

Dmitri Shostakovich – “Leningradskaia”: The End of the Siege and the Triumph of the Spirit

NORA HOPPE—Shostakovich’s Seventh Symphony was written in 1941, primarily during the Siege of Leningrad by the Nazi forces. When it had its premiere in the war-torn city on 9th August 1942 – performed by the emaciated, surviving musicians of the Leningrad Radio Orchestra that was supplemented with military performers, before a starving but euphoric audience – it was hailed as a universal beacon of resistance to barbarism. The conductor, Karl Eliasberg, concluded that “in that moment, we triumphed over the soulless Nazi war machine”.