

THE JEWISH ARTS

The question of exactly what is Jewish music will come in for fresh inspection today evening at **University Synagogue, Brentwood**, where artistic director **Noreen Green** and the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony will open its seventh season in a 7:30 concert.

As the only orchestra of its kind in the world dedicated to the exposure of Jewish composers, performers and works based on Jewish themes, it is fitting that the synagogue program will spotlight the genius of the composers **Aaron Copland** and **Kurt Weill**.

In preparing for the first West Coast performance in 50 years of Weill's *The*

Eternal Road, the story of a Jewish congregation in Europe seeking refuge on the eve of a pogrom. Ms. Green offered perspectives on both Jewish composers.

"Copland did not particularly identify himself as a Jew," she said. "Yet the sound of Jewish music had an influence on his compositions." As for the German-born Weill, she said that he "could not escape the fact he was Jewish, and he embraced it in his compositions."

Which, of course, still leaves hanging — like a Florida chad — the question of what makes music Jewish. The sound? Certain groupings? There mere fact it was written or performed or arranged by a Jew, or

something beyond all that?

Meanwhile, the 100th birthdays of both Copland and Weill are being marked this year.

Copland, the son of Eastern European Jews who grew up in Brooklyn, was influenced by the Jewish music he heard at home through his father, president of a shul. *Vitebsk: Trio for Violin, Cello and Piano*, which will be featured in the concert, is based on a Jewish theme. Two signature compositions of Copland, *Simple Gifts* and *Zion's Walls*, also will be heard.

Tickets are \$45, \$36, \$25. Call (818) 753-6681 or www.lajewishsymphony.org.

With music coming to the foreground, this is closing weekend for the **Middle East Peace Quilt**, which is on exhibit until Sunday at **A Shenere Velt Gallery of the Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring**, 1525 S. Robertson Blvd.

A Joyous Concert, featuring a generous lineup of musicians of all ages will be presented at 2 p.m. Sunday, a benefit for the **Jewish Home for the Aging**.

The **Los Angeles Mandolin Orchestra**, under **Maestro Joel Lish**, the **Mit Gezang Yiddish Chorus**, conducted by **Dr. Michelle Green-Willner**, Yiddish soloist **Moti Buchboot** and the **Russian Children's Chorus**, directed by **Natalie Meiler**, will perform. Minimum donation of \$25 is requested.

The **Workmen's Circle**, a donor for more than 50 years, is one of 18 support groups of the Jewish Home for the Aging.

Artist **Sima Elizabeth Shefrin** of Vancouver, B.C., produced the quilt as an international community art project, and Palestinians and Jews of all ages contributed squares to the peace quilt.

More than 200 persons, from North America, Europe and Asia participated. **Binders**, containing stories of each quilt square, accompany the exhibit.

Visitors can experience the display from 10 to 5 p.m., today, Friday and on Sunday. Call (310) 552-2007.

With **Michael Feinstein** hosting a grand occasion, the music of composer **Kurt Weill**, 100 years after his birth, will resound on Monday, Dec. 4, at 7:30, at the **Mark Taper Forum**.

In a tribute to one of the most prolific and original composers in musical theater history, the **Center Theater Group's Salon IX** at the **Taper** will present *I'm A Stranger Here Myself*, an intimate evening of song, verse and reminiscences.

It is the group's ninth annual benefit honoring extraordinary lyricists and composers of American musical theater.

Dead a month after his 50th birthday, Weill, 10 years after his first Broadway hit, *Lady in the Dark*, he was at work on a musical version of Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* at the time.

At his death, his originality was saluted by American composer **Virgil Thomson**. "Every work was a new model, a new shape, a new solution to dramatic problems," said Thomson.

Conductor **Zubin Mehta** will lead the **Los Angeles Philharmonic** in performances this weekend of Weill's **The Seven Deadly Sins**, Friday night and Saturday night at the **Dorothy Chandler**. Call (213) 972-7368.

Ten-year-old piano virtuoso **Elliot Jin**, performing for four years, will appear in concert at the **University of Judaism** in its Young Artists Series at 11 a.m., Tuesday, Dec. 5.

A two-time recipient of the **Playa Del Rey Women's Club Scholarship**



NARRATOR — Dick Van Patten will narrate the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony's concert performance of Kurt Weill's epic opera, *The Eternal Road* on Dec. 3 at University Synagogue in Brentwood. For tickets, call (818) 753-6681.

Foundation, Jin will play selections from Beethoven, Chopin, Schubert and Sinding. Tickets are \$10. A luncheon follows for **University Women** members and nonmembers. (310) 476-9777, Ext. 283.

Four days of previews of **Avi Hoffman's** one-man show *Too Jewish? A Mensch and His Musical* start Wednesday, Dec. 6, at **UCLA's Freud Playhouse at Macgowan Hall**. Performances start at 8 all four evenings with matinees at 2 on Saturday and Sunday.

Hoffman's run formally opens at 7 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 10, and closes Sunday, Dec. 31. Call Ticketmaster or check www.tickets.ucla.edu.

On Wednesday, Dec. 6, **Pinchas Zukerman** and **Marc Neikrug**, one of the distinguished violin/piano duos in the world, will perform sonatas by Beethoven, Bartok and Frank in a **Celebrity Series** recital presented by the **Los Angeles Philharmonic** at 8 p.m. at the **Dorothy Chandler Pavilion**. Zukerman and Neikrug have won wide acclaim during their 26 years of collaboration, and they have recorded virtually the entire repertoire of sonatas for violin and piano.

Tickets are available at www.laphil.org or they can be ordered with credit cards by telephone at (213) 365-3500.

At the **Theatre West** in Hollywood, *Glad to Be Unhappy: The Lyrical Life of Lorenz Hart* is currently enjoying a run at the Theatre West in Hollywood. Singers **Gogi Grant** (*The Wayward Wind*) and **Bill Hayes** (*The Ballad of Davy Crockett*) sing 49 great songs whose lyrics suggest the different times in Hart's (the son of German-Jewish immigrants) life, some reflecting the demons in his own personal life and others celebrating love, joy and romance.

The show is directed by Betty Garrett and William Mead. Produced by John Gallogly and Larry Thomas, tickets are \$20 apiece. The show runs Thursdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. For reservations/information, call (323) 851-7977.

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