

Biography 2022-2023

A nationally recognized conductor, educator, composer, accordionist, and producer, Aaron Kula is a *Fulbright Music Specialist* and was awarded a 2018 grant to conduct and lecture in Israel with appearances at the U.S. Embassy, *Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance*, and music conservatories in the Negev and Western Galilee. Aaron began his studies at the *Hebrew Arts School* now the *Kaufman Music Center*, in New York City followed by studies at the *Rubin Academy* in Jerusalem. In May 2018 the United States Congress awarded Mr. Kula a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition for his “outstanding and invaluable service to the community” in the field of music. Currently Mr. Kula is managing director of Kula Concert Productions, resident artist director of Kultur Festival Concerts at the Levis Jewish Community Center in Boca Raton, serves as guest co-host on WDNA Radio in Miami for Nomadic Pentameter and serves as conductor of Bellaggio Singers in Lake Worth, Florida.

During his 25-year residency in Boston, he attended New England Conservatory of Music where he later joined the conducting faculty from 1986-2013. Mr. Kula held conducting posts at Chautauqua Music School in New York and has appeared as guest conductor with Boston Ballet, Miami City Ballet, Boston Conservatory, Boston University, Santa Fe Symphony, Erie Ballet (PA), New Hampshire Ballet, and Boca Sinfonia as well as high school honors orchestras in Florida, Massachusetts, and Mississippi. A faculty member of the Florida Atlantic University (FAU) in Boca Raton from 1997 to 2020, he led orchestral, jazz and Klezmer folk ensembles for the music department and was appointed director of Music Performance and Education at the FAU Libraries where he produced international cultural arts festivals, concerts, musical theater production, and community outreach programs.

Mr. Kula's interdisciplinary career in classical, jazz, and folk music led him to form the award-winning genre bending *Klezmer Company Jazz Orchestra* in 1997. An innovator of concert programming he has conducted concert performances of Broadway musicals with the original orchestration and a full cast including: *My Fair Lady* in Concert (2019), *Funny Girl* in Concert (2018), *Fiddler on the Roof* in Concert (2017), *South Pacific* in Concert (2016), and *On The Town* in Concert (2014). Mr. Kula also led the first Florida performances of Duke Ellington's *Black, Brown, and Beige* in 2011 and Bernstein's *Jeremiah Symphony* in 2016. Mr. Kula is artistic director of south *Florida's Kultur Festival* now in its 12th year and in residence at the Jewish Community Center in Boca Raton, Florida and is managing director of Kula Concert Productions, Broadway in Concert, and Sinfonietta Society. Mr. Kula constantly strives to transform the concert experience with multimedia presentations, multi-genre programming, and reimagining archival music. As a composer, he has transformed over 150 compositions by reimagining vintage sheet music from music archives across the globe through a project called “Shelf to Stage.” Mr. Kula has produced three studio albums of what is described as “world Jazz”: *Beyond The Tribes* (2009), *Klezmerology*

(2011), and JubanoJazz (2016). In 2011, *Beyond the Tribes* was selected by a juried committee from the Library of Congress (LOC) for inclusion in the Copyright Acquisitions Division. The LOC determined that the album represented an important cross section of American culture and would “enrich the collections.” In 2018 and 2019 Mr. Kula was invited to perform at the International Yiddish Tes Fest in Bucharest, Romania. In 2011 and 2014, Mr. Kula led KCJO on concert tours to California, Arizona, and Rhode Island. In 2015, the ensemble was invited to perform as a featured ensemble on the main stages at the Ashkenaz Festival in Toronto and the Montreal Jewish Music Festival.

As a conductor, Aaron Kula has led orchestras throughout the US, Europe, and Israel and served on the conducting faculty at *New England Conservatory of Music* in Boston from 1986-2013, *Boston University* from 1995-1996, and *Chautauqua Music School* in New York from 1990-1995. An active guest conductor, he has worked with *Boston Ballet*, *Miami City Ballet*, *Erie Ballet* (PA), *Boston Conservatory Symphony*, *Santa Fe Symphony and Chorus*, *Boca Raton Sinfonia*, and *New Hampshire Ballet*. In 2014 Kula was invited to conduct the Collier (FL) All County Honors Orchestra and led educational seminars for early childhood educators in the Broward and Palm Beach county school districts. He has collaborated with renowned artists including Yo-Yo Ma/cello, Richard Stoltzman/clarinet, Colin Carr/cello, Denise Graves/singer, Håkan Hagegård/singer, David Leisner/guitar, and members of the *Boston Symphony Orchestra* among others. As music director of the *New England Conservatory Youth Symphony* from 1986-2003, Mr. Kula led eleven international concert tours throughout Europe and Israel and organized European tours for *Harvard Radcliffe* and *Stanford Symphony Orchestras* between 1996-1998.

A concert accordionist, Mr. Kula began studying the accordion at the age of 10 and performs music of all genres. He performs regularly with KCJO and collaborates with musicians such as Grammy Latin jazz flautist Nestor Torres and artists from other south Florida organizations including *University of Miami* and *New World Symphony in Miami*. From 2009-2011, Mr. Kula was invited to serve as a consultant for the American Klezmer exhibit at the International Musical Instrument Museum in Phoenix, Arizona. Maestro Kula is a member of ASCAP, League of American Orchestra, and Boston Musician's Association 9-535.

Mr. Kula holds a Bachelor of Arts in music theory and Judaic studies from the *University of Minnesota* and a Master of Music in theory and conducting with Distinction in Performance from *New England Conservatory of Music*.

For more information, please visit these websites:

www.aaronkula.com

www.kulaconcertproductions.com

<https://www.kulaconcertproductions.com/kultur-festival>

www.klezmercompany.com

www.youtube.com/user/KlezmerCompany

www.sinfoniettasociety.com