

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 35

I. *Allegro moderato*

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky composed his Violin Concerto rapidly while staying beside Lake Geneva in March of 1878. The Concerto was intended for the legendary violinist Leopold Auer, the teacher of Heifetz, Elman and Milstein, among others. However, after studying it, Auer pronounced it unplayable. It languished for two years before Adolph Brodsky premiered it in Vienna to mixed success. Some critics never changed their mind about the value of the work, but Auer did. He went on to perform it with brilliant success and taught it to many of his finest students. Thus he contributed greatly in establishing the Concerto as one of the truly great works in the violin repertoire.

The Violin Concerto bears a resemblance to the First Piano Concerto in that the introduction contains a melodic idea which is then discarded and never heard again. Two beautifully songful themes are utilized by the composer, culminating in a brilliant cadenza for the soloist. This cadenza then leads the orchestra back to the recapitulation and the conclusion of the movement.

--*Stephen Larmore*