



# Musiques ...

Ecole pédagogique d'Art musical

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*Music from the heart*

## Children Jury - Account



The Children jury, created by Nicole Coppey for the International Violin Competition of Sion-Valais, in conjunction with the International Jury presided by Maestro Shlomo Mintz, has awarded his prize 2007 to the violinist

### **Sergey Tsoy**

winner of the Children Jury's Prize and 2<sup>nd</sup> place winner of the International Violin competition 2007 who reports about this event :

## Children Jury's Prize

*International Violin Competition of Sion-Valais 2007. Final stage. Last movement of Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No. 1.*

Infuriated half-steps and whole steps crawling all the way up to the high "E" in the eleventh position forming up a major tenth with a "C-sharp." One last seemingly impossible crescendo with a feeling that any second now, the smoke will start coming out from under the bow jumping wildly. The last two notes on the "G" string completely covered by the whole orchestra confirming the key of "a". Bow goes down with a relief, and enthusiastic applause sounds. Violin is bit lowered with the deepest of all exhales that evening – it's over. Taking a bow and seeing the audience as well as the Children Jury next to the International Jury, all clapping with smiles...

In the beginning, when applying for the competition, I remember becoming pleasantly surprised learning that there was going to be *Jury d'enfants* functioning independently of the International Jury panel. Evidently, there was to be more than one opinion in evaluating the candidates, which meant more fairness and more objectivity. After all, entrusting such responsibility to the children, that is, to be able to form a unanimous opinion of their own, must have been quite a privilege and a commitment. Most importantly, it meant to me that the whole atmosphere of the contest was to be different...

Finally, arriving to Sion, it felt as though if I had already been there before. Although everything looked unfamiliar, there was an inexplicable sense of déjà vu. Settling in my room, going over the schedule of the competition, and eager to begin practicing – it was all in the order of natural things to do. I also remember anticipating

meeting the Children's Jury: those younglings, who were given the privileges of adults at an International Competition. Who were they? What were they going to be like?

Competition! At opening ceremony, seeing *Jury d'enfants* all in white shirts entering the hall with smiles was immediately a relieving sight next to the towering figures of the International Jury with calm but focused faces. None of the candidates was to communicate with any member of either committee until the competition was over. During all of the three rounds, there was constantly a mixed feeling of nervousness and excitement although with each round it felt more comfortable to play. Nevertheless, I remember vividly that whenever taking a bow prior to playing, I would look at the inquisitive faces of my young judges. Somehow, they encouraged me and made it easier to perform. Importantly, it was both surprising and impressive to find out how their chosen candidates would actually match the ones whom the International Jury selected to advance to the next round.

When hearing the final announcement of the results, I remember becoming overwhelmed with the unexpected, but especially with the fact that the Children Jury had chosen me as their laureate. What did it really mean to me? To my mind, the essence of life originates in its purity, which children in general come to embrace so naturally, so wonderfully, and so completely while giving it away without any thought of reward. In fact, they inspire hope for a better tomorrow and bestow all of us with their precious gifts of innocence, laughter, and simple goodness. This explains why the decision of *Jury d'enfants* struck me because in essence, it indicated that there was indeed something in my playing, which they felt was honest and unspoiled. Without a doubt, this was truly a great honor – one of genuine affection and hope.

As a consequence, I began realizing and reflecting on how every competition should perhaps consider having the Children Jury panel of their own functioning as a separate evaluating committee. In truth, not only it would give confidence to one's playing while easing up the tension of the competition process itself, but it would also shed a definite light of certain freshness and surprising objectivity upon the evaluation of the candidate's playing. My thoughts were then interrupted by the children's laughter when I suddenly realized that I was sitting out at a cafe with my young judges and their families. Sensing a bit of chilliness with night descending upon me and being absolutely unable to understand French, I felt pleasantly exhausted realizing that the competition was over.

At last, I remember seeing the proud Alps standing tall and gorgeous, breathing invigoratingly fresh air, drinking pure mountain water, enjoying the discreet elegance of a European town with a mixture of old architecture and modern shops, watching smiling people outdoors, hearing comforting sounds of the churches' bells, listening to the whisper of the trees at sunrise with a gentle wind bringing about a myriad of different fresh morning scents of summer, spending a day in the paradise of Crans Montana with one lovely family, dreaming sunny dreams at daytime across the cafes inviting to be seduced by a delicious cup of coffee, and dissolving into the world of mysterious shadows of the night with gazing upon the stars of summertime tempting to embark upon a magic journey to be taken far, far away to become one with infinity... These are my fondly remembrances of *Concours International de Violon Sion-Valais 2007*, where in all honesty, I never expected the honor to advance to the finals and be awarded with so many prizes, which I have accepted with the utmost sense of humility, gratitude, and responsibility. However, the most significant of those prizes for me remains that of the Children Jury – "*Prix du jury d'enfants*".

I often think of Sion and feel so privileged for that unique opportunity I was given – to learn how to make music under the pressure of competing. It was also a chance to meet wonderful people of that beautiful town as well as the candidates from other

countries to become friends with them. The competition is over, but the memories will live on, for I will indeed treasure them and always keep them dear to my heart!

Sergey Tsoy