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**“Spirit of America: Bernstein & Copland” to be Presented by Klezmer
Company Orchestra, Conducted by Aaron Kula, at FAU**
Concert Features 45-piece Orchestra, Popular American Orchestral Works and Folk Songs

BOCA RATON, FL (May 29, 2008) – “Spirit of America: Bernstein & Copland,” a concert celebrating America’s independence and Florida Atlantic University Libraries’ collection of colonial imprints, will be presented by the Klezmer Company Orchestra (KCO), under the direction of Aaron Kula, on Sunday, June 29, at 3 p.m. at FAU’s Carole and Barry Kaye Performing Arts Auditorium in the University Center, on FAU’s Boca Raton campus, 777 Glades Road.

The high-energy program features 45 musicians who will perform American orchestral works, including Leonard Bernstein’s “Symphonic Dances,” which is a compilation of all of the dance music from the 1959 Broadway hit “West Side Story,” and one of Aaron Copland’s popular orchestral suites based on the ballet “Billy the Kid,” which is a powerful story of an outlaw in the Wild West.

“Bernstein and Copland are without a doubt my two favorite American composers,” said Kula, who is conductor of the KCO, which is the professional ensemble–in-residence at FAU Libraries, as well as the library’s director of music collections and performance. “As a conductor and composer, I am always excited to conduct these energetic orchestral scores that are jam-packed with sounds of American life.”

Some of the music from “Symphonic Dances” that KCO will perform are “Mambo,” “I Just Met a Girl Named Maria,” “Rumble,” “Somewhere,” “Cha Cha” and “Cool.” Video excerpts of Bernstein conducting and dance scenes from the original 1962 movie “West Side Story” will be shown during this performance.

“‘West Side Story’ is an excellent example of musical fusion with the blending of orchestra, Latin jazz band and American musical theater,” said Kula. “Billy the Kid” tells a story of a famous outlaw hunted by a posse, a thunderous gun battle, a triumphant march after Billy the Kid is caught in the desert, a legendary escape from jail and a final capture ending in Billy’s demise.

“Copland manages to create powerful images with his expert use of orchestrations and simple straight forward melodies,” said Kula. “One can almost imagine the sounds of galloping horses depicted by the woodblock or the pennywhistle played by the piccolo giving the melodies a more informal folk quality.”

A concert highlight will be KCO's performance of "There Goes that Song Again," one of three unpublished music scores by 1940s band leader Glenn Miller that was donated recently to FAU Libraries. This concert will be the first time the song has been performed in more than 60 years, according to Glenn Miller scholars. Kula used 21st century technology to edit and transcribe the vocal line from a live 1945 radio broadcast recording, which was commercially released.

During the concert's finale, Kula will conduct two new sparkling orchestrations of patriotic songs that vocalist Elena Correia will perform, leading the audience in an all-American sing-along with songs by Berlin, Cohan, and other melodic favorites such as "God Bless America" and "America the Beautiful."

KCO violinist Randi Fishenfeld will be back by popular demand with a performance of a newly orchestrated version of one of Florida's most celebrated folk songs, "Orange Blossom Special."

Since Kula founded KCO in 1997, the ensemble has successfully taken music in the library's collections "from shelf to stage." New orchestrations are based on pre-existing melodies in the collections.

This is the third consecutive year FAU Libraries have sponsored a concert to celebrate its Marvin and Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection of Colonial Imprints, which was donated in 2006 by the Weiners of Boca Raton. The collection contains more than 13,000 printed items from the American Revolutionary era and other imprints, mostly American, British and French.

The concert is being sponsored by FAU Libraries with additional support from WXEL, FAU's Lifelong Learning Society and FAU's Student Union. Concert tickets are \$15, \$20 and \$25. Call 800-564-9539 or visit www.fauevents.com. Early reservations are recommended. For information on KCO, visit www.klezmercompany.com.

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Photo #1 Cutline: Klezmer Company Orchestra, Aaron Kula, music director

Photo #2 Cutline: Aaron Kula, music director and conductor, Klezmer Company Orchestra

Photo #3 Cutline: Vocalist Elena Correia