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BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND ANDRIS NELSONS ANNOUNCE NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON

DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON TO LAUNCH NEW BSO/NELSONS COLLABORATION WITH RECORDINGS OF MUSIC OF SHOSTAKOVICH: FIVE LIVE PERFORMANCE ALBUMS TO FOCUS ON MUSIC COMPOSED DURING PERIOD SHOSTAKOVICH WAS UNDER CLOSE SCRUTINY BY STALIN AND THE SOVIET REGIME: SYMPHONIES 5-10, INCIDENTAL MUSIC FROM KING LEAR AND HAMLET, AND PASSACAGLIA FROM LADY MACBETH OF MTSENSK

INAUGURATING THE PARTNERSHIP—ENTITLED SHOSTAKOVICH UNDER STALIN’S SHADOW—FIRST RELEASE FEATURES SHOSTAKOVICH’S PASSACAGLIA FROM LADY MACBETH OF MTSENSK AND SYMPHONY NO. 10, RELEASE JULY 31, 2015

The Boston Symphony Orchestra and Deutsche Grammophon have announced a new partnership that will feature a series of live recordings under the direction of BSO Music Director Andris Nelsons. This new recording initiative will launch with a project entitled Shostakovich Under Stalin’s Shadow, focusing on works composed during the period of Shostakovich’s difficult relationship with Stalin and the Soviet regime—starting with his fall from favor in the mid-1930s and the composition and highly acclaimed premiere of his Fifth Symphony, and through the premiere of the composer’s Tenth Symphony, one of the composer’s finest, most characteristic orchestral works, purportedly written as a response to Stalin’s death in 1953. In addition to Symphonies 5-10, the project will also include performances and recordings of the incidental music from King Lear and Hamlet and the Passacaglia...
from *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. The recordings of these works will take place at Symphony Hall—one of the world’s most renowned halls for acoustical excellence—during performances scheduled in the BSO’s 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 seasons, all under the direction of BSO Music Director Andris Nelsons.

The first of the BSO’s five live recorded albums—to be released by Deutsche Grammophon in three installments between summer 2015 and summer 2017—features the Passacaglia from *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, the opera that appalled Stalin and propelled Shostakovich out of the dictator’s favor, and Symphony No. 10. The album, which was released on July 31, 2015, was recorded during the BSO’s April 2-4, 2015 concerts at Symphony Hall under the direction of Mr. Nelsons.

Andris Nelsons—born in Riga, Latvia in 1978, when it was still a part of the Soviet Union—is certain to bring a unique perspective to the performances and recordings of Shostakovich’s music. One of the last conductors trained under the Soviet music tradition, and having studied extensively in St. Petersburg, Andris Nelsons now represents the last of a distinct musical voice that is influenced heavily by both those great Russian masters and later by Western European masters of the core Germanic repertoire.

**QUOTE FROM ANDRIS NELSONS**

“I am completely thrilled and honored to be leading this very exciting collaboration with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Deutsche Grammophon. It is an immense privilege to focus on the music of Shostakovich, a composer of such great personal courage and virtue, whose extraordinary work transcends even the circumstances in which it was written, and is timeless on many levels. At the same time, with my formative years spent in Soviet Latvia, the music of Shostakovich in particular speaks to me personally in a distinctive way and I’m sure that special affinity will be communicated in these recordings.”

**QUOTE FROM UTE FESQUET, DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON, VICE PRESIDENT, ARTISTS & REPERTOIRE**

“I am confident that this new recording project with Andris Nelsons and the Boston Symphony Orchestra will become nothing less than the Shostakovich cycle of the 21st century, and will present this composer’s music in a way that will speak to audiences above and beyond those who fill our concert halls. Andris Nelsons, who is known far and wide for his passionate approach and deeply rooted musicality, also brings to this project his roots in the Russian and Soviet music tradition that formed Shostakovich’s language, all of which combines to make him the perfect candidate to lead such a project. The involvement of the extraordinary Boston Symphony Orchestra—which has played a leading role in the reception of Russian/Soviet repertoire in the United States and in the Western canon of classical music—plays a key role in turning this major undertaking into an outstanding cultural statement. We are looking forward to working with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Andris Nelsons to create a new point of reference in the Deutsche Grammophon catalogue.”

**ADDITIONAL DETAILS ABOUT RECORDING PROJECT**

Symphony Nos. 5, 8, and 9, as well as incidental music to *Hamlet* will be released in a 2-album set in May 2016; these works will be recorded during the BSO’s 2015-16 season, details of which are available at
In summer 2017, a second 2-album set will include Symphony Nos. 6 and 7, and incidental music from the Suite from *King Lear*. Further details about the May 2016 and summer 2017 releases will be available at a later date.

