

[PHOTOS ATTACHED]

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**Klezmer Company Orchestra and the Ebony Chorale Reunite
for “Tantz, Samba & Soul” Concert on March 1 at FAU**
Concert will Celebrate the Musical Connections of Jewish, Latin and African-American Cultures

BOCA RATON, FL (February 5, 2009) – “Tantz, Samba & Soul” will be presented by the innovative, critically-acclaimed Klezmer Company Orchestra (KCO), under the direction of music director and accordionist Aaron Kula, on Sunday, March, 1, at 3 p.m. at the Carole and Barry Kaye Performing Arts Auditorium in the Student Union, on Florida Atlantic University’s Boca Raton campus.

Kula, who also is director of music collections and performance at FAU Libraries, spent eight months selecting music from the library’s printed music archives to create new compositions and arrangements for the concert. Fourteen new orchestrations, four spirituals and five songs from the KCO music folio will be performed during the concert. Kula’s compositions bring an intensity to the music by fusing contrasting styles to create a hybrid genre he calls “Afro-Latin-Klezmer-Jazz.”

“I created transformational music that transcends our differences yet celebrates our cultural plurality for people of all colors and races,” said Kula. “I want the concert to take us on a spiritual journey, creating a new landscape where mankind lives in harmony.”

“Tantz, Samba & Soul” will be the grand finale to “KULTUR Festival 2009,” an inaugural five-day celebration of Jewish music and arts hosted by FAU Libraries. A cross-section of materials from the library’s special collections are incorporated throughout the festival. This will be KCO’s 12th annual concert to benefit the music collection.

The concert, a tour de force performance of new orchestrations and arrangements, pushes cultural boundaries and celebrates the connections of Jewish, Latin and African American music. The highlight of the concert is the long-anticipated reunion between the 25- member KCO, which is the professional ensemble-in-residence at FAU Libraries, and the renowned 40-voice Ebony Chorale of the Palm Beaches under the direction of Orville Lawton. KCO and the choir presented “Klezmer Does the Blues,” a concert exploring the musical link between Klezmer and the blues, in 2004 to a sold-out audience.

The first half of “Tantz, Samba & Soul” will include traditional Klezmer and Latin arrangements of songs featuring solos for violinist Randi Fishenfeld, trumpeter and arranger Chaim Rubinov, and vocalists Elena Correia and Phil Alongi. The repertoire will include songs from Russia, Rumania, France, Israel and America. New songs will include a “Yiddishe Bolero,” “Can-Can Freylach” and “Raisins, Almonds and Salsa” and a new overture from “Shulamis ” by Jewish poet and playwright Avrom Goldfadn.

The second half of the concert includes a bebop version of “Hopkele,” “AfroJuban Bulgar” and “Bongo Bulgarita.” The Ebony Chorale will be featured singing in English and in Hebrew, including three a cappella Negro Spirituals from the library’s music collections and music by composers George Gershwin, Kurt Weill and Giuseppe Verdi.

The Ebony Chorale made its debut in 1992 when it performed with the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus during the dedication of the Raymond F. Kravis Center for the Performing Arts in West Palm Beach. The chorale is dedicated to performing and preserving Negro Spirituals, which grew out of the slave experience. In addition to the spirituals, the chorale’s repertoire includes sacred and secular classics, folk songs, pop and gospel.

Since Kula founded KCO in 1997, the professional ensemble-in-residence has successfully taken music in the library’s collections from shelf to stage. The ensemble hit a milestone in 2007 with its independently-produced CD, *Beyond the Tribes*, which is enjoying national exposure on entertainment websites. The 12 tracks on the groundbreaking album were selected from 150 works Kula has composed and orchestrated for KCO over the past decade. The music is a celebration of cultural fusion and a tribute to ethnic melodies. Many of the compositions are based on original melodies from the library’s music archives.

“It is gratifying to have our collections brought to life in this way,” said William Miller, dean of University Libraries at FAU.

“Tantz, Samba & Soul” has been made possible in part through a grant from American Express. Additional support is being provided by WXEL, the Nathan and Marion Crosby Holocaust and Judaic Library Collections Endowment Fund, the Jewish Cultural Society at FAU, the South Florida Association of Jewish Libraries, FAU’s Lifelong Learning Society and FAU’s Student Union. Proceeds from the festival will benefit FAU Libraries.

For tickets, call 800-564-9539 or visit www.fauevents.com. For more festival information, visit www.library.fau.edu/news/kultur.htm, and to experience KCO visit www.klezmercompany.com.

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Cutlines

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

Photo #2 Cutline: The Ebony Chorale of the Palm Beaches

Photo #3 Cutline: Aaron Kula, music director and conductor, KCO