

UNDER THE STARRY SKY OF THE RHINE

Unter dem Sternenhimmel des Rheins



by José Elizondo

Unter dem Sternenhimmel des Rheins

Under the Starry Sky of the Rhein

dedicated to Benedict Klöckner

Music composed by José L. Elizondo
with quotes by J. S. Bach's Gigue from his Cello Suite #6

PROGRAM NOTES

Unter dem Sternenhimmel des Rheins (Under the starry sky of the Rhine) was commissioned by German cellist Benedict Klöckner as a companion piece for Bach's Cello Suites. The composer was particularly inspired by Mr. Klöckner's performance of the Gigue in Bach's Cello Suite #6, and even incorporates some quotes from that piece in his composition. In his attempt to include other elements that referenced Mr. Klöckner's homeland in Rhineland-Palatinate, he was captivated by the evocative landscapes and medieval castles of the region. The composer imagined a medieval knight riding a horse through these epic landscapes under the starry sky of the river Rhine. At several points of his journey, the knight is so moved by the beauty of nature, that he halts his ride to engage in contemplation and reflection. The setting for this composition's premiere perfectly suited this imagery: it was performed masterfully by Benedict Klöckner at an outdoor concert, in the evening, literally under the starry sky of the Rhein, at the magnificent castle Schloss Burg Namedy on the banks of the Rhein.

Unter dem Sternenhimmel des Rheins is also the first movement of Jose Elizondo's composition *Die Legende des edlen Ritters (The Legend of the Noble Knight)*, a four-movement suite that further develops the themes presented and first explored in *Unter dem Sternenhimmel des Rheins*.

Unter dem Sternenhimmel des Rheins

Dedicated to Benedict Klöckner

Inspired by his performances of the Gigue from J. S. Bach's Cello Suite #6

composed by José L. Elizondo

with quotes from J. S. Bach's Cello Suite #6

NOTATION: Notes with the symbol * above them can be held a tiny bit longer to accommodate the melody's prosody.

PERFORMANCE NOTE: Several sections of this piece need to be performed in a passionate manner akin to a cadenza, taking some tempo liberties to allow the musical passages to sing with bravery or in whichever manner is indicated by the corresponding descriptive expressions. That is particularly the case for the opening section, as well as sections E, F and G, as well as the ending of sections H and I.

Reverent, stately, passionate (♩. = c. 44-50) (somewhat free, cadenza-like tempo)

Cello

mf confident, daring but elegant and noble

4

7 *f* *mf* suspenseful, gaining impetus confident, daring but elegant and noble

10 (G) *ff*

13 *mf* suspenseful, gaining impetus

Tempo a piacere (molto rubato*)

*Suggested rubato (measures 13 & 14): For each of these measures, start very slowly, then accelerate, but do a tenuto on the last couple of notes of the bar. Make sure the tenuto in measure 14 still has enough energy to lead into the next section with excitement.

A With more energy (like a gentle horse trot) (♩. = c. 56)*Differentiate the two voices:**upper voice (main melody) vs. lower double stops (reminiscent of a horse trot)*
mf *rhythmic, solemn, elegant*
B More relaxed, serene, romantic (♩. = c. 50)
f *lovingly, luminous, noble*
A Reverent, graceful*Differentiate the two voices in the cello: lower voice (main melody) vs. upper voice (double stops).**The upper voice should be flautando, legato, delicate and gentle (reminiscent of a graceful curtsy)*
tenderly, a bit melancholic

C With more energy (like a gentle horse trot) (♩. = c. 56)

Differentiate the two voices:

upper voice (main melody) vs. lower double stops (reminiscent of a horse trot)

mf rhythmic, solemn, elegant

42

D More luminous, joyful,
a bit more relaxed (♩. = c. 52)

Keep the lower fanfarre rhythmic,

but make the upper melody as expressive as possible

45

f luminous, joyful

A piacere

49

confident, daring but elegant and noble

a tempo

51

luminous, joyful

53

3

B Reverent, graceful (♩. = c. 46)

55 *very light tremolo* *very light tremolo*
f *confident, daring but elegant and noble* *f* *subito mp* *subito mp*

57 *f* *almost heroic*

E Più rilassato (♩. = c. 54)

Alternating between freer tempo (*a piacere*) and more standard tempo (*tempo giusto*) for the parts in the style of a Baroque Gigue

A piacere **Tempo giusto**
mp *passionate* *mf* *graceful, like a Baroque dance*

62 *mp* *passionate* *mf* *graceful, like a Baroque dance*

66 *mp* *passionate* *mf* *graceful, like a Baroque dance* ^(D)

69 *mp* *passionate* *mf* *graceful, like a Baroque dance*

F Serene, bright, romantic (♩. = 50)

f luminous, stately, noble

Ad lib (♩. = c. 40)

(start slowly, with rubato, gradually accelerating)

76

accel.

un po' tenuto

79

gradually increasing in intensity

***Suggested rubato (measures 79-80):** For each of these measures, start very slowly, then accelerate, but do a tenuto on the last couple of notes of the bar. Each measure should have more intensity than the previous