In conjunction with the performances and recordings of Shostakovich’s works, the BSO will provide enhanced online materials detailing the BSO’s history with Shostakovich, including Serge Koussevitzky’s close advocacy of Shostakovich’s music during his BSO music directorship, 1925-49; an interview with Andris Nelsons about his early experiences and strong ties to Shostakovich’s music; and fascinating details on the August 14, 1942 American premiere performance of Shostakovich’s Seventh Symphony by the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra.

**The BSO and Deutsche Grammophon**

Deutsche Grammophon and the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s long history of celebrated recording projects dates back more than forty years and encompasses more than 100 recordings. The BSO’s relationship with the prestigious DG label was initiated in 1970 with a recording of Ives’s *Three Places in New England*, under the direction of Michael Tilson Thomas—the first BSO recording of music of Charles Ives. The most recent BSO Deutsche Grammophon recording, in 2007, was of Andre Previn’s Concerto for violin and contrabass, featuring Anne-Sophie Mutter and Roman Patkolo and conducted by Mr. Previn.

**The BSO’s History with Shostakovich and His Music**

Shostakovich’s symphonies have figured in the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s repertoire on frequent occasions since the BSO’s initial performances of the composer’s Symphony No. 1 in November 1935. During the 1940s, legendary BSO conductor Serge Koussevitzky led the orchestra in frequent performances of the composer’s symphonies 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, in Boston, at Tanglewood, and out of town in New York, Brooklyn, New Haven, Hartford, Washington, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Chicago, Ann Arbor, Rochester, and Toledo. Equally significantly, it was Koussevitzky who gave the first American concert performance of the Symphony No. 7, *Leningrad*, with the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra (then known as the Berkshire Music Center Orchestra) at Tanglewood in a Russian Benefit Concert on August 14, 1942 (following the U.S. premiere in a broadcast concert by Toscanini and the NBC Symphony the previous month). Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra made recordings for RCA Victor of the Adagio of the Symphony No. 8 in April 1945 (a recording later reissued as part of a BSO fundraising album in 1989), and of the Symphony No. 9 in November 1946/April 1947. Other Boston Symphony recordings of Shostakovich’s music include the composer’s Cello Concerto No. 2 with conductor Seiji Ozawa and soloist Mstislav Rostropovich, recorded for Deutsche Grammophon in August 1975; and the Violin Concerto No. 2 with soloist Gidon Kremer under Ozawa’s direction, also recorded for Deutsche Grammophon in April 1992. In addition, a September 1964 Boston Symphony telecast of Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 1 with Erich Leinsdorf conducting has been released on DVD by IMG Artists.

Other conductors who have led performances of Shostakovich symphonies with the BSO have included BSO music directors Erich Leinsdorf and Seiji Ozawa, BSO conductor emeritus Bernard Haitink, and such distinguished guest conductors as, among others, Paavo Berglund, Leonard Bernstein, James Conlon, Andrew Davis, Valery Gergiev, Mariss Jansons, Vladimir Jurowski, Charles Mackerras, Kurt Masur, André Previn, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, Kurt Sanderling, the composer’s son Maxim Shostakovich, Leonard Slatkin, Leopold Stokowski, and Yuri Temirkanov. In 1956, the Boston Symphony Orchestra became the
first American orchestra to perform in the U.S.S.R. when it gave five concerts in Leningrad and Moscow under the direction of Charles Munch and Pierre Monteux. In November 1959, as part of a United States-Soviet educational-cultural exchange, Dmitri Shostakovich himself headed a delegation of Soviet composers visiting Symphony Hall to hear a Boston Symphony program of Russian and American music. On August 9, 1975, upon returning to the podium to conduct Shostakovich’s already-scheduled Symphony No. 5 as the second half of that afternoon’s BSO program at Tanglewood, Mstislav Rostropovich stunned the audience by announcing the news of Shostakovich’s death earlier that day—in what may well have been the first public announcement in the U.S. of the composer’s death, the news having only just reached Rostropovich during the intermission of that concert.

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DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
SHOSTAKOVICH RECORDING PROJECT

Released July 31, 2015
Passacaglia from Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk
Symphony No. 10

May 2016 (2-album set)
Symphony Nos. 5 & 9

Symphony No. 8
Incidental music to Hamlet

Summer 2017 (2-album set)
Symphony No. 7

Symphony No. 6
Suite from King Lear incidental music