

ARCHES: July 10th, Al-Andalus Ensemble to Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of PSU's Middle East Studies

By Al-Andalus Events

Dated: Jun 14, 2009

“Arches,” a concert featuring traditional and contemporary music and songs from the Middle East, performed by Al-Andalus Ensemble in celebration of the 50th anniversary of Portland State University’s Middle East Studies Center.

WHEN: Friday, July 10, 7:30 p.m.

WHERE: St. Mary’s Academy, Clark Family Auditorium, 1615 S.W. Fifth Avenue, Portland, Ore 97201
www.Andalus.com

DETAILS: Experience the richness of Middle Eastern culture with Al-Andalus Ensemble this summer, when the group performs “Arches” to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Portland State University’s Middle East Studies Center!

“Arches” will unveil traditional and contemporary songs sung in Arabic, Ladino (Sephardic Jewish), Farsi (Iran) and Turkish, with music from North Africa, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Andalusian Spain, the Levant, and the Gulf States. Rich instrumentation will include the oud (parent of the Renaissance lute), ney (Arab reed flute), darbuka (clay or metal drum), kamancheh (Persian/Iranian violin), ghaita (medieval bagpipe) and flamenco guitar, to create music that offers parallels and contrasts between the old and the new.

Touted as creating “...a new musical language that unites the East and West” by *Aramco’s World Magazine*, Al-Andalus Ensemble was founded by Tarik (oud) and Julia Banzi (flamenco guitar). The group was named after Al Andalus – a period (711-1492) in Spain when Christians, Muslims and Jews lived in peaceful co-existence.

Joining Tarik & Julia Banzi for “Arches” will be Boujemaa Razgui (voice, ney, kamaja, percussion); Gavin Bondy (trumpet); Bobak Salehi (kamancheh, sehtar, violin, voice); Emily Henke (voice), Anthony Jones (drums), Nat Hulskamp (guitar, tar); Diana LoVerso (Andalusian dance).

The foundation of PSU’s Middle East Studies Center is steeped in promoting understanding of the people, cultures, languages and religions of the Middle East through the university’s academic programs and community outreach. Launched in 1959, it was the first federally-supported undergraduate program in the United States for Arabic language and Middle East studies.

Tickets for “Arches” (\$20/general \$15/students, seniors, green card holders) available at 1-800-838-3006 and at www.brownpapertickets.com/event/69645. More information www.Andalus.com.

ARTISTS

Tarik Banzi (oud, ney, percussion) "a superbly gifted player" (*All Music Guide*) was born to an Andalusian family in Tetuan, Morocco and traces his roots back to Al-Andalus. He completed doctoral studies in Fine Arts and collaborated with flamenco-jazz music masters such as Paco de Lucia, Manolo Sanlucar, Enrique Morente and Jorge Pardo.

Julia Banzi (guitar) is one of the few female flamenco guitarists worldwide. She lived in Spain for over a

decade, studying flamenco with some of Spain's finest guitarists including Manolo Sanlucar and Isidro Munoz. With a Doctorate degree (Ph.D.) in Ethnomusicology from the UC, Santa Barbara, Julia teaches guitar at Reed College and Lewis & Clark College.

Boujemaa Razgui (voice, ney, kamaja) hails from Marrakech, city of Dakka (percussion). A regular with the Boston Camerata (conductor Joel Cohen) since 2002, Razgui's recordings include "Dralion" Cirque du Soleil, "Mediterranean Christmas" the Boston Camerata and the upcoming Shakira and Beyonce duo "Beautiful Liar."

Gavin Bondy (trumpet) Premier trumpeter for the Pink Martini Ensemble, Gavin has been a long time member of the Al-Andalus Ensemble.

Bobak Salehi (kamancheh, sehtar, violin, voice) A native of Iran, Bobak learned music the direction of his father Hossein Salehi and later studied violin with international recording artist Davood Ganjei.

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In a marriage of East & West, the Al Andalus Ensemble embodies the new vision of America as a modern society that embraces its cosmopolitan, cultural heritage. Al Andalus was a time when Christians, Jews & Muslims lived in peaceful co-existence (Spain 711-1492). The Al Andalus Ensemble is a unique group of musicians, scholars, singers, dancers and visual artists from diverse backgrounds including the United States, Spain and the Arab World. Our message is to bridge Eastern and Western cultures through the arts and bring the spirit of convivencia of Al-Andalus back to live amongst us all.

Category	Music, Event, Education
Tags	al-andalus, middle east, sephardic, arab, andalusian, tres culturas, muslim, Christian, jewish, oud, morocco, banzi
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