

Week of sacred music

MUSIC/Yohanan Boehm

THE CHRISTMAS marathon traditionally presented by visiting choirs and ensembles will be enlarged this year.

A symphony concert on December 25 at the Jerusalem Theatre with Gary Bertini conducting the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra will offer the "Shabbat Cantata" by Mordehai Seter and a "Cantata for Hanukka" by Jerusalem composer Josef Tal — a world premiere. Mozart's "Vesperae Solennes de Confessore" will close the programme. The same evening, visiting and local choirs will perform from 8 until 11 p.m. at Binyanei Ha'ooma.

Elisabeth Roloff will give an organ recital at the YMCA Auditorium the

Welcome idea

THE ISRAEL STRING QUARTET. Yigal Tune, Rafael Marcus, violins; Zeev Steinberg, viola; Yaacov Menze, cello (Targ Music Centre, Ein Karem, December 18). Josef Tal: String Quartet No.3; Haydn: Quartet, opus 76, No.2; Beethoven: Quartet opus 18, No.3; Tal: Quartet No.3 (second reading).

THE ISRAEL QUARTET apparently has made a good choice in its new leader. Yigal Tune is a commendable violinist for quartet playing.

The occasional off intonation may be put down to accident, and the quartet's rather loud and aggressive-sounding performance could be the result of the Targ Music Centre's acoustic conditions.

Performing a new work twice in the same programme is a sound and welcome idea. In the case of Tal's Third String Quartet (1976), it may have helped some of the remaining listeners to get a clearer impression of the work. Even a second reading did not leave me with an impression of any musical values in the accepted, or maybe I should say, reactionary sense.

For more conservative ears, the ensemble performed a beautiful and for its kind an original and "modern," quartet by Haydn and then Beethoven's early opus 18. The four artists gave a very creditable reading of these works.

following night (December 26), with works by Buxtehude, Bach, Salomon, Mendelssohn and Schoenberg. That night a concert of cantoral songs will also be presented at Heichal Shlomo. And Marc Elder will conduct the JSO at Binyanei Ha'ooma in a performance of "Judas Maccabaeus" by Handel.

The next night (December 27) at the Church of the Redeemer in the Old City, the Friedrich Spee Choir from Germany, directed by Karl Berg, will sing music by Gabrieli, Schuetz, Bruckner, J.C. Bach and Brahms. On December 30, John Nelson will conduct Haydn's oratorio "The Creation" at the Jerusalem Theatre with Gila Yaron, the Spee Choir and artists from abroad.

The Khan Theatre on December 31 will contribute one of its "Contrasts" programmes on music "from Jewish origins" with works by Mendelssohn, Milhaud, Orgad, Hajdu and others from Habad folklore.

The closing programme of the marathon will be J.S. Bach's Mass in B Minor, conducted by Gary Bertini with international soloists, the Spee Choir and the JSO at Binyanei Ha'ooma on January 1.