

## Conducting New Traditions in Jewish Music— Noreen Green and the LA Jewish Symphony Kicks Off its 9th Season

By Alex Gomez

"Music is a non-threatening form of expression. It's art that crosses all borders and for the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony, it often strikes an emotional chord."

Entering its ninth season this month, Noreen Green and the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony (LAJS) continue to support the performances of orchestral works of distinction, exploring Jewish culture, heritage and experience. With the onset of its ninth season on Dec. 8, the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony is using the Hanukkah season of dedication to confirm itself as a new tradition in Jewish music, with a wealth of Jewish orchestral works that entertain, educate and inspire.

Since its debut back in April of 1994 and under the leadership of Artistic Director Noreen Green, the LAJS has won widespread national and international acclaim for its inspired programming featuring a variety of new works and several exclusive world premieres. Importantly, the LAJS fills a cultural niche revitalizing the legacy of Jewish music and covering the broad range of Jewish heritage from periods of adversity to moments of accomplishment and liberation.

Over the past eight years, Dr. Green has brought neglected, as well as new, orchestral works on Jewish themes to the stage, provided an orchestra or chamber ensemble for fund raising events for the LA Jewish community and performed in Israel. Dr. Green has a Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in choral music from the University of Southern California, and a Master of Music Degree in choral conducting

under the well-known conductor John Alexander at California State University, Northridge.

Dr. Green's core goals at the LAJS are to perform orchestral works of both established and not commonly recognized Jewish composers; identify opportunities for the presentation of new compositions by Jewish artists; serve as a professional resource for aspiring Jewish and non-Jewish musicians; and act as an educational medium for Jewish music and composers.

Annually, the LAJS performs a minimum of three full orchestra concerts as part of its season, each with its own respective theme. This year marks the incorporation of exciting new genres like Broadway, pop classical and world music.

"The symphony orchestra is a relatively new vehicle for creating music of the Jewish experience," said Green. "People usually think of singers and cantors performing this music. We're the first classically modeled orchestra in the world that has embraced the post-Holocaust repertoire of Jewish music, helping to create this new tradi-

tion in Jewish music."

The 2002-2003 concert series showcases the abundance of music in this new tradition, beginning with Elliot Finkel in concert on Sun., Dec. 8 at Valley Beth Shalom Synagogue in Encino. Finkel's performance will feature the world premiere of Piano Concerto No. 1 by American composer Isador Achron. Acting much like an orchestral version of Indiana Jones,

Dr. Green had to track down the unpublished music score in the archives of the composer's works at Yale University.

On Sun., Feb. 9, 2003 at the Alex Theater in Glendale, the orchestra will join singer/songwriter Sam Glaser and his band in the second concert of the season, Sam

Glaser in concert. The evening will be the kick-off event for the annual fundraising drive by the Valley Alliance of the Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles and proceeds from the concert will benefit the Valley Alliance of the Jewish Federation.

The season finale, Symphony Sephardi, is scheduled for Sun., April 6, 2003, at the newly remodeled Wilshire Windsor Pavilion. This con-

cert will be a follow-up to the Celebrate Israel concert of the 2001-2002 season. Strengthening the symphony's offerings with Middle Eastern as well as Sephardic melodies, the concert will highlight the Sephardi and Mizrahi musical traditions.

In an effort to make these concert experiences accessible and affordable, the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony has introduced special discounted ticket packages called "Anytime Tix." These coupons can be used for any concerts for the 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 concert seasons. Anytime Tix holders will receive significant discounts off the original ticket price and can use the tickets for the best available seats.

Dr. Green is excited about her work with the LAJS in keeping alive a vibrant and eclectic Jewish musical tradition.

"It requires only one person to champion a body of work in order for the successive generations to know about its existence," she said. "That's where I feel my place is in the history of Jewish music."

In reviewing her goals for the year ahead, Dr. Green says her priorities are two-fold.

"Over the next year, I want spread our success and bring our repertoire to other cities without a Jewish Orchestra; that and have CDs of our performances available to our patrons."

A book of six Anytime Tix is \$120 and a book of ten Anytime Tix is \$180. Individual tickets are also available at \$36-\$18 and children/senior citizen tickets are \$30-\$12. For more information on ticket prices and the concert season please call (310) 478-9311 or visit the website at [www.lajewishsymphony.com](http://www.lajewishsymphony.com).



"Westside Stars" cont. from page 21

his West Hollywood home with a revolving circle of stars and some of

presented with an award at the First Annual Celebrity Golden Youth Awards at the Friar's Club (Beverly Hills) on Dec. 7 for his work in fight-

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