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**POMEGRANATES & FIGS: A FEAST OF JEWISH MUSIC**  
**RETURNS TO CAL PERFORMANCES**  
**FOR A HOLIDAY CONCERT ON SUNDAY DECEMBER 5**

**Program includes Teslim with Kaila Flexer and Gari Hegedus,  
North End Klezmer Project, and Sqwonk**

**BERKELEY, November 4, 2010**—*Pomegranates & Figs: A Feast of Jewish Music* returns to Cal Performances with a Hanukkah treat showcasing the infectious exuberance of klezmer, the soulfulness of Sephardic music and the musical innovation of these traditions on **Sunday, December 5, at 3:00 p.m. at Zellerbach Hall**. Marking the fifth evening of Hanukkah, the program features driving, danceable rhythms of Winnipeg's **North End Klezmer Project**; innovative bass clarinet duo **Sqwonk**; and Bay Area string twosome **Teslim** with violinist **Kaila Flexer** and multi-instrumentalist **Gari Hegedus**. Flexer—who was the force behind *Klezmer Mania!*, the much-loved Bay Area Jewish music event that occurred annually from 1989–2002—created *Pomegranates & Figs* to celebrate the diversity of Jewish music. Special guest musicians include violinists **Shira Kammen** and **Julian Smedley**, percussionist **Susu Pampanian** and vocalist **Caleb O'Reilly**.

Klezmer is translated to mean “vessel of music.” It is an Ashkenazi Jewish folklore style of music that began in 15th-century Europe. As klezmer musicians immigrated to the United States in the early decades of the 20th century, klezmer became tinged with the sounds of Tin Pan Alley and early jazz. Sephardic music originates from the descendants of Jews that were expelled from Spain in 1492. Sephardic songs are sung in a mixture of Ladino, Spanish, Hebrew and the other languages of the countries that sheltered Jews.

To make the evening more *hey mish* (“homey”), audience members can *schmooze*, *kibbitz* and *nosh* (“visit,” “chat” and “snack”) before the concert and at intermission on house-made

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rugelach and other delicacies from Cal Performances' Adagia@Zellerbach café located on the mezzanine of Zellerbach Hall.

## THE ARTISTS

**Teslim** (Turkish, meaning “commit” and “surrender”) features violinist and composer **Kaila Flexer** (kailaflexer.com) and multi-instrumentalist **Gari Hegedus** on *oud*, Turkish *saz*, Greek *lauoto* and other stringed instruments. The duo performs original songs as well as Sephardic, Greek and Turkish music. Both performers and composers, Flexer and Hegedus's works reflect their deep respect for modal music traditions of Greece and Turkey. Teslim's debut album, released in March 2008, was commended by the *San Jose Mercury News* as “an enthralling body of music...a singular CD by an utterly original pair of players.” *Billboard* opines, “their virtuosity is spellbinding.” They perform in classical, early music and folk music venues and hold workshops on a variety of topics.

Flexer has long been a fixture in the Bay Area music scene with leading groups such as Third Ear, Next Village and her own Fieldharmonik, and she has performed with Club Foot Orchestra, Kitka Women's Vocal Ensemble and Persian singer Hamed Nikapy. Flexer is the artistic director of Worldview Cultural Performances, an Oakland-based nonprofit organization under whose auspices she founded and produced *Klezmer Mania!* Her works have been commissioned by the Creative Work Fund, American Composers Forum, Meet the Composer and the City of Oakland. Teaching from her Oakland studio, Flexer holds workshops on Balkan and klezmer music, playing by ear, improvisation and composition. One of her educational passions is encouraging classical musicians to explore folk music and to become comfortable in the realm of improvisation. She is also the creator of the Music Deck, a teaching tool that helps people learn to read music.

Hegedus performs on a vast array of stringed instruments; in addition to the *oud*, *saz* and *lauoto*, he plays the *baglama*, *mandocello*, *lavta*, violin and viola. When not with Teslim, Hegedus performs with several other groups, including Stellamara, Janam and the Helladelics.

He studied with *oud* master Naseer Shamma and has performed and recorded with Ross Daly, among others. Hegedus travels frequently to Greece and Turkey to study and collect instruments.

The **North End Klezmer Project** performs original material influenced by contemporary styles, while respecting the Eastern European roots of their music. Group members **Myron Schultz** (clarinet), **Victor Schultz** (violin) and **Daniel Koulack** (double bass, guitar and banjo) came from the Canada-based Klezmer band Finjan, which toured North America in the 1980s and 1990s. Other members include Grammy Award-winner **Ben Mink** (guitar, violin and mandolin) and virtuoso Moldovan accordionist **Nicolai Prisacar**.

