

Over the years I had my opportunities to share the concert platform with Yehudi Menuhin. He is one of those personalities one can never forget – someone who combined musical vision, an unique violin sound and most important, endless curiosity and humanity. He was loyal to Israel but always tried to remind the people of the importance of Palestinean identity. He was the first important Jewish artist to return to Germany after World War II to play and record with Furtwängler and Berlin Philharmonic. Forgiveness, tolerance and understanding were essential to his persona.

This was much in evidence for me in 1998 as Musical Director of the Enescu Festival working with him as the honorary president. All these elements came together in a gala concert uniting for the first time The Budapest Fest Orchestra, Yehudin conducting, Peter Frankl prime solist in a Bartók – Enescu program. Yehudin and I wanted their friendship and musical relationship to symbolize what must exist in Hungary and Romania – in the special loge was King Michael with his wife, the Hungarian and Romanian Presidents and respective ambassadors.

If I can convey one word to any aspiring young artist it is **curiosity**. This trait is what Enescu and Menuhin shared in their lives. Without curiosity there is no personal progress. Most important this means familiarity with all relevant history, poetry and literature. There is no Beethoven without Schiller, Schubert without Goethe, Schuman without Heine, Tchaikovsky without Pushkin etc.

Learn! Wide all horizons!

This would be the message of Enescu and his great student, Yehudi Menuhin.

My best to all,

Lawrence Foster (Music Director Opera Marseille, Enescu Festival 1998)