

## Memories of Aharon Shefi (April 2013)



*Under Kestenberg's motto "education to humanity with and through music", Shefi founded the Givatayim Konservatorium near Tel Aviv in 1954, together with the violinist Giora Bernstein. Between 1954 and 1993, it expanded under his direction into a music school of the highest level. Today, it educates some 250 music students between the ages of 6 and 18.*

Dear Friends, My name is Aharon Shefi. I am founder and retired director of the Givatayim Conservatory Of Music in Israel. - About 1950 as a young trumpet player - just released from the army band, I was invited to audition as additional trumpet player in Verdi's Requiem, to be performed by the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Ferenc Fricsay. - I still remember the moments of playing in front of this great artist (with the special sensitive countenance) - waiting for his OK. After being selected I was happy to play in "his" orchestra and being able to follow every word and motion coming from the podium. It was the best school of conducting and making the most perfect music I ever heard. - During the intermissions I got the chance to talk to Maestro Fricsay to express my admiration and his magnetic influence on all participants. - His ingenious humour helped to create a sonority which was never heard before in this country. The soloists were Francis Yend, Mariana Radev, Gabor Carelli and Kim Borg. When we played a special concert of Arias with the same soloists under his direction, the audience gave him an unforgettable standing ovation.

I even have a little jocular story: We were touring through Israel with the superb performance of Verdi's Requiem. It was a very hot day when we went to Beth-Shan (an ancient Roman town) near the Jordan river. The performance took place at the amphitheatre. Many mosquitos "landed" on our manuscripts. Fricsay raised his voice and warned: "Please don't play the mosquitos!" His warning was accompanied by his unforgettable smile.