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Everett Evans

Apollo's New York concert will include Rice composer



Al-Zand

When Houston's Apollo Chamber Players makes its debut at Carnegie Hall next month, the group will share the spotlight with a composer from Rice University's Shepherd School of Music.

With a concert at Rice kicking off the tour, the ensemble will include a work by Karim

Al-Zand in a program titled "Basque and Slavic Folkscapes." Matthew Detrick, Apollo's artistic director, said the concert ties in with the group's mission: highlighting how classical composers have drawn inspiration from folk music.

Al-Zand's composition, "Fantasy on Bulgarian Rhythms," is inspired by what he calls the fascinating music of the Balkan region. The "wildly exuberant" wedding music he heard in recordings by a musician from the region was one of his starting points. Another was the distinctive, dissonant harmonic style of a Bulgarian women's choir that grabbed American listeners' attention through a 1980s recording.

The Apollo performances will include quartets by Maurice Ravel, a Frenchman whose mother was Basque, and by Czech composer Leoš Janáček. Detrick's arrangements of Basque and Slavic folk melodies will round out the program.

Apollo's Rice performance will be at 6 p.m. Sept. 22 in the school's Duncan Recital Hall. Tickets are \$25. The group's tour will take it to Pennsylvania and New York, including an Oct. 11 concert at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall. Details: 832-496-9943, apollochamberplayers.org.

Steven Brown

City, art community unite for Houston Is Inspired

Mayor Annise Parker recently launched the fall arts

season with a pep rally at the Menil Collection as part of the Houston Is Inspired campaign. Menil director Josef Helfenstein, Musiqa artistic director Anthony Brandt and Project Row Houses founder Rick Lowe were among the 300 Houston arts administrators, patrons and artists at the event, which included a perfor-

mance by the brass trio of the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra.

"We've counted up, and over the next 30 days alone — 62 separate venues will have 836 hours of live theater, 52 venues will feature 768 hours of music, 25 venues will have 213 hours of dance, and of course, our museums will offer 27,967 viewing hours," Parker said.

Brandt told the crowd the Houston Is Inspired marketing campaign resonates in a city that is home to a lot of artists.

"This is the first time in the history of the Houston arts community that we've come together in such a large way to make a statement," he said.

Houston's poet laureate Gwendolyn Zepeda marked the occasion by reciting an original poem.

Kate Morris

"You Moved Here for Your Job"

By Gwendolyn Zepeda

You commented on the traffic but I only half-listened. Attention instead on my fifth favorite song, the Curve of the freeway, the green signs that told me the way.

You presented me with controversial trivia, asked if I knew that the Gallery we walked through was funded by Profits from oil and gasoline. Ugly oil and evil gasoline, *Arts City continues on H18*



Courtesy photo

University.