

7 Days In The Arts

December

By Mike Levy, Calendar Editor

2 Saturday • The story is by now familiar to most, yet **"The Diary of Anne Frank"** remains both haunting and uplifting. The tale of the girl who kept believing that people are good at heart while hiding from Nazis in a cramped attic is back on stage in Los Angeles. This production, at West Coast Theater, is augmented with newly discovered material. \$20-\$25. Fri. and Sat. 8 p.m., Sun. 3 p.m. Through Dec. 17. 522 N. La Brea Ave., Los Angeles. For tickets or more information, call (323) 525-0022.

3 Sunday • The Los Angeles Jewish Symphony celebrates the centennial of two of the 20th Century's most gifted composers at its season opener tonight at University Synagogue. The evening begins with works by Aaron Copland, including his "Vitebsk. Trio for Violin, Cello and Piano" and the exuberant "Music For The Theater." The concert also honors Kurt Weill with operatic selections from his epic saga "The Eternal Road." Special guest star Dick Van Patten narrates this story of a Jewish congregation seeking refuge in its synagogue on the eve of a pogrom, retelling biblical tales of the Jews' flight from persecution. \$25-\$45. 7:30 p.m. University Synagogue, 11960 Sunset Blvd., Brentwood. For ticket information, call (818) 753-6681 or visit www.lajewishsymphony.org.

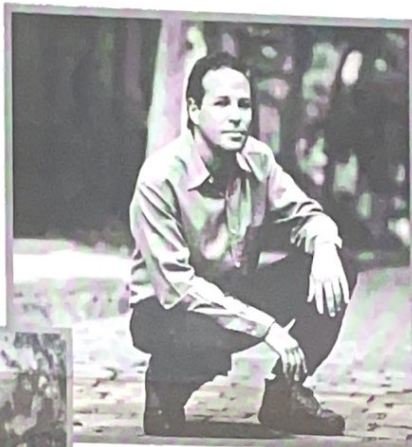
• Len Lesser (Uncle Leo on "Seinfeld"), Robert

DoQui and Deena Freeman star in "I'm Not Rappaport," the first of four staged play readings to be presented at the Westside JCC. The Herb Gardner play follows the lives of two lively older gentlemen as they scheme and adopt alter egos. Their comic adventures infuriate one character's daughter but show just how strong and relevant the older generation can be. \$8 (members); \$10 (nonmembers). 2 p.m. 5870 W. Olympic Blvd., Los Angeles. For reservations, call (323) 938-2531 ext. 2225.

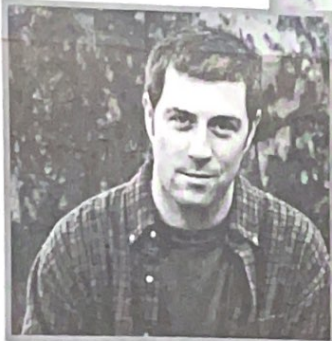
4 Monday • "Two By Two," a musical comedy version of the story of Noah, plays tonight only in a staged reading with live orchestra. Based on a play by Clifford Odets, with music by Richard Rodgers and lyrics by Martin Charnin, the modernized biblical tale tells of an ordinary family dealing with ordinary problems like drinking, jealousy, intermarriage and a father receiving messages from God. \$35. 7:30 p.m. The Pasadena Playhouse, 39 S. El Molino Ave., Pasadena. For reservations or more information, call (818) 848-6844.

5 Tuesday • Hal Linden, B.J. Ward and a 25-piece orchestra join prolific composer Charles Fox in an evening performance of some of Fox's most memorable songs. **"The Charles Fox Songbook,"** directed and choreographed by hitmaker Paula Abdul, includes hits like "Killing Me Softly" and "Ready to Take a Chance Again," familiar TV themes like "Happy Days" and "Love American Style," and a preview of a new stage musical. \$25-\$30. Sat., Dec. 2, 8:30 p.m.; Sun., Dec. 3, 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.; Tue., Dec. 5, 8 p.m. University of Judaism, 15600 Mulholland Drive, Bel Air. For reservations or more information, call (310) 476-9777 ext. 203.

