

PRESS INFORMATION



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MEMPHIS IN MAY PRESENTS SPLENDORS OF TURKEY AT THE ORPHEUM

Memphis, TN...In celebration of Memphis in May's annual International Week, May 5th – 10th, the Memphis Area Teachers' Credit Union (MATCU) presents Splendors of Turkey, May 8, 2008 at the Orpheum Theatre, 203 South Main Street in Downtown Memphis. This cultural program will feature Turkish performances by the Anatolian Sun Quartet, Baba Zula and a Turkish food sampling by Chef Gencer Uzumlu, founder of Istanbul Culinary Institute.

The Anatolian Sun Quartet, with group members Kemal Bilsel Sarisözen on stringed instrument the baglama, Dr. Ugur Alpagut on violin, Kaya Güç on piano and Riza Akyürek on percussion, are noted for putting a contemporary flare on traditional Turkish folk music. All members have taught or studied at Abant Izzet Baysal University in Bolu, Turkey.

The distinctive sounds of Turkish performing artists, Baba Zula, will also be featured at Splendors of Turkey. This diverse group includes musicians Levent Akman, Murat Ertel and Cosar Kamçi, with sketch artist Ceren Oykut. Baba Zula uses ritual-like performances, which often consist of belly dancers, elaborate costumes, poetry, theatre and live animation to create a theatrical and cultural experience like no other. Baba Zula also incorporate whirling dervishes in their performance. Their very vibrant and colorful performances keep audiences captivated.

During intermission, patrons will have an opportunity to sample authentic Turkish cuisine prepared by Chef Gencer Uzumlu. A native of Istanbul, Turkey, Chef Uzumlu has spent time perfecting the art by cooking different types of food such as Italian, European and Asian. Currently, he is employed at Istanbul Culinary Institute where he primarily cooks Turkish Cuisine with techniques learned throughout his career.

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“Splendors of Turkey and all of the exhibits, performances and chef demonstrations of international week help the Mid-South bridge cultural gaps through music, art and food,” says Jim Holt, president/CEO of Memphis in May. We’re excited about presenting Turkey’s rich culture and all its exuberance”.

Tickets for Splendors of Turkey are on sale now, and can be purchased online at www.ticketmaster.com. To charge-by-phone, call (901)525-1515. Tickets can also be purchased at The Orpheum Box Office, 901-525-3000. Box office hours are 9am - 5pm, Monday through Friday. General admission is \$12.00 per person, or \$8.00 for a group of 20 or more. For more information on Splendors of Turkey or any event during Memphis in May International Week, visit the official Memphis in May website, www.memphisinmay.org.

Splendors of Turkey is part of the month-long Memphis in May International Festival 2008. In addition to the cultural salute to Turkey, Memphis in May also produces the city’s largest events including the Beale Street Music Festival, World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest and the AutoZone Sunset Symphony. Memphis in May also produces an extensive international education program for area schools and commercial programs in cooperation with the honored country.

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