

The City

Sunday, September 7, 1997

PLAYING IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

STUYVESANT SQUARE

Dvorak's Homecoming, With Music

AFTER spending 32 years on the roof of Avery Fisher Hall in what was supposed to be, but never became, a roof garden, Antonin Dvorak is coming home to his old Stuyvesant Square neighborhood, or at least a statue of him is returning.

The Czech-born composer (1841-1904) lived in an apartment at 327 East 17th Street, opposite the square, from 1892 to 1895 while he was the director of the National Conservatory of Music of America. While he lived there, Dvorak wrote two of his most

beloved works, the Cello Concerto and Symphony No. 9, the "New World" Symphony. The apartment building was razed in 1991, its landmark status revoked by the City Council.

But to preserve his memory in another way, a four-foot statue of Dvorak, by the Yugoslav-American sculptor Ivan Mestrovic, will be placed at the northeast corner of the square where the composer often took daily strolls. The statue was presented to the New York Philharmonic in 1963 by the Czechoslovak National Council of America.

After the dedication ceremony on Saturday afternoon, a concert of Dvorak's music, including the "New World" Symphony, will be performed, at 5 P.M., in St. George's Church, on the east side of the park. Steven Richman will conduct the Harmonie Ensemble/New York, and Dvorak's great-grandson, Josef Suk, a violinist, will be a guest artist.

Dvorak Monument Dedication, Saturday, 3 P.M., Stuyvesant Square Park, Second Avenue between 15th and 17th Streets, followed by concert at 5 P.M., St. George's Church, 16th Street and Rutherford Place; free; (212) 206-1450.