6 Wednesday • The two-week Orange County JCC Festival of Books is set to introduce the public to new works by Jewish authors. In addition to new fiction, books presented at the festival include cookbooks, Bible studies, women's issues and Jewish history. Throughout the festival, authors will be on hand for lectures, readings and discussions of a wide range of topics. Dec. 3-17. Most events will be held at the Orange County Jewish Federation campus, 250 E. Baker St., Costa Mesa. For more information, call (714) 755-0370 ext. 122.



Rich Cohen, above, author of "The Avengers," and Niles Elliot Goldstein, left, author of "God at the Edge," are two of the featured authors at the Orange County JCC Festival of Books, which begins Sunday at the Jewish Federation campus in Costa Mesa. Photos by Sara Barrett (Cohen) and Carol Rosegg (Goldstein)



7 Thursday • Regularly acclaimed as Israel's first lady of song, Chava Alberstein showcases a repertoire amassed over a 30-year career as she concludes her first major U.S. tour tonight at Royce Hall. Singing a mixture of folk, Jewish and worldbeat styles in Hebrew, Yiddish and English, Alberstein transcends language barriers with her emotional performance. \$20-\$32. 8 p.m. Royce Hall, UCLA. For reservations or more information, call (310) 825-2101, or visit www.performingarts.ucla.edu.



Chava Alberstein

8 Friday • Multimedia artist Diane Jacobs creates lithographic portraits interwoven with text, realistic wigs made from strips of paper, and other combinations of word and image which together form a subtle, stinging critique of race and gender inequalities. In her exhibit, "Between the Lines," Jacobs plays with stereotypes, crossing cruel epithets with beautiful and serene faces. Gallery hours Tue.-Sat. 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Through Jan. 6. Frumkin/Duval Gallery, Bergamot Station, 2525 Michigan Ave., Santa Monica. For more information, call (310) 453-1850.

The Spectator

Return to Yiddish

By Naomi Pfefferman, Entertainment Editor

Chava Alberstein has been called Israel's Joan Baez, and for good reason. Her politically charged folk songs have infuriated and inspired listeners — none more so than "Chad Gadya," a scathing riff on the Passover tune she wrote at the height of the Intifada.

The song, which declares, "I used to be a kid and a peaceful sheep/Today I am a tiger and a ravenous wolf," admonishes Israel for perpetrating the Middle East cycle of violence. Banned from the radio and led to canceled concerts and threatening telephone calls to Alberstein.

When the chanteuse performs "Chad Gadya" at her Royce Hall concert on Dec. 7, she believes audiences will be more receptive. "The current conflict reminds people that the cycle of violence is still turning and that it can turn against ourselves," explains Alberstein, a Peace Now advocate who has recorded nearly 50 albums. "It shows us that we must stop the cycle; otherwise, it's the end of the world and the dream of the Jewish state."

Polish-born Alberstein, the daughter of Holocaust refugees, arrived in Israel at the beginning of the dream, around 1950. She was 4, and her father, a piano teacher, was too poor to purchase a piano. Instead, he bought an accordion, and little Chava was his first pupil.

At 12 years old, not long after Alberstein was riveted by a Pete Seeger concert, her father brought her a used guitar purchased from a sailor in Haifa. In her late teens, inspired by the American folk musicians who drew on their ethnic roots, Alberstein did the unthinkable in the young Jewish state: She put out an album of songs in Yiddish.

Recently, the internationally acclaimed singer returned to the *mameloshn* after making a documentary on the last Yiddish poets in Israel. "I felt like the movie was a goodbye to Yiddish, but I wasn't ready to say goodbye," says Alberstein, who began writ-

ing songs based on Yiddish poems and recorded them with The Klezmatiks on a 1999 album titled "The Well."

Alberstein, who'll sing excerpts from the CD in L.A., says performing Yiddish songs in Poland has been intense. "It's a mixture of sorrow and anger and victory," she explains. "I think to myself, 'You tried to erase us and here I am again, singing in Yiddish. It never stops.'"

For tickets to Alberstein's Dec. 7 Royce Hall concert at UCLA, call (310) 825-2101. ■