In all the years' history of competitions, there is to be found the enormous courage and inspiration such events bring to a city. When wonderful young talents gather to express their ideas and their ideals in amicable creative combat, it usually nets lasting friendships, treasured memories, and strengthened artistic determination.

Such was my personal feeling after participating in the First International Tchaikowsky Competition in Moscow the Spring of 1958.

In November of that same year, I was overwhelmingly surprised by the extreme generosity of Dr. Irl Allison, Founder and President of the National Guild of Piano Teachers, who, while addressing a banquet sponsored by the Fort Worth Piano Teachers Forum, suddenly announced that he was giving $10,000 to start a competition in my name.

Although my immediate reaction was, of course, extreme gratitude mixed with awe, I was nevertheless aware of the great work involved in organizing such a project. Had it not been for the dedicated efforts of the National Guild of Piano Teachers, The Fort Worth Piano Teachers Forum, Texas Christian University, and the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, the project might never have been accomplished.

As it has evolved, I have had little connection with the development of the project. Through the incredible, concerted efforts of Mrs. Grace Ward Lankford, General Chairman of the Competition and President of the Forum, and the other sponsors, this project has materialized.

This competition is not planned to emulate any other, though similarities are inevitable, but it endeavors to represent the sincere desire of deeply interested persons who have sought to encourage some of the many budding musical souls to visit the beautiful State of Texas, enjoy the hospitality of Fort Worth, and, I might add, the United States of America.

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