

FODOR, Eugene, violinist

1974

Tchaikovsky Winner Finds

Special to The New York Times

MOSCOW, July 4—Eugene Fodor is a handsome clean-cut, square-jawed young man who looks more like an athlete or a virile outdoorsman than a talented violinist who has just shared top honors in the world-famous Tchaikovsky competition.

Sitting cross-legged in an open-neck sports jersey, checkered slacks and stocking feet in his room at the Rossiya Hotel before tonight's laureate concert at the Moscow Conservatory, Mr. Fodor related that for 10 years he had been a scuba diver, rode horseback enthusiastically and is a devotee of jogging four miles a day.

"I think exercise is good for you," the 24-year-old violinist said, with a smile. "It gets rid of all the poisons in your system. I'm a nature freak for one thing, and I believe in being as healthy as possible. I don't smoke. I wouldn't think of smoking. I've had a drink occasionally, but I think exercise is the most important thing that a person can do, no matter what."

Inspiration From Nature

Does this relate to his art, too? he was asked.

"I get my inspiration from—or partly from—nature, just being outside," he explained. "So many composers, like Tchaikovsky and Sibelius, got their inspiration from nature. In Sibelius's music, this point is so evident that you can practically hear the wind blowing through Finland and the dense groves of trees and the rivers and streams, the lakes.

"Sibelius used to play the

Inspiration in Nature

violin outdoors—on top of a mountain. I've done it, too. When I was a kid, I used to go up and practice on the top and listen to the echo. Now, I don't have time to climb the mountain. I've too much work to do. I climb the mountains in my free time, not to practice the violin."

Mr. Fodor's attachment to nature is understandable. He grew up in Evergreen, Colo., just outside Denver, where his father owns a garage and works as an excavator.

"My dad always loved music," said Mr. Fodor. "He wanted to be a concert violinist. He played the violin, but he did not have enough time to practice."

Gene Fodor began taking violin lessons when he was 7 years old from Harold Wippler, the concertmaster of the Denver Symphony, and then made his concert

New York Times, July 5-1974



Tass via Associated Press

Eugene Fodor, one of three who won second-place prize for violin in the Tchaikovsky Competition, with Myung Whun Chung, who was second in the piano competition, Competition, with Myung Whun Chung, second in piano competition, in Moscow.

debut at 11 with the orchestra. Then, to Juilliard Prep, Indiana University and, finally, under Jascha Heifetz at the University of California.

"That's whom I owe everything to," said Mr. Fodor. "From him I learned a lifestyle, a way of living with music. When you walk out on the stage, you are what you are off the stage. Everything comes out in the music. Everything that you are is mirrored through the performance."

Mr. Fodor is not the only American winner here this year. Myung-Whun Chung, a 21-year-old New York pianist, came in second in the piano section and won praise

for his "very original, free style." James Kraeger, also of New York, placed fourth in the cello competition.

But Mr. Fodor, praised by David Oistrakh as a "strong, self-reliant violinist with an artistic will and temperament," was especially popular with the Soviet audiences.

Many thought that Mr. Fodor had actually won first prize in the competition rather than a second-place tie with two Soviet violinists—still the best any American violinist has ever done in the five Tchaikovsky competitions to date.

"I'm happy," said Mr. Fodor. "It's the top award. What more can you ask?"

