**War Symphonies – Shostakovich vs Stalin (2008) BBC (0-27 mins)**

Dmitri Shostakovitch – composer, survivor, voice of his country

1937 - Lady Macbeth of Mtensk – the height of the Gt Terror

* Sh v succ in a country becoming 1 big concentration camp
* St left early after becoming clearly irritated
* Main figure, an ogre, poisoned by wife – a point of celebration
* Pravda led the way with reviews attacking the opera – Sh under attack
* Formalistic soulless music, against the people – generic terms of Gt Terror
* Terrorised people turned vs previous idol
* Sh denounced by colleagues in Composers Union

1936 – 4th symphony – the coming horror of the Purges

* Nightmare of repression depicting savagery of life under Stalin
* Sh withdrew it from performance as too vivid, too harsh
* Life is better acc to St BUT Sh continued with his tragic themes
* 100 000s of gulag prisoners ; suffering of 5YPs
* Sh toast ‘Let’s drink to life not getting any better’

1917 – Early works - Child of the Revolution

* Product of revolution and years that followed it
* Rebirth of Soviet Russia ; NEP ; 5YPs….
* Propaganda supporting Rev in earlier works, sugar coated fantasy
* Counterplan (1932 )– scored by Sh – glory of 5YPs, glorious & upbeat music

1937 - 5th Symphony – Sh vs Terror

* Time of terror and difficulty – people disappearing day after day
* Premiere received half hour standing ovation
* Music of joy, happiness – music wanted to hear
* Sh family close circle swept away – sister Maria’s husband arrested and died in prison ; Sh mother in law arr and exiled…..
* He needed to produce opus – music was magnificent
* Official reception was Sh had seen the light
* Now officially ‘a Soviet Mans response to justified criticism’
* BUT is this enough to save him ?
* Arrests, imprisonments, denouncements, exiles, show trials, executions
* Incessant propaganda – film, radio, music
* Sh received summons from NKVD- this is the end – he is undone
* Asked to return following Monday after saying goodbye to wife and children
* Investigator Zakorsky had been arrested the day before, saving Sh