing Leonard Bernstein's Symphony No. 1 "Jeremiah" — an award-winning orchestral work that Bernstein composed in 1942 and dedicated to his father.

The piece, according to a KCO press release, is a powerful combination of Biblical chanting, lyrical strings, bombastic percussion and fiery brass.

The second half of the concert features KCO's 14-member Latin Klezmer jazz ensemble performing selections from its newly released CD "JubanoJazz" — as well as original works by winners of KCO's third annual Composition Competition.

"Never in the history of orchestral concerts has 'Jeremiah's Symphony' and Klezmer Latin jazz been performed on the same program," said Kula in the press release. "This will be a new experience for the audience as they will hear music from two distinct genres tied together by imagination and Jewish culture."

The concert is the cornerstone for Kultur Festival 2016 — the eighth annual celebration of Jewish music and arts for the Florida Atlantic University Libraries.

Kultur Festival showcases the libraries' special collections through film, lectures, humor, storytelling and music. The weeklong festival begins Saturday, March 5 and continues through Saturday, March 12.

The Jewish Cultural Society at Florida Atlantic University (FAU) is the lead sponsor of the festival — as well as KCO's third annual Composition Competition — which draws interest from young musicians around the country. Kula consulted with each of the three winning composers to tailor their music to meet the specific needs of KCO — which is FAU Libraries' professional ensemble-in-residence.

"KCO and the Kultur Festival at FAU have evolved into a world-class celebration of Jewish music, art and culture for the broader community, our students, faculty and staff," said Kula — who also is the director of music performance and education for FAU Libraries.

"Aaron Kula is an amazing man," added Stan Pierce, of Boca Raton, president of the Jewish Cultural Society. "It is so exciting to pair 'Jeremiah's Symphony,' by Bernstein — with its very Jewish theme — with Latin klezmer music. We hope to get many new visitors from the [Palm Beach County](#) Jewish community."

"I am so impressed by all this university does for the Jewish community," Pierce continued. "The Jewish community needs to show its support of FAU in return by supporting the Libraries and these Kultur Festival events."

Tickets for the "Jeremiah Symphony + Klezmer Jazz" concert are \$20 to \$45 and tickets for the other festival events are \$10 to \$15. Kula is offering "NextGen" tickets to attract younger patrons to his KCO concerts. FAU students with an Owl Card and young adults 18 years and under can purchase tickets for \$5 to attend the KCO concert. Group discounts also are available for the KCO concert.

Save additional fees by buying tickets in person at the FAU Box Office, located at the university's Student Union.

For more information on the KCO concert — or other Kultur Festival events — or to purchase tickets, visit www.fauevents.com or call 800-564-9539.

For more information about KCO, or to get a taste of KCO's music, visit www.klezmercompany.com.

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