



Press Release

Music for Peace project features Baltic Sea Philharmonic's virtual orchestra recording of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 7, the 'Leningrad'

- **New digital production features 108 musicians performing excerpt from symphony's first movement at home, conducted by Kristjan Järvi**
- **Music for Peace to premiere online on Friday 8 May, marking the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe**
- **Baltic Sea Philharmonic developing further innovative digital projects while concert halls remain closed due to COVID-19**

Berlin 7 May 2020. The **Baltic Sea Philharmonic** and **Kristjan Järvi** have collaborated with the **Open Sea Foundation** from Russia on an ambitious international project to mark the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe. The new project, titled **Music for Peace**, will premiere online on 8 May and features a virtual orchestra recording by the Baltic Sea Philharmonic of music from Shostakovich's Symphony No. 7, the 'Leningrad'. The orchestra had been due to perform the symphony at the Berlin Konzerthaus on 9 May, in one of five simultaneous live Music for Peace events across Europe. But with the concerts cancelled because of COVID-19, 108 musicians from the Baltic Sea Philharmonic each made their own recording at home of a 20-minute excerpt from the symphony's first movement. All the recordings were then brought together using the latest audio and video technology to create a virtual orchestra performance with Kristjan Järvi conducting. Music for Peace premieres online on **Friday 8 May at 2pm Berlin time / 3pm Moscow time** at the [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) social media channels of the Baltic Sea Philharmonic.

Shostakovich completed his epic Seventh Symphony in December 1941, having been evacuated from his beloved home city of **Leningrad**, which was under siege by Nazi forces. A microfilm of the score was smuggled out of Russia and the symphony quickly became popular in the Soviet Union and the West as a symbol of freedom and defiance in the face of oppression and occupation. The symphony was heroically performed in Leningrad amid the direst of conditions on 9 August 1942. The Baltic Sea Philharmonic's new recording of Shostakovich's music brings together musicians from 18 countries, both in the Nordic region and elsewhere across the world,



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and carries with it a message of peace, strength and solidarity at a time when so many millions of people are under lockdown.

Music for Peace is the first of several unique digital initiatives from the Baltic Sea Philharmonic, which, having postponed its June 2020 'Midnight Sun' tour of Poland, Germany and Russia until March 2021 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, is taking its musical mission of international collaboration online. The orchestra and Kristjan Järvi, in collaboration with **Sunbeam Productions**, are working on another innovative project called **Musical Chain**, to be launched in the early summer on the orchestra's social media channels. This dedicated online campaign is inspired by historic human chains, such as the Baltic Way, which was a peaceful political demonstration on 23 August 1989 when around two million people joined hands to form a human chain stretching more than 600km across the three Baltic states of Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia. Drawing on the same sense of collective purpose, solidarity and connectivity, Musical Chain will feature musicians from the Baltic Sea Philharmonic joining with creative collaborators for a series of musical-chain videos, in which, for example, a piece of music is transformed by one performer after another, or new pieces are composed by different musicians on the same theme.

Baltic Sea Philharmonic – a revolution in music and culture

The Baltic Sea Philharmonic takes the orchestral concert experience to a new dimension. Every performance is a voyage of musical discovery, as the musicians perform the entire programme from memory, creating a one-of-a-kind artistic journey. Each concert is a unique spectacle of sound, light, visual art and technology, and under the electrifying baton of Music Director and Founding Conductor Kristjan Järvi every performance has a special energy that's absolutely infectious. But even more than this, as a community of musicians from ten Nordic countries, the Baltic Sea Philharmonic transcends boundaries and has become a movement for bringing people together. Embodying all that is innovative and progressive about the Nordic region, this visionary ensemble is taking the traditional orchestral model further than ever before. 'It is a living breathing creature, with boundless energy and enthusiasm for the new – an adventure in itself,' says Kristjan Järvi.

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About the Baltic Sea Philharmonic

The Baltic Sea Philharmonic is a unique Nordic orchestra that brings together musicians from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia and Sweden. The orchestra started life in 2008 as the Baltic Sea Youth Philharmonic, a joint initiative of the Usedom Music Festival and Nord Stream AG. It quickly established an international reputation, not just for its acclaimed performances under the baton of Kristjan Järvi, but also with its powerful message of unity and cooperation in a region that has historically been divided. In 2015 the orchestra's achievements were honoured with the prestigious European Culture Prize by the European Culture Foundation 'Pro Europe'. Newly renamed the Baltic Sea Philharmonic, in 2016 the orchestra collaborated with Gidon Kremer and the Kremerata Baltica, and since then has toured innovative programmes that throw classical music conventions out of the window and enable audiences and the musicians alike to experience new musical dimensions. After becoming the first orchestra in the world to perform Stravinsky's *The Firebird* from memory, the Baltic Sea Philharmonic is now widely known for its commitment to playing entire programmes by heart. The orchestra and Kristjan Järvi started 2020 with an exciting collaboration, performing with British indie band Bastille at Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie. Further performances this year will take the ensemble to Germany and Italy. The Baltic Sea Philharmonic's second recording for Sony Classical will be released in May, featuring violinist David Nebel and Kristjan Järvi together with the London Symphony Orchestra. www.baltic-sea-philharmonic.eu