



Broadcasts of Kulturradio / rbb
04.08. - 09.08.2014 18:05

**In his six series of broadcasts
Kai Luehrs -Kaiser
portrays detailed
the Hungarian conductor.**

Who was Ferenc Fricsay? From 1946 a steep success bestowed him in Salzburg, Berlin and Munich. Composers as Dvorák, Bartók and Kodály, hardly anyone ever conducted better than he did. With his aim of audio emphasis and transparency he has influenced probably the aesthetics of all radio symphony orchestras of Germany. What is the merit of Fricsay in our days?

Commemorating the 100th birthday of Ferenc Fricsay

Broadcast no. 4 (August 7th 2014):

„International I am by my own“

Fricsay as universalist in his best recordings

Musikbeispiel: DG LC 0173 00289 479 3120 Serge Prokofieff
Symphonie Nr. 1 D-Dur op. 25 "Classical" / IV. Finale Molto vivace
RIAS-Symphonie-Orchester / Ltg. Ferenc Fricsay 1954

The 4th movement: Finale: an interpretation of this first opus is not only sparkling in reference to Haydn but, but making all gun power audible, that had been used out meanwhile.

Not too bright and not too light, but burning at both ends, – explosive, particularities of the conductor Ferenc Fricsay, leading the RIAS Symphony Orchestra in 1954.

In our broadcast in memory of the 100th birthday we celebrate today the festival of his top-recordings

But who will arbitrate about the best recordings of the extensive range, which have been taken during the tragically short career of Fricsay? - Well, formerly I make some suggestions. You may decide yourself.

*Fricsay was regarded as a specialist of Bartók, Kodály, but also Tchaikovsky, Dvorak, Verdi and Mozart. - Concerning Mahler, his lifetime was too short. What a pity, to be realized by listening at the five songs of Rückert.
A high light by all means!*

Musikbeispiel: DG LC 0173 474 383-2 Gustav Mahler
Fünf Lieder nach Gedichten von Friedrich Rückert / IV. Liebst du um Schönheit
Maureen Forrester, Mezzo-Sopran
RIAS-Symphonie-Orchester Berlin / Ltg. Ferenc Fricsay 1958

If Fricsay at his time would have started to perform Mahler in great dimension: The beginning of "Mahler Revival" would have already begun in the 50th. – by his unsentimental, modern and compelling conducting.

By reason the world is particularly proud about Fricsay's Mozart Concertos played by Clara Haskil. But: at that very time Haskil was perhaps as Mozart pianist unique, but by no means not the only one. - In addition have to be mentioned Myra Hess, Lili Kraus and Marcelle Meyer. - Monika Haas, the French pianist, was particularly and immensely successful in the fifties and sixties in Berlin with Mozart.

If I am right no Mozart recording was registered by Fricsay and Haas, but the delicious Capriccio of Igor Stravinsky in the 1950s. As the recordings of Clara Haskil a highlight!

Musikbeispiel: DG LC 00173 00289 477 6201 Igor Strawinsky
Capriccio für Klavier und Orchester / III. Allegro capriccioso ma tempo giusto
Monique Haas, Klavier
RIAS-Symphonie-Orchester / Ltg. Ferenc Fricsay 1950

Witty, flashing, being distracted by laughter, this is the effect of "Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra" by Igor Stravinsky, a composition being played rather rarely.

Fricsay brought to bloom the "Capriccio" – on concert tours with the RIAS-Symphony-Orchestra 1950th. But soloist was Monique Haas (at that time also regular recording partner of the Berlin Philharmonics)..

Therefore, after valued these highlights, we take a look at an important spot of his repertoire, Rossin's "Stabat mater": this music would have received more notice by the public, if Fricsay not already had to abandon 1961 the podium due his health problems (and died about one year later).

Brilliant, but not surprising, Fricsay worked at the sparkling scores of Gioachino Rossini. Precisely by that reason he did not pamper Rossini, the Italian-pithy Mozart-ian In Rossini's "Stabat Mater" is the possibility to throw a bridge over to Verdi.

*In addition to the RIAS Chamber Choir, the Choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral and the RIAS - Symphony Orchestra live in 1954, we meet (for the first time in this broadcast)an absolute favorite singer of Fricsay: the Swiss soprano Maria Stader. The recording was made in the Concert Hall of the former University of the Arts.
"Inflammatum et accensum": A great moment, a highlight.*

Musikbeispiel: Audite LC 04480 95.587 Gioacchino Rossini "Stabat mater"
Aria e Coro – "Inflammatum et accensum" / Maria Stader, Sopran
RIAS-Kammerchor, Chor der St. Hedwigs-Kathedrale
RIAS-Symphonie-Orchester Berlin / Ltg. Ferenc Fricsay Live, Berlin 1954

In these audio-sequences we are assembling the best Fricsay recordings. Not all of them can be transmitted during these broadcasts. By that reason I have to mention at least Mozart and also the legendary "Sorcerer's Apprentice" by Paul Dukas, just as well "Sheherazade," the musical composition by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Smetana's "Moldau" and Dvorak's "New World" - all of them are catalog classics of Fricsay.

