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New Music Café to Present Local, International Compositions

March 13, 2007

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Illinois Wesleyan's New Music Café will feature music by composer and Rice University faculty member Karim Al-Zand on Thursday, March 15 at 8 p.m. in Westbrook Auditorium of Presser Hall (1210 Park St., Bloomington).

The event is free and open to the public.

The New Music Café series features student and faculty performances of new compositions that capture musical elements from the early 20th century to the present. Also featured at the New Music Café will be musical works by Brad Decker, an IWU adjunct composition professor and Martin Blessinger of Ithaca College.

Al-Zand, who is considered by many to be one of the United States' most promising young composers, draws inspiration for his music from diverse sources such as 19th century graphic art, global fables and folksong. His wide-ranging compositions include settings for classical Arabic poetry to scores for dance pieces.

Having enjoyed success in the United States, Canada and abroad, Al-Zand has received numerous awards including the Sackler Composition Prize, the ArtSong Prize and the Louisville Orchestra Composition Prize. Among many other awards and fellowships, he has received commissions from Harvard University, the Fromm Foundation, ALEA III, ASCAP/SCI and OrchestraX in Houston.

Performances of his music have been awarded three times in the Canadian SOCAN Competition and two of his string quartets have received numerous awards including the Salvatore Martirano Award and Harvard's Bohemians Prize. While a fellow at the 2000 Oregon Bach Festival Composer's Symposium, Al-Zand's work "Parizade and the Singing Tree" was performed to critical acclaim.

Many performers have played Al-Zand's music including the California E.A.R. Unit, Mendelssohn String Quartet, Collegium Novum, Ensemble Noir, Brave New Works and Pinotage. Musiqqa, Houston's premier contemporary music group, frequently presents Al-Zand's music as he currently serves as vice president of the ensemble and was one of the founding members.

Al-Zand received his Bachelor of Music degree in both music theory and composition from McGill University, where he studied with such composers as Donald Steven, John Rea and Bengt Hambraeus. Al-Zand studied composition at Harvard University under Mario Davidovsky and Bernard Rands.

For additional information, contact the IWU School of Music Office at (309) 556-3061.



Karim Al-Zand

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