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Riding the LA-TA express

By MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

From *Exodus* to *Schindler's List*, from *The Ten Commandments* to *Victory at Entebbe*, Jewish history as depicted by film music will be celebrated in a special concert taking place tonight and tomorrow at the Claremont Hall of the Rubin Academy of Music (at Tel Aviv University at 8 p.m.).

Led by its music director Noreen Green, the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony Orchestra will make its local debut in concerts funded by a grant from the Tel Aviv-Los Angeles Partnership of the Jewish Federation. The concert will feature the Israeli premiere of "Ruth," a symphonic poem by Franz Waxman (Oscar winner for both *Sunset Boulevard* and *A Place in the Sun*); a suite from *The Ten Commandments* written by Elmer Bernstein; an *Exodus Rhapsody* by Ernest Gold; a *Victory at Entebbe* suite by Charles Fox; three pieces from *Schindler's List* by John Williams; and most interestingly the world premiere performance of "Palestine Suite" by Dmitri Tiomkin.

Green recalls the special life and artistry of Tiomkin and the genesis of this opus and its current performance.

"Tiomkin (1894-1979) was born in the Ukraine and left his homeland to work as a concert pianist in Europe, where in 1928 he performed the European premiere of Gershwin's concerto in F. Later he moved to the US and in 1929 he settled in Hollywood in order to compose film music."

In Hollywood he created the scores to some great epics such as *Lost Horizon*, *Duel in the Sun*,



Los Angeles Jewish Symphony Orchestra music director Noreen Green

Giant, *The Old Man and the Sea* and above all *High Noon*, winning four Oscars in the process.

"Back in his homeland his uncle was very much involved in the Zionist movement and even participated in the first two Jewish Congresses in Basel. We do not know when exactly he composed this suite but we assume it was written before the birth of the State of Israel.

"Tiomkin's compositional style is based in 19th century Slavonic romanticism and this suite has a very Jewish Russian sound to it. We also do know that he used the fourth movement as music for the film *Land of the Pharaohs*."

ONLY THE third (andante) and fourth (Danza Hebriaca) movements of the suite were rediscovered. "What happened back then in Hollywood was that once film music was recorded, the only way it survived was on glass recordings. Scores were usually thrown away, and last minute changes in the scores were never notated.

"Recently some of these recordings were found, broken, and then glued and from that reconstructed. We really hope that eventually the first two movements will be found as well. We are in touch with Tiomkin's children who are still searching all their father's archives."

The orchestra comprises professional musicians, two of whom, violinist Mark Kashper and cellist Barry Gold, are members of the prestigious Los Angeles Philharmonic, and both will also be soloists in the coming concert.

Green herself managed to use her time in Israel these days to meet with local composers and search for Israeli music to perform with the orchestra back in LA.

"We have a big Persian community in LA, and now I found various works that contain Persian themes and will no doubt appeal to that community. I didn't know this music existed. And although she was here 16 years ago on a kibbutz and an Ulpan, Green is most excited about the current visit.

"I was born and raised in Los Angeles and living in LA you must get caught up by Hollywood and film music," she says. I thought that for our first visit here in Israel the most natural thing was to bring some LA touch to Tel Aviv."