**Jeff Anderle** and **Jonathan Russell** are the San Francisco bass clarinet duo **Sqwonk**, formed to explore the full expressive range of the bass clarinet with “dazzling technique and out-of-the-box creativity” (Lucid Culture). Their music has a wide range of influences, from klezmer to heavy metal to blues to minimalism to free improvisation which creates a repertoire that is strikingly contemporary, yet accessible to a wide audience. The group has premiered and commissioned over 15 composers and just released their second CD in March. Anderle has also performed with other groups in the Bay Area, including San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, the Magik\* Magik Orchestra, the Paul Drescher Ensemble and the Del Sol String Quartet. He is also the co-founder of Switchboard Music, an organization dedicated to supporting music that fuses different genre and styles of music through its annual marathon concert and other activities. Russell received a B.A. in music from Harvard University and a M.M. in music composition from the San Francisco Conservatory. He has collaborated with choreographers Janice Garrett and Charles Moulton and has received commissions from the San Francisco Symphony, Empyrean Ensemble, ADORNO Ensemble, Woodstock Chamber Orchestra, Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra and Imani Winds.

Joining the artists will be variety of guest musicians. Jazz violinist, arranger, producer and sound engineer **Julian Smedley** started his career in England. A Bay Area resident, he has performed and recorded with many groups, including Flexer’s Third Ear, Clubfoot Orchestra, Dan Hicks, Paul Horn, Jim Kweskin, Mike Wollenberg, the Club of San Francisco, Duo Gadjó, Café Americain and his singer/guitarist wife Alison, with whom he recently released an album.

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The San Francisco Symphony commissioned one of his klezmer tunes. **Shira Kammen** performs on the *vielle*, a European bowed string instrument, which is perfect for the medieval storytelling genre in which she often appears. She has collaborated with acclaimed musical artists and groups Hespèrion XX, the Boston Camerata, Patrick Ball and Kitka Women's Vocal Ensemble, among others. She is the founder of the ensemble Class V Music, which is dedicated to performing on white-water rafts. Percussionist **Susu Pampanin** began her studies listening to Middle Eastern music as a daughter of a local belly dancer. She has recorded and performed with various groups, including Wild Mango, Light Rain, Keith Terry and Crosspulse, Stellamara and the Vince Delgado Quintet. Pampanin has released two of her own recordings and an instructional DVD with Zeina Zahesha. She is currently teaching at Zambaleta School of Music in San Francisco. **Caleb O'Reilly** is a 14-year-old freshman at the College Preparatory School. He had the honor this year of chanting Torah at Kehilla Community Synagogue's High Holy Day Service. He also plays the cello in the Young People's Symphony Orchestra.

#### **TICKET INFORMATION**

Tickets for *Pomegranates & Figs: A Feast of Jewish Music* featuring **Teslim, The North End Klezmer Project, Sqwonk** and on **Sunday, December 5, 2010, at 3:00 p.m.** in **Zellerbach Hall** are priced at \$20.00/\$26.00/\$30.00/\$34.00/\$40.00. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at [www.calperformances.org](http://www.calperformances.org); and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens, other students and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$5 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988 or visit the Cal Performances web site at [www.calperformances.org](http://www.calperformances.org).

For select performances, Cal Performances offers UCB student, faculty and staff, senior and community rush tickets. Rush tickets are announced two hours prior to a performance and are available in person only at the Ticket Office beginning one hour before the performance; quantities may be limited. Rush ticket sales are limited to one ticket per person; all sales are cash only. Rush ticket prices are \$10.00 for UCB students; \$15.00 for UCB faculty and staff (UCB

ID required) and seniors age 65 or older; and \$20.00 for all other community members. Information is available at (510) 642-9988, press 2 for the rush hotline; or check Cal Performances' Facebook page, three hours prior to a performance.

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Cal Performances' 2010/11 Season is sponsored by Wells Fargo

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**CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:**

**CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS**

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**Sunday, December 5 at 3:00 p.m.**

**Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus**  
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

*World Stage*

***Pomegranates & Figs: A Feast of Jewish Music***

**Teslim**

**The North End Klezmer Project**

**Sqwonk**

plus guest artists

**Program:** Celebrate Hanukah with the North End Klezmer Project, bass clarinet duo Sqwonk and Teslim, featuring violinist Kaila Flexer and *oud* player Gari Hegedus.

**Tickets:** \$20.00/\$26.00/\$30.00/\$34.00/\$40.00 available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall; at (510) 642-9988; at [www.calperformances.org](http://www.calperformances.org); and at the door.

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