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‘Bernstein Songbook & Music from Fantasia’ Presented by KCO, Conducted by Aaron Kula, Captures Spirit of America

BOCA RATON, FL (July 13, 2010) – The 60-piece Klezmer Company Orchestra, conducted by Maestro Aaron Kula, captivated an enthusiastic audience with its stellar performance of love songs, guest soloists and an emotional tribute to the late benefactor Marvin Weiner, during the recent fifth annual “Spirit of America: Bernstein Songbook & Music from Fantasia” concert at Florida Atlantic University’s Carol and Barry Kaye Auditorium.

FAU President Mary Jane Saunders and her husband, Dr. George Newkome, as well as FAU Provost John Pritchett and his wife, Ginger, attended the annual concert and post-concert reception hosted by FAU Libraries and The University Club of the FAU Foundation. The events also drew more than 100 VIPs.

The concert celebrated the Marvin and Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection, which focuses on the American Revolutionary era and contains more than 8,000 imprints. The Weiners lived in Boca Raton and donated the collection to FAU Libraries in 2006. Marvin Weiner passed away on June 25, two days before the concert. Sybil Weiner passed away in November 2009.

Guest soloists were Shani Glance, an Israeli-born soprano who is the granddaughter of renowned opera singer and cantor Leib Glantz, and Daniel Cochran, a West Palm Beach tenor who is a core member of the Ebony Chorale of the Palm Beaches.

Among the concert’s selections were “A Little Bit in Love,” “Ya’ Got Me,” “One Hand, One Heart,” “Stephen Foster Medley,” “God Bless America,” and Irving Berlin’s “Always,” which was newly orchestrated by Kula and dedicated in memory of the Weiners.

“All of the songs were related to romantic love and the love of humanity,” said Kula, who also is director of music collections and performance at FAU Libraries. “It was an emotionally charged concert because of the repertoire and the relationship between the library and the Weiner family and specifically with Marvin’s passing.”

During the reception, Saunders thanked supporters before shaking hands and speaking with guests.

“The concert was a fitting tribute of what music is supposed to do; touch you intellectually and more importantly emotionally,” said Saunders. “Actually playing music that has been archived as sheet music was incredibly moving and a wonderful example of how libraries are reinventing themselves by taking special collections off the shelf and giving them a new life.”

Some of the other VIP guests in attendance were Dr. Howard and Judith Weiner, FAU benefactor Marleen Forkas, Arthur Jaffe and Marianne Haycook, Drs. Diane and Jay Alperin, Dottie and Stan Pierce, Randy and Susan Talbot, Marlis and Victor Hadeed, Alene and Michael Brewer and Donna and Hugh McCaffrey.

The concert was sponsored by FAU Libraries with additional support from WXEL. Two funds related to the collection and KCO exist to support FAU Libraries. The “Weiner Spirit of America Collection Fund” helps provide additional educational outreach programs to benefit future generations of students and scholars. For more information on the Marvin and Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection, contact Ellen Randolph at 561-297-2693 or erandoll@fau.edu, or visit www.library.fau.edu/depts/spc/weiner.htm.

The Klezmer Company Orchestra Professional Ensemble-in-Residence Fund accepts donations of print music to enhance and preserve the musical heritage and financial contributions to help the library continue its outreach and performances. For more information about the music collections or KCO, contact Aaron Kula at 561-297-3742 or akula@fau.edu, or visit www.library.fau.edu/music/music_collections.htm and www.klezmercompany.com.

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Cutlines

Photo #1: L-R, Maestro Aaron Kula, FAU President Mary Jane Saunders, and R-L, Dr. Howard and Judith Weiner

Photo #2: L-R, Marlis Hadeed and FAU President Mary Jane Saunders

Photo #3: L-R, Marleen Forkas, Dr. George Newkome and FAU President Mary Jane Saunders

Photo #4: Guest vocalists Daniel Cochran and Shani Glance, and Conductor Aaron Kula and the Klezmer Company Orchestra

About Florida Atlantic University:

Florida Atlantic University opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public university in Florida. Today, the University serves more than 28,000 undergraduate and graduate students on seven campuses and sites. Building on its rich tradition as a teaching university, with a world-class faculty, FAU hosts 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts & Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering & Computer Science, the Graduate College, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.