

My father, before the Hungarian revolution broke out in 1956 applied to join the Hungarian merchant marine in the hopes of getting on a ship bound for Cairo where he could defect to the West.

In his interview he just smiled and said that he was just living up to the ideals of communism by being one of the guys on a ship. In his second interview, when the official discovered my father's so-called political unreliability from the secret-police dossier, he was able to quote verbatim remarks my father had made in confidence to coworkers about his intent to escape and his willingness to get out of Hungary. He taunted my father by showing him the safe

containing the passports that would have been issued to him saying that he will never get one. Once my father had escaped Hungary, standing free in Vienna, he did something which could only occur to him- he sent the official a lovely postcard-

‘Greetings from the Free World – George Kepes’

This small story illustrates a lot about my father’s character and how he lived his life. He put himself many times at risk- early in his life when the Germans invaded Hungary a big risk he took saved his life while he was being held in a football stadium full of people unknowingly waiting to be deported- his decision to escape Hungary during the chaos of

the '56 revolution- coming to Canada with, in his own words, 'nothing but a pair of underwear in my backpack'- and later quitting his modest job and taking a big financial risk to start his own company.

The only music I know which could express the ethic with which my father lived his life is the music of Beethoven. To participate in the dramatism of his music gives us the chance to feel the essence of human existence, this specific sense of being close to the edge. And, the Eroica symphony is completely unique in its telling the complete story of the hero's departure and apotheosis, which for me certainly acts as a mirror of my father's biography.

This concert is also about honoring supporting St Mary's Hospital, whose care and staff were really a blessing for my father and the whole family in the last 2 and a half years. I want to give special thanks to the Oncology treatment center on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor for the elevated care that made day-long treatments for my father a bit easier to bear-

Specifically I would like to thank nurses Benny, Colleen, Ms. Dail, Diana, Mr. Don, Elaine, Mr. Franco, Hema, Inez from the 8<sup>th</sup> floor, Jeff, Jonas, Josee, Madame Lucie, Mari, Marissa, Mina, Naima, Renee, Rose, Sandra, Sarah, Nadine and Vanessa. I want to thank as well Dr. Rodriguez, Dr. Stuart from

the 5<sup>th</sup> floor, Dr. Narbonne, Dr. Neil Kopek from the Montreal General Hospital, Dr. Dalfen, Dr. Prchal, Dr. Zidulka, his oncologist Dr. Langleben who earned from my father the nicknames Atomic Bomb and Napoleon, a special thank you to Dr. Donna Tataryn who saved my father's life twice, and finally but perhaps most importantly Dr. George Michaels who recognized how sick my father was when to the rest of us he seemed perfectly fine, and ordered him to leave work and go to the emergency immediately in November 2013.

Finally thank you all for coming, I hope you enjoy the concert.