



J. Haydn: Symphony No. 44 & No. 98

aud 95.584

EAN: 4022143955845



4 0 2 2 1 4 3 9 5 5 8 4 5

Classical Weta 90,9 FM - Classical for Washington (Jens F. Laurson - 2009.05.29)

Perhaps the coupling of Haydn's 44th, 95th, and 98th symphonies strikes you as slightly random – a little Sturm & Drang (no. 44, the Trauersymphonie – “Mourning-Symphony”), a little London (nos. 95, 98). Perhaps a 1954 mono recording doesn't obviously kindle your interest or tickle your fancy? And maybe you have not thought much of the short-lived (1914-1963) Ferenc Fricsay – apart perhaps from enjoying a wonderful Beethoven or Dvorak 9th or his Don Giovanni? Well, this budget disc from Deutsche Grammophon's Europe-centric "Musik..... Sprache der Welt" collection will make you reconsider on all counts. It's an absolute gem and (especially for those who don't already have a Haydn #44 in their collection) there is no reason not to indulge in this recording. The sound quality belies its age (better still than the remastered 58/60 Beecham EMI recordings), the playing of the RIAS Symphony Orchestra Berlin under Fricsay is positively infectious.

"Mourning" may be the featured symphony's title, but it is actually an unadulterated joy to listen to; the kind of Angst- and tension-free music that allows you to smile, apprehending only skilled, honest beauty and goodness. It's music with little wings. A delightful 70 minutes of it.

There is a similar disc among the Fricsay unearthing of Audite with Symphonies 44 and 98. Often their remasterings of old radio tapes bests similar DG studio recordings (as is the case with Kubelik's Mahler cycle), but sadly that's not the case here with considerably limited monaural sound and the Cologne RSO not on the same level as the Berliners. Hopefully, as Audite's tour of German radio vaults continues, they may unearth more Fricsay Haydn. Meanwhile, the DG disc – released a few years ago – remains a clear, happy first choice.