It is harder for me, by just simply mentioning Fricsay's recordings of Béla Bartók and just to put off with a simple comment. - Fricsay belonged to the students of Bartók, who taught in the 20s at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music / Budapest.

If there would exist only one outstanding record of Fricsay, so it would be probably the three Bartók Piano Concertos, recorded with Géza Anda in Berlin 1959 and 1960. – It is to recognize the accumulation of soloists concerts be described and played during the program that Fricsay, was one of the few excellent conductor of soloists – in the history of recording.

Obviously he had no fear, the show been stolen. – for him his performance was sufficient.

*Musikbeispiel: DG LC 00173 447 399-2 Bela Bartók
Klavierkonzert Nr. 3 / III. Allegro vivace / Géza Anda, Klavier
Radio-Symphonie-Orchester Berlin / Ltg. Ferenc Fricsay 1959*

We arranged a small anthology of the best recordings that Fricsay, nearly entirely registered with the RIAS Orchestra.

An absolute incunabula – of operetta discography which I have presented already.

Just gorgeous, but not only because by the swing and the aplomb of Fricsay with his orchestra (at the Titania-Palast 1951). – A rare example where Fricsay took the risk to move on the slippery floor of the waltzes by Johann Strauss.

This refers to the "treating for ears" evening of Fricsay together with the tenor Peter Anders and soprano Martha Musial.

Here two songs:

First, the highlight of the collection: "Gypsy Baron", song of appearance by Sandor Barinkay

Attention, buckle on! The second: "As dashing spirit / but early orphaned, over half the world I travelled"

*Musikbeispiel: Audite LC 04480 23.419 Johann Strauß II
Entrée-Couplet „Als flotter Geist“ aus "Der Zigeunerbaron" / 1. Akt
Peter Anders, Tenor (Sandor)
RIAS-Symphonie-Orchester Berlin / Ltg. Ferenc Fricsay 1951*

and

*Musikbeispiel: Audite LC 04480 23.419 Johann Strauß II
„Wer uns getraut“ aus "Der Zigeunerbaron" / 2. Akt
Peter Anders, Tenor (Sandor) / Martha Musial, Sopran (Saffi)
RIAS-Symphonie-Orchester Berlin / Ltg. Ferenc Fricsay 1951*

Two titles, basically fully grown for a program of desire, conducted by Fricsay (live in Berlin, Titania Palace 1951):

We have already realized that Fricsay worked on the local front, but the circles of repertoire he drew, were widely internationally and completely reflecting the multi-ethnic mixture of which he was originated from.

Internationally, he was himself.

This signifies that Fricsay not even had to leave the cultural space of its old Austrian home to meet the wide variety of languages and elements.

To compile the best recordings of him means to ladle from a frantically abundance of material. The more immeasurable, considering that his "recording" career lasted just only ten years.

In the back of the untiring discharge of records and radio recordings was of course one reason the big bang of a record industry. This paid very early attention to Fricsay. –

Elsa Schiller as producer was mainly the driving power of his recording career from the beginning and of the utmost importance - hardly less important for the German Gramophone as the legendary Walter Legge was for EMI. –

That Elsa Schiller obviously stood up for a lot of contemporary repertoire, may also be justification of the importance of the concerned composers.

At that time really brand new: Paul Hindemith.

*Musikbeispiel: DG LC 00173 00289 479 3121 Paul Hindemith
Symphonische Tänze / I. Langsam
RIAS-Symphonie-Orchester / Ltg. Ferenc Fricsay 1950*

The "First" of Symphonic Dances (slow...) by Paul Hindemith, was certainly one of the very important Fricsay recordings - because we do have to consider how much this person in the direction of the modern repertoire has just influenced his successors in Berlin.

*As bouncer, typical classic - and hard to surpass:
"Perpetuum mobile" by Johann Strauss - Fricsay 1949 with the Berlin Philharmonic.*

*Musikbeispiel: DG LC 00173 474 383-2
Johann Strauß II / Perpetuum mobile (Musikalischer Scherz) op. 257
Berliner Philharmoniker / Ltg. Ferenc Fricsay 1949*