

DVD & BLU-RAY

Long-awaited *Peter Maniura* film of John Adams's *El Niño*; *Philippe Herreweghe* conducts a joyful JS Bach *Christmas Oratorio*; Jake Heggie's opera setting of *Moby-Dick*; plus a 3D version of Verdi's *Aida*

 MUSIC DVD CHOICE

Notes of hope and consolation

Erik Levi recommends a sensitive film about the Theresienstadt ghetto



IN MEMORY OF TEREZÍN:
Daniel Hope performs
with Bengt Forsberg



REFUGE IN MUSIC

Terezín | Theresienstadt
(documentary & concert)

Anne Sofie von Otter (mezzo-soprano), Daniel Hope (violin), Christian Gerhaher (baritone), Bebe Risenfors (double bass, guitar, accordion, percussion), Bengt Forsberg (piano), Alice Herz-Sommer, Coco Schumann (participants); Gert Heidenreich (narrator)

DG DVD: 073 5077 58 mins + 106 mins

BBC Music Direct £18.99

'From the very first note, music penetrates the soul and we no longer belong to this world'. These words from the 110-year-old pianist Alice Herz-Sommer preface this sensitively

made documentary about musical life in Terezín, a garrison town in the Czech Republic which was turned into a transit concentration camp by the Nazis. Herz-Sommer describes most movingly how intense music-making, including her own series of recitals, managed to thrive in this

Music brought hope where there was little prospect of survival

environment, bringing succour, consolation and even hope to those who realised that there was precious little prospect of their survival. A similarly positive demeanour is provided by jazz guitarist Coco Schumann who joined The Ghetto Swingers in Terezín and recalls his valiant attempts to raise spirits in the most unimaginably distressing of circumstances.

Coupled with the documentary is a filmed concert of music from Terezín, recorded at the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts which features Anne Sofie von Otter and Daniel Hope. Some of the repertoire will already be familiar to those who have heard Deutsche Grammophon's CD release with the same artists, but the addition of two movements from Erwin Schulhoff's Second Violin Sonata and two of his heart-warming *Stimmungsbilder* for soprano, violin and piano, plus a movement from Pavel Haas's remarkably original *Suite for Piano*, is most welcome. As on the CD, the performances are unfailingly intense and committed, but an added dimension here is the personal contribution from all the artists who provide poignant verbal introductions to the music they perform.

PERFORMANCE

★★★★★

PICTURE & SOUND

★★★★