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San Diego Symphony set to make global impact with new Delos album and Apple Music exclusive

The album, which was recorded at two 2025 concerts at Jacobs Music Center, is being released just in time for Grammy Awards nomination consideration



The San Diego Symphony is shown performing Shostakovich's 7th Symphony on May 16, 2025, at Jacobs Music Center. The performance is featured on the symphony's new album for the Belgium-based record label Delos. (Courtesy San Diego Symphony)

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The San Diego Symphony is poised to make an international impact with its upcoming new album, "Shostakovich Symphony No. 7," which was recorded at two spring 2025 concerts at Jacobs Music Center and whose release is being announced today.

The epic work by the storied Russian composer is also known as the Leningrad Symphony. It was inspired by the deadly siege of Leningrad by the Nazis during World War II.

This will be the first album by the San Diego Symphony on Delos, the prestigious classical-music record label that is headquartered in Brussels, Belgium. It will also be the symphony's first album to be exclusively streamed around the world by Apple Music Classical, starting today at 9 p.m. Pacific Time.

The symphony is now the only West Coast-based U.S. orchestra that is signed to Delos, which will release "Shostakovich Symphony No. 7" on Sept. 11 as a 75-minute-plus CD. It will include a full-color, 11-page booklet with recording information, the orchestra's full lineup and an essay by British composer Gerard McBurney that provides historical context about the composition.

"It's fantastic because people around the world will now get to hear the San Diego Symphony," said Rafael Payare, who has been the orchestra's music director and artistic director since 2019.

“That is the whole point of signing with Delos and partnering with Apple Music Classical,” Payare said by phone from Montreal, whose orchestra he also leads. “There are people who don’t know the San Diego Symphony is a world-class orchestra, so it’s wonderful that we can put ourselves out there for everyone to hear.”

Founded in California in 1973, Delos is now owned and operated by the Outhere Music Group, a Brussels-based company whose portfolio includes 10 classical-music record labels. Delos has released acclaimed albums by the London Symphony Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Moscow Chamber Orchestra and others, as well as noted solo artists who include Renée Fleming, Jean-Pierre Rampal and Clara Rockmore.

Payare’s first album with the San Diego Symphony, “Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 11: The Year 1905,” came out in 2022. It was released by Platoon, a boutique label based in London, but only as an online stream. Delos will release Payare and the San Diego Symphony’s “Shostakovich Symphony No. 7” on CD as well as online.

“It is an extremely significant release for us,” said Charles Adriaenssen, the founder and director of Outhere Music Group. “Like all our priority recordings, we will promote it throughout the world and distribute it in CD form across Europe, Japan, Korea, North America and everywhere else we are.”



The San Diego Symphony's debut album for the prestigious record label Delos will be released online today and on CD on Sept. 11. It was recorded at two concerts at Jacobs Music Center in May, 2025 (Courtesy San Diego Symphony)

Adriaenssen acknowledged he did not become familiar with the San Diego Symphony until after he saw Payare perform as a guest conductor at a February concert in Amsterdam. The highlight of the evening? Shostakovich's 10th Symphony.

"I was taken aback by Rafael's intensity, his risk-taking with the music and the fantastic rapport he had with the orchestra and the audience," said Adriaenssen, who met over lunch the next day with Payare and San Diego Symphony CEO Martha Gilmer.

"Then I heard the master recording of the two May 2025 Shostakovich concerts at Jacobs Music Center," Adriaenssen continued. "And I realized that not only is the orchestra in San Diego excellent, but so is its concert hall!"

Apple Music Classical will exclusively stream the new album until Aug. 28, when it will also become available on other streaming platforms worldwide. That date ensures the album will qualify for Grammy Award nomination consideration. The cutoff date for eligibility is Aug. 31.

Perhaps coincidentally, Apple Music Classical honcho Jonathan Gruber is from San Diego and is an avowed fan of the orchestra.

“This stunning recording of Shostakovich’s Seventh captures a defining moment for the San Diego Symphony and Maestro Rafael Payare,” Gruber said from London via email.

“We’re delighted to partner with them, and Delos, to share exclusively this thrilling performance with a global audience. Apple Music Classical invites listeners to experience the brilliant sound and exquisite detail of the Jacobs Music Center, in the highest audio quality, from the very best seats in the house.”

Payare will lead the San Diego Symphony Friday night at its season-opening concert at The Rady Shell at Jacobs Park. The performance will open with Shostakovich’s Festive Overture, Op. 96.

“It is no secret that I am an enormous Shostakovich fan,” said Payare, who was born in Venezuela and has earned international acclaim for his approach to the composer’s work.

“Along with Mahler, Strauss and Stravinsky, Shostakovich is a core composer who feels very close to the San Diego Symphony and whose music we play very well. And, somehow, our performances of his music always come at very special moments. The last concert we played in front of an audience at Jacobs Music Center before the pandemic shutdown was Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 11.

“So, we couldn’t be more happy and excited to now have our new album be of Shostakovich’s Seventh. To have it come out on Delos and Apple Music makes everything even better. It’s a perfect fit.”
