

Friday Evening Message – 12 June 2020

During lockdown I have been playing one particular piece of music virtually every day and wondering lately - why that piece in particular?

You will see from the album cover and web link below that it is "Variations on a Rococo Theme" by Tchaikovsky, played by the wonderful Mstislav Rostropovich with the Berliner Philharmoniker, although my CD was recorded by the London Philharmonic - same soloist in both recordings. I thought I would try and work out why for this message and see if it rings any bells with you.



[Tchaikovsky Variations on a Rococo Theme](#) / Rostropovich (1968/2012)

Lockdown has brought a variety of intense experiences to me and I am sure to you, ranging from the deeply sad and worrying to the deeply touching and joyous. The backdrop to all that has been the most glorious spring weather in East Anglia since records began.

These seven variations on an original theme are mainly very joyful, with thoughtful moments in the minor key, and I realise now they remind me of the evening when I first heard them in a live performance. It had been a difficult week and I remember how the music really lifted my spirits.

When I reread the sleeve notes on the CD, I discovered that Tchaikovsky wrote the piece in December 1876, in the middle of a harsh Russian winter and a time of great pain and turmoil in his own life. In the Variations he was able to escape into an elegant and calm world which reminded him of the music of his beloved Mozart - who could easily have written them himself.

I hope you have at least one beautiful escape route at this time and, if only to celebrate the beautiful weather and say a Blessing for it, you will listen to and really enjoy this (not very long) piece of sublime music making.

Shabbat shalom,

Helen
Norwich Liberal Jewish Community
norwichljc.org.uk