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For immediate release:

## Cape Verde's Tcheka to Play UC Davis Quad in SummerMusic 2008 Concert

*June 10, 2008, Davis, California*—The exotic musical legacy of Cape Verde will come to the UC Davis Quad in a free concert featuring **Tcheka**, the 23-year-old singer and guitarist who is bringing the *batuque* rhythm of his island home to the world by blending it with jazz, folk, funk, and more. The concert will be the first event of **SummerMusic 2008**, a series of free concerts on the Quad presented by the **Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts** and sponsored by **UC Davis Summer Sessions**.

The event will begin at 7:30 pm on July 15 on the UC Davis Quad on the university campus, with the area opening for picnics beginning at 6:30 pm. In accordance with university policy, alcoholic beverages are not permitted. Admission is free.

Tcheka, who was born **Manuel Lopes Andrade** in 1973 on Cape Verde's Santiago Island, is a rising star on the world music scene and one of the leading figures in the resurgence of interest in the *batuque* tradition. With a light, soft voice, subtle guitar work, and a gift for socially conscious songwriting, Tcheka has been winning over fans and critics around the world with the quiet intensity and exotic feel of his unique brand of Afro pop. "Against a beat that would please **Youssou N'Dour** with its lop-sided accents... Tcheka weaves some rhythmic acoustic guitar and tops it with his high, clear tenor," wrote the *Birmingham Post*. "Tcheka is one of those secrets you want to share with all your best friends."

Born just two years before Cape Verde achieved its independence from Portugal, Tcheka learned his homeland's musical traditions playing alongside his father, **Nho Raul Andrade**, a famous violinist. By the time he was 15, he had developed his own style based upon adapting the distinctive rhythms of the percussion-based *batuque* tradition to his guitar and incorporating influences from contemporary pop, jazz, and other sources to create something new.

Basing his style on *batuque* was a somewhat unusual decision, given that for most of its history, *batuque* has been considered the province of women and most of the artists associated with the genre, from **Cesaria Evora** to **Lura**, have been female. The form traces its roots to the colonial period, when drums were banned, and women would get together after long days of working in the fields to take turns singing about their lives to the accompaniment of rhythms patted out on the stretched cloth of their garments.

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## Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts, UC Davis

Utilizing the “call and response” patterns typical of many traditional African musical forms, the women would sing of births, deaths, day-to-day events, and social realities as they played complex patterns on their makeshift drums. *Batuque* music and its associated dances had been suppressed by the Portuguese administration and the Roman Catholic church during the colonial period and nearly became extinct during the 1950s. But led by younger artists such as Tcheka, the style has enjoyed a resurgence in popularity that extends well beyond Cape Verde’s shores.

For Tcheka, the music is both a beloved tradition and a way to understand the present. Hailing from the port city of Ribeira Barca in Santiago, often considered Cape Verde’s most “African” island, Tcheka learned *batuque* performing at local village dances and festivities with his father, and at 15, left home for the city of Praia and found a job as a cameraman for Cape Verde’s national television channel. It was there he met **José da Silva**, whose Lusafrica record label had become internationally known as a champion of the latest incarnation of Cape Verdean music.

Tcheka’s meeting with da Silva led to the recording of his first album, *Argui*, in 2003. The follow-up recording, *Nu Monda*, was released in the U.S. on Times Square Records in 2005 and received international acclaim, including the Radio France International Music of the World award for “**Artist of the Year**,” which in turn led to an electrifying debut at WOMEX in Seville. Tour dates with Cesaria Evora followed, and Tcheka’s reputation quickly spread. Tcheka soon crossed paths with Brazilian rocker **Lenine**, who produced the young singer’s third CD, *Lonji*, which showcases a performer deeply rooted in the traditional *batuque* style but also open to influences from world music, jazz, and other forms, with a keen eye for lyrical detail and commitment to social commentary.

The new recording has gotten outstanding reviews from the international press. “Tcheka has created a soundtrack to life [in Cape Verde] with so many tiny sonic details that illustrate the songs’ subject matter that you feel as if they are no longer just tunes, but that you are in the middle of his world,” wrote *The Times* of London. “Credit also goes to Lenine, the Brazilian producer who has repositioned the singer near the experimental end of the new *bossa nova* explosion (think Bebel Gilberto, Vinicius Cantuaria) without losing a sense of Africa.”

“It is a pleasure to once again be hosting SummerMusic, one of our community’s favorite seasonal traditions, and to be bringing the outstanding young singer Tcheka to campus as the first event of this year’s series,” said Mondavi Center Executive Director **Don Roth**. “We’re very grateful to UC Davis Summer Sessions for making SummerMusic possible.”

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**What:** Tcheka  
**When:** Tuesday, July 15, 2008 ▪ 7:30 pm  
**Where:** UC Davis Quad  
University of California, Davis  
**Admission:** Free  
**Info:** 530.754.2787  
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<http://www.MondaviArts.org>  
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