



Boston Symphony  
Orchestra



2024-25 Season

For immediate release

Friday, January 10, 2025, 9:00 a.m. EST



Boston Symphony  
Orchestra



Boston Pops



Tanglewood



Symphony Hall



**Andris Nelsons and the BSO Conclude their  
Award-Winning Decade-Long Shostakovich Project  
with Release of 19-CD Box Set**



**The Boston Symphony Orchestra and its Music Director  
Andris Nelsons mark their tenth anniversary together and the  
50th anniversary of the composer's death by presenting their  
acclaimed Shostakovich symphony cycle**

**This exceptional anthology also contains brand-new  
recordings of:**

- **Shostakovich's complete piano, violin and cello concertos, featuring soloists Yuja Wang, Baiba Skride, and Yo-Yo Ma**
- **and his opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*, starring Kristine Opolais, Brenden Gunnell, Peter Hoare, and Günther Groissböck, the first commercial audio CD recording of the opera in nearly 20 years**

"It is hard to imagine a better orchestra than the BSO to play  
Shostakovich's music nowadays"

*OperaWire*

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In 2015 the **Boston Symphony Orchestra** and its newly appointed **Music Director Andris Nelsons** teamed up with **Deutsche Grammophon (DG)** to record Shostakovich's fifteen symphonies. Ten years, four GRAMMY Awards®, and scores of rave reviews later, DG is issuing the full cycle as part of a **towering anthology of Shostakovich's major works**. These recordings will enable listeners to immerse themselves in a dramatic and endlessly fascinating sound-world, thanks to performances that reflect the intimate bond between orchestra and conductor, and the profound insight they have gained into a composer whose music has been central to their first decade together.

The anthology's release in 2025 coincides with the **50th anniversary of Shostakovich's death**. As well as the symphonies and incidental works already issued, it also includes new recordings of the composer's **complete piano, violin, and cello concertos**, and his only full-length opera, ***Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District***. Nelsons and the BSO are joined by pianist **Yuja Wang**, violinist **Baiba Skride**, and cellist **Yo-Yo Ma** in the concertos, while the *Lady Macbeth* cast is headed by **Kristine Opolais, Brenden Gunnell, Peter Hoare, and Günther Groissböck**. Benefiting from the superb audio quality achieved in the exceptional acoustic of Boston's Symphony Hall—and by a team led by legendary Hollywood producer **Shawn Murphy** and BSO lead recording engineer **Nick Squire**—the anthology will be available digitally and as a **19-CD set on March 28, 2025**.

Presenting Symphony No. 10 and the Passacaglia from *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*, the first album in the DG/BSO/Nelsons Shostakovich project was

released in July 2015. It was hailed by *Gramophone* as “powerful and beautifully crafted” and went on to win a GRAMMY® for Best Orchestral Performance, as did the next two albums in the series, with volume 3 also winning the award for Best Engineered Album, Classical. The last of the six releases, featuring Symphonies Nos. 2, 3, 12, and 13, came out in October 2023 and, like its predecessors, garnered widespread critical acclaim. “The cycle has been a monumental achievement, and this final installment is as shattering and insightful as earlier ones,” concluded *The Sunday Times*.

Before that last symphony recording was made, plans were already in place to expand the project with readings of the composer’s six concertos. Yuja Wang here gives characteristically dynamic and expressive performances of his two contrasting piano concertos, written 24 years apart, with the BSO’s principal trumpet Thomas Rolfs playing the obbligato trumpet part in the First.

Shostakovich wrote his two violin concertos for his friend David Oistrakh, withholding the darker First Concerto from public performance until after Stalin’s death. Baiba Skride makes both works her own, from the pyrotechnics of the First to the more lyrical writing of the Second.

Yo-Yo Ma gives similarly inspired performances of the two cello concertos. The inventive First was written for another friend, Mstislav Rostropovich, while the far more introspective Second was the composer’s 60th-birthday present to himself. Introducing the latter work to the Symphony Hall audience, Ma said, “This piece is as relevant today as it was then. I think Shostakovich’s artistic truth was to represent the voice of the voiceless.”

The final addition to this hugely successful survey of Shostakovich’s major works is a rare treat for opera fans – a concert version of *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* captured at Symphony Hall in January 2024. Premiered 90 years earlier, the opera was an instant hit both in Russia and around the world. In early 1936, however, Stalin attended a performance in Moscow—two days later the work was denounced on all levels by the state-run newspaper *Pravda*. Shostakovich never wrote another opera and *Lady Macbeth* disappeared from the repertoire for 40 years. A cast led by soprano Kristine Opolais, tenors Peter Hoare and Brenden Gunnell, and bass Günther Groissböck, together with the Tanglewood Festival Chorus, joined the BSO and Nelsons for the “incandescent performance” (*Bachtrack*) presented here. For *The Boston Globe*, the opera “roared with visceral fury ..., bringing a grand conclusion to the long-running Shostakovich project ... The orchestra came prepared, and so they delivered. *Lady Macbeth* demanded a colossal ensemble and even more vast dynamic range, and Nelsons drew out the best.” This is the first commercial audio CD recording of *Lady Macbeth* in nearly 20 years.

Summing up his thoughts on exploring the world of Shostakovich with the BSO, Andris Nelsons states, “The music of Shostakovich has been a constant companion on my journey with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. We are incredibly proud to bring together all the symphonies, concertos, and the opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* into one, all-encompassing celebration of Dmitri Shostakovich’s genius. His music is a cross-section of what it means to be human and sharing this exploration of his works over the past ten years with an orchestra

as extraordinary and versatile as the Boston Symphony Orchestra has been a great privilege and a real joy. We have also been lucky to share the stage with some of the world's most talented soloists, including Yuja Wang, Yo-Yo Ma, Baiba Skride, and the wonderful cast of our recording of *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. We are thrilled to present this box set as a tribute to Shostakovich's great legacy and to the remarkable artistry and dedication of everyone who brought this project to life."

**[Listen to a sample track](#) from *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk***

**[Pre-order the box set now \(available March 28\)](#)**

**[Click here](#) for an online press kit with the booklet and images**

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## About the BSO

Led by Music Director Andris Nelsons since 2014, the Boston Symphony Orchestra gave its inaugural concert in 1881 and opened Symphony Hall—widely acclaimed as one of the greatest concert halls in the world—in 1900. Today, the BSO reaches millions of listeners through not only its concert performances in Boston and at Tanglewood—the orchestra’s summer home in Lenox and Stockbridge, Mass.—but also via educational and community programs, radio, television, recordings, and tours. Celebrated for its diverse programs, passionate performances, and tradition of innovation, the BSO is one of the world’s most accomplished and versatile ensembles, attracting world-renowned guest artists and players, composers, and conductors. More information about the BSO and Andris Nelsons may be found at [bso.org](https://www.bso.org).

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## Press Contacts

Jan Devereux, Senior Director of Public Relations & Communications  
([jdevereux@bso.org](mailto:jdevereux@bso.org))

Matthew Erikson, Senior Publicist and Media Relations Lead  
([merikson@bso.org](mailto:merikson@bso.org))

Rena Cohen, Publicist ([rcohen@bso.org](mailto:rcohen@bso.org))

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