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## Los Angeles Jewish Symphony Premieres New Work

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Contributing Writer



Above: Composer Andrea Clearfield's oratorio will debut in UCLA's Royce Hall and will be narrated by actress Valerie Harper, below.



THE LOS ANGELES  
  
JEWISH SYMPHONY

### Symphony

Continued from page 36

men." In addition to this world premiere, the concert, sponsored by Hadassah Southern California, will feature works by women composers including Fanny Mendelssohn, sister of Felix Mendelssohn, Israeli composer Tsippi Fleischer and American composer Meira Warschauer.

Tickets start at \$36 and benefit the educational, health and literacy programs of Hadassah Southern California in the U.S. For ticket information, please call (310) 276-0036 or (800) 951-6228. ■

"I believe this concert is the culmination of what the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony is all about, commissioning works by Jewish composers on Jewish themes to promote important issues," says conductor Noreen Green. "Conducting and composing have traditionally been dominated by

On Sun., April 16, the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony under the direction of Noreen Green will premiere "The Women of Valor," a new oratorio by Philadelphia-based composer Andrea Clearfield at UCLA's Royce Hall. The new work will be narrated by actress Valerie Harper and feature soloists Hila Plitmann and Gail Dubinbaum.

According to Clearfield, the new work is a celebration of women in Judaism. "As we enter the new millennium, women's voices are starting to shine through much more in Judaism. This piece is an outgrowth of that."

The libretto for "The Women of Valor" includes texts in English, Yiddish and Hebrew on Sarah, Leah, Rachel, Yocheved, Miriam, Hannah, Yael, Michal and Ruth, culminating in the victory song of Esther. Inspired by a midrash on Proverbs where each line of the biblical text is likened to a biblical woman, it incorporates works of modern Jewish writers such as Rivka Miriam, Rabbi G. Rayzel Raphael and Isidor Lillian. In addition, Dr. Ellen Frankel, author of "The Five Books of Miriam," wrote several new texts for the oratorio.

Influenced by Israeli folk dance and Sephardic music, the composer describes her new work as lyrical, colorful and rhythmic.

"My musical language is basically tonal," says Clearfield, "but don't come expecting Mozart."

Her score makes use of timbrel, *dumbek*, *zil* and *riqa*, all instruments of Middle eastern origin, to add a "biblical flavor" to the piece.

Continued on page 39