Joseph Tal (born Joseph Gruenthal in 1910), pianist, composer and pedagogue in Jerusalem, has contributed some strikingly individual works to the music of Israel — most noteworthy among them are the compositions inspired by the world of the Bible and the ancient legend such as the choreographic poem “Exodus” (1945/6) and the symphonic cantata “A Mother Rejoices” (1948/9).

The Sonata for Violin and Piano (completed September 1951 and revised for publication in March 1952) is typical of Tal’s forcefully expressive style; in form it presents the interesting and novel experiment of shaping a three-movement Sonata in the scheme of a classical first-movement, with the opening Moderato representing the first-subject section and exposition, the Andantino corresponding to second-subject expression and development, and the final movement (Moderato) given to recapitulation and Coda.

The first performance of the Sonata took place in Jerusalem in September 1951, when Eli Goren and Doreen Stanfield broadcast it over Kol Israel; the revised version was accepted for the I. S. C. M. Festival at Salzburg (June 1952). Duration: 12 minutes.