

Dmitri Shostakovich – Symphony No.7 (Toscanini) [1942]

Wpisany przez bluesever

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1. Allegretto 2. Moderato (poco allegretto) 3. Adagio 4. Allegro non troppo Dmitry Shostakovich Opus 60, Symphony No. 7, "Leningrad" Arturo Toscanini, conductor NBC Symphony Orchestra, augmented with 15 additional musicians July 19, 1942 Studio 8-H NBC Radio City Studios New York City, NY

Arturo Toscanini's 1942 western premiere live recording of Shostakovich's monumental Seventh Symphony has been around for years on RCA, so the performance itself is not new, though this Opus Kura release does have stronger, more vivid sound than any previous version. However, better sound cannot save this performance, which is rude, crude, loud, and insensitive. From the beginning, the NBC Symphony's strings' tone sounds raw and scrappy, and the playing in the Adagio is amazingly rough. The woodwinds throughout sound like they barely know the parts, and in the Moderato the clarinets are painfully out of tune. The brass and tympani are overblown, overbearing, and, in the finale's coda, almost excruciatingly painful. All this might have been redeemed by a conductor who felt respect, much less affection, for the music, but Toscanini sounds like he actively dislikes the Seventh, rushing climaxes, forcing crescendos, clipping phrases, and eschewing all subtlety. Listeners who want to hear a great antique performance of Shostakovich's Seventh should try Stokowski's hellbent-for-glory recording with the NBC Symphony. But only Toscanini's most ardent fans need bother with this one. ---James Leonard, Rovi

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