

ELEANOR HOPE
A-1040 Vienna, Austria

George Enescu was clearly an exceptional human being. I grew up in South Africa, and as a child I loved listening to 78 rpm records of his Romanian Rhapsodies. Far away from Europe, the music conjured up for me a magical world, a dream landscape.

It was in Johannesburg, still as a child, when I first heard Yehudi Menuhin in recital with his sister Hephzibah. The programme included Enescu's third sonata for violin and piano and I remember my excitement at being able to identify the composer immediately. The Rhapsodies and the third sonata "dans le caractère populaire roumain" liberated my fantasy and took me to a Europe I had only read about in books and with which I was in love - not imagining for a single moment that one day my life and that of my family would be joined to that of Yehudi Menuhin. I had been working for him for six weeks back in 1975 when he took us all off to his festival in Gstaad. That in itself was like stepping into a picture book. But a great surprise awaited me in his chalet. In the beautiful music room which looked out on to the Diablerets glacier was a striking bronze bust of an extraordinarily handsome man which caught the eye immediately. I didn't know who it was. "George Enescu, my teacher," said Menuhin by way of introduction. "Violinist, pianist, composer, conductor - a genius, the greatest musician of our time, and my greatest influence."

Give life to your dream is the message of this year's Enescu Festival. I hope that young musicians will be fortunate enough to have the same level of impetus in realizing one's dreams that I was privileged to enjoy thanks to Lord Menuhin. Don't put up with second rate. Go for height and breadth and light in your life if you are lucky enough to make music. Dinu Lipatti, another great Romanian and godson of George Enescu said once "Ne vous servez pas de la musique - servez la!" Don't just help yourself to music, be its servant.

Eleanor Hope