

ARTS
December7days
by Solange Borne, Calendar Editor

1/saturday

If you still aren't convinced that Jewish humor is some of the best around, then go see **"Sholem Schtik III: Visit to Vaudeville and Beyond: An Evening of Laughter and Music."** Enjoy the evolution of Jewish comedy from Yiddish theater to burlesque to the movies and TV shows of today. Be warned however, some material might be unsuitable for children. Presented by the Sholem Community/Workmen's Circle, the money raised in this one-night-only performance will benefit Sholem, a secular Jewish educational, cultural and social institution. \$10-7:30 p.m. Workmen's Circle/Arbeiter Ring, 1525 Robertson Blvd., Los Angeles. For tickets or more information, call (310) 532-2007.

2/sunday

For some brides, searching for the right wedding dress is comparable to finding a needle in a haystack. For those who prefer the dresses to come to them, the Skirball Cultural Center presents **"A Match Made in Heaven: Two and Badgley Mischka Bridal Fashion Show."** The high tea, with floral design by event planner King Dahl, features the newest creations by the world-renowned designer Mischka, accompanied by the Ladies Choice String Quartet. The program also includes a talk by Gary Cohen Grossman, curator of "Romance & Ritual: Celebrating the Jewish Wedding," \$35 (per person) 1:30 p.m. Ahmanson Hall, 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles. For tickets or more information, call (323) 653-8587.



3/monday

The lady in the rocking chair brings back memories of the famous mother in the 1960 movie **"Psycho."** But fear not, the sculpture **"Woman on White Wicker Rocker,"** by artist George Segal, is not dangerous. The work is one of two dozen from **"Art and Illusion: Selections From the Frederick R. Welman Art Foundation,"** presented by the University of Judaism's Plaut and Bornstein Galleries. The collection includes pieces that span the 20th century, and reveal an emphasis on vibrant works with a frequent focus on illusionism. Opening reception: Sun., Dec. 2, 3 p.m.-5 p.m. Gallery hours: Sun.-Thurs., 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and Fri., 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 15600 Mulholland Drive, Bel



4/tuesday

How does a simple extramarital affair lead to absolute upheaval in a small town? Author **Lorraine Despres** answers that question in her debut novel **"The Scandalous Summer of Sissy LeBlanc."** In 1956, when Sissy's high school sweetheart shows up in Gentry, La., the unhappy housewife doesn't hesitate to let him add some excitement to her boring life and unhappy 14-year marriage. Despres, whose writing credits include the "Who Shot J.R.?" episode of "Dallas," will sign copies of this sexy story and discuss its humorous, yet serious reflections of life. \$10 (members), \$15 (nonmembers) 7 p.m.-9 p.m. National Council of Jewish Women's Council House, 543 N. Fairfax Ave., Los Angeles. For reservations or more information, call (323) 852-8518.

5/wednesday

Take two models, a rabbi and a man named Norman and you get **A Different Kind of One-Act Festival: 2001-2002 Season,** presented by Theatre Forty. The collection of new one-acts, music and tales includes **"Norman!,"** the romantic comedy **"The Rabbi Is In,"** and a humorous dialogue between two self-absorbed models in **"Plastic."** Music is provided by **Michael Gough, Jeff Harlan and Jennifer Parsons.** \$10 (general admission). Plays Sun., Dec. 2, 3 p.m. Tues., Dec. 4-Fri., Dec. 7, 8 p.m. Through Dec. 16, 241 Moreno Drive, Beverly Hills. For reservations or more information, call (323) 936-5842.



(From left) David Forseth and "Days of Our Lives" actor Austin Peck in "Plastic," at Theatre 40.

6/thursday

"Reading the Zohar: The Sacred Text of Kabbalah," by Dr. Pinchas Giller, gives an insightful look into the origin of the Zohar in the 16th century by the people of Safed in the Galilee, and the culmination of Jewish mysticism. Today, the author will speak on the book at the Jewish Community Library of Los Angeles as part of the Adult Lecture Series. 7 p.m.-8:30 p.m. 6505 Wilshire Blvd. For reservations or more information, call (323) 761-8648.

7/friday

With only a small amount of well-known Chanukah melodies, hearing the same ones over and over can become pretty boring. That's why musician **Karl Kimmel** has added a new twist to holiday favorites by adding jazz. Virginia Jazz DJ Jerry Carter says it will "become one of the classics to be played during the holidays for decades to come." **"Absolutely Chanukah"** is a compilation of age-old songs such as **"Chanukah, Oh Chanukah"** and **"I Have a Little Dreidel"** with a fresh sound. To purchase the CD, visit www.amazon.com or

SPECTATOR

Classical
Klezmer

by Miko Levy
Staff Writer

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOUR symphony season hinges on a theme of celebration, but your country is still reeling from terrorism? When your opening concert features a piece called **"Suite for Klezmer Band and Orchestra,"** and the klezmer band cancels?

If you are Noreen Green, artistic director, conductor and founder of the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony (LAJS), you find another band and you put on the show. "I think it's important we get on with our lives," she says. "Jews are no strangers to tragedy. Our music has reflected our hopes, our dreams and our tragedies."

When the Swiss Klezmer band Koi Simcha canceled after the Sept. 11 attacks, Green called up the spirited three-piece Hollywood Klezmer, longtime friends of the symphony. And on with the show.

On Dec. 2, Green's dedication to Jewish orchestral music bears fruit once again in the LAJS' eighth season opening concert, featuring the eclectic range of composers and musical styles for which the symphony is known. For the first half of the "Celebrate Joy" concert, LAJS offers a musical Chanukah, with Peter Yarrow's "Light One Candle," Zelig Barel's "Hanukkah Rhapsody" and selections from Aaron David Alon's "Or HaMen."

Then the symphony really gets cooking with Hollywood Klezmer, playing Sid Robins' "Suite," blending Klezmer with elements of burlesque and even tango, for a little extra holiday spice.

Not a Jewish music expert? Not to worry, Green is that rare conductor who interacts with listeners and explains the music, "so the audience isn't walking into a vacuum," she says. "And they walk out feeling not



Noreen Green conducting

only did they hear great music, but their spirits have been lifted, and they learned something. And people are hungry for that."

"Celebrate Joy" concert Sunday, Dec. 2, 7:30 p.m. \$25-\$45. K.L. Peters Auditorium, Beverly Hills High School, 241 Moreno Ave., Beverly Hills. For tickets, call (310) 753-6687.

ARTS
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UP FRONT


Sephardic Solo

MAYA HADDI IS JUST A TAD EMBARRASSED ABOUT HOW she landed her April 28 solo gig with the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony. The 28-year-old singer was throatily belting out "Hava Nagila" at a Bel Air party when composer Yuval Ron walked into the room. "He's a guy I wanted to impress," says the Israeli-born singer-songwriter. "And the only time he hears me sing is 'Hava Nagila.'"

Haddi need not have worried. A week later, Ron asked her to perform his new piece, "Sephardic Songs of Exile," commissioned by the Jewish Symphony for a concert celebrating Israeli Sephardic and Mizrahi music. "Song" — which begins with the Jewish expulsion from Spain — requires Haddi to improvise Moroccan-style chanting.

It's no problem for the Yemeriute-Israeli musician, who's been singing for as long as she can remember. Because of a childhood birth defect, Haddi could sing better than she could speak until a series of surgeries corrected the problem when she was around 10. Four years later, she made an impression on a televised Israeli talent show and embarked on her first professional tour. A scholarship to Boston's Berklee College of Music brought her to the States in 1997. Since graduation, she's been a finalist in the John Lennon Songwriting Competition, sold songs to MTV's "Undressed" and has been touring with her jazzy-pop-R & B band, Maya.

"Sephardic Songs of Exile" will be her first performance with a symphony orchestra. "I'm not nervous, I'm excited," she says. "Sometimes 'Hava Nagila' can save your life." For more information, call (310) 478-9311. — Naomi Pfefferman, Arts & Entertainment Editor



• Never heard of an Israeli Flamenco dancer? Well we wandering Jews have covered the globe well. Help celebrate Israel's Sephardi-Mizrahi tradition in music with the **Los Angeles Jewish Symphony**. For its 2002 season finale it will perform compositions by Israel's preeminent composers, with Israeli dance sensation **Or Nili Azuly** and singer-songwriter **Maya Haddi**. 7 p.m. Sinai Temple, 10400 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles. For ticket prices and more information, call (310) 478-9311.

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