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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ... APRIL 1, 2005

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**Klezmer Meets Gospel in Tenth Anniversary Concert:
The Klezmatics Featuring Gospel Artist Joshua Nelson
to Perform Freedom Songs from the African American
and Jewish Traditions at UMass Amherst on April 20**

In celebration of its tenth anniversary, the UMass Amherst Office of Jewish Affairs presents **The Klezmatics featuring Joshua Nelson**, performing songs from their newly-released CD, **“Brother Moses Smote the Water”**—a compilation of freedom songs from the African American and Jewish traditions. Recorded live at a festival in Berlin and released March 8, 2005 by Piranha Records, the *Berliner Morgenpost* describes this musical collaboration as “a moving summit of African-American, Jewish workers’, spiritual and festive songs.”

Echoing the Passover theme of liberation from slavery, these songs speak to the parallel struggles of Jewish slaves in ancient Egypt and Black slaves in the U.S. This collaboration between The Klezmatics and renowned gospel artist Joshua Nelson breathes new life into two musical traditions, telling a joyous story of inspiration and social action, in a celebratory dialogue between cultures and musical styles.



Matt Darriau, Frank London



Joshua Nelson

The Klezmatics are “the best band in the klezmer vanguard,” says *Time Out New York*; “on a good night, they can rank among the greatest bands on the planet.” And the *Village Voice* writes: “The Klezmatics continue to explore the interstices between jazz, ethnic music, and radical culture with considerable style and verve.” Known for their reinterpretation of traditional Jewish melodies and musical experimentation, The Klezmatics have been at the forefront of the klezmer revival of the past two decades. (Klezmer is the traditional music of Jewish celebrations in Eastern Europe, a musical genre which inspired American jazz musicians such as Benny Goodman in the early decades of the 20th Century.) Their seven CD’s and international tours have been widely acclaimed, and their U.S. and European performances are routinely sold out.

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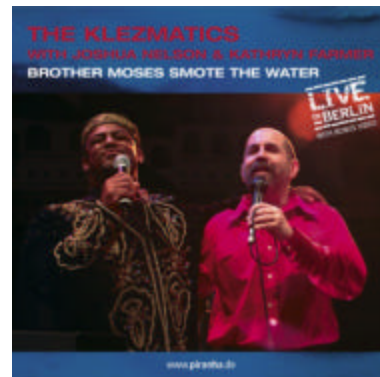
Joshua Nelson is a renowned gospel singer and an African American Jew who traces his heritage back to the ancient Second Temple of Jerusalem. He descends from a long line of Black Jews, whose very existence calls into question the dichotomous black/white thinking typically placed on religion, race, and culture in America. His first encounter with gospel music was from his grandmother's Mahalia Jackson recordings, which he first heard when he was eight. "I make Jewish music and give it a soul sound," he says. "They call it the gospel sound. But technically it is soul Jewish music. If you can be Black and put soul in Christian music, you can be Black and put soul in Jewish music!"

The Klezematics featuring Joshua Nelson
Wednesday, April 20 at 8:00PM (Doors open at 7:30)
Bowker Auditorium, Stockbridge Hall, UMass Amherst

Tickets: General Admission \$12; children \$8; Five College students free (with ticket and ID). Tickets available at the Fine Arts Center Box Office, 413.545.2511 or 800.999.UMASS or online at www.umass.edu/fac



The Klezematics and Joshua Nelson



CD cover (Nelson & Sklamberg)

The **Office of Jewish Affairs** was created in April 1995 to foster mutual understanding and better relations between Jews and other religious, ethnic and racial communities at UMass.

This concert is presented by the Office of Jewish Affairs in celebration of its tenth anniversary; and cosponsored by the Asian Arts & Culture Program, College of Humanities & Fine Arts, Department of Judaic & Near Eastern Studies, Graduate Student Senate, Office of Multicultural Student Services, W.E.B. DuBois Department of Afro American Studies, WMUA 91.1 FM, UMass Hillel, Smith/Amherst Hillel, Smith College Jewish Studies Program, Smith College Office of the Chaplains, and Hampshire College Jewish Studies Program.

Funded in part by grants from the Five College Lecture Fund, Jewish Arts & Culture Initiative of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, Student Affairs Cultural Enrichment Fund, UMass Amherst Alumni Association, and UMass Arts Council, with additional support from WFCR 88.5 FM and the Valley Advocate.

More information online at www.umass.edu/jewish or (413) 545-9642.

High resolution digital photos can be downloaded from our website, www.umass.edu/jewish (Photo credits: Kai Uwe Heinrich; CD cover courtesy of Piranha Records)