BOCA RATON, FL (June 1, 2010) – Maestro Aaron Kula will conduct the 60-piece Klezmer Company Orchestra (KCO), which will be joined by vocalists Shani Glance of New York City and Daniel Cochran of West Palm Beach, in “Spirit of America: Bernstein Song Book and Music from Fantasia,” on Sunday, June 27, at 3 p.m., at Florida Atlantic University’s Carole and Barry Kaye Performing Arts Auditorium in the University Center on FAU’s Boca Raton campus, 777 Glades Road.

Leonard Bernstein, one of the most influential American composers and conductors of the 20th century and a former New York Philharmonic conductor, died in 1990, but his music continues to be celebrated in theater, Hollywood films and “Young People’s Concert,” the Bernstein TV series.

The concert will open with Bernstein’s “Candide Overture,” followed by seven songs from his successful musicals, including “A Little Bit in Love,” “Wrong Note Rag,” “Ya Got Me,” “Maria, Tonight” and “One Hand One Heart.”

“Conducting any music by Bernstein is always a treat, especially the songs for this concert,” said Kula, FAU Libraries’ director of music collections and performance, and conductor of KCO, FAU Libraries’ professional ensemble-in-residence.

Glance, an accomplished singer, actress and songwriter, and Cochran, who is involved with the Palm Beach Opera and the Ebony Chorale, will sing solos and duets from Bernstein’s most popular Broadway musicals including West Side Story, On the Town and Wonderful Town.

“The scores are exciting and filled with delightful surprises, and you can feel Bernstein’s passion and love through his compositions,” said Kula. “I believe his music is a reflection of his life, which revolved around love, humor, joy, people, politics and New York City.”

The music of other famous composers, including Irving Berlin, Paul Dukas and Gioachino Rossini, also will be presented during the concert. KCO violinist Randi Fishenfeld will make her annual cameo appearance with a “Stephen Foster Medley” of American folk songs.

The concert will conclude with music inspired from American film and television, including Dukas’ “Sorcerer’s Apprentice,” which was made famous by Disney’s hit film Fantasia and “William Tell Overture” by Rossini, which became known as “The Lone Ranger” in the 1950s. “These works are part of the American cultural and have been adopted by listeners as American music,” said Kula.

Glance, a granddaughter of the famous cantor Leib Glantz, also will sing Berlin’s “Always” in a new orchestration that Kula composed. She was discovered at age 8 by Nurith Cohen, a leading Israeli
musical theater choreographer. Glance has extensive credits on Broadway, and in film and television. She has performed with The National Israeli Opera in La Boheme and Carmen, and her recital audiences have included the late Pope John Paul II, Hillary and former President Bill Clinton, former New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and the King of Sweden.

Cochran graduated from Forest High School where he was awarded the second place vocal music Pathfinder Award. He has performed with Fortissimo, a nationally renowned men’s barbershop quartet. Cochran also was named the Palm Beach Pop’s Orchestra’s 2008 PopStar winner and earned the privilege of performing with Judy Collins and the Palm Beach Pop’s Orchestra.

This is the fifth consecutive year FAU Libraries have sponsored a concert to celebrate the Marvin and Sybil Weiner Spirit of America Collection, which was donated to the library 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.

Since Kula founded KCO in 1997, the ensemble has taken music in the library’s collections “from shelf to stage.” He is credited with composing and orchestrating more than 200 works for KCO, which hit a milestone in 2007 with its third independently-produced CD, “Beyond the Tribes.”

The concert is being sponsored by FAU Libraries with additional support from WXEL and the University Club at FAU Foundation. Concert tickets are $17– $38. Call 800-564-9539 or visit www.fauevents.com. Early reservations are recommended. For information on KCO, visit http://www.youtube.com/user/KlezmerCompany.

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Cutline:
Photo #1: Aaron Kula, Klezmer Company Orchestra music director and conductor
Photo #2: Klezmer Company Orchestra music director Aaron Kula and KCO

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: Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts & Letters, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Biomedical Science, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering & Computer Science, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Graduate College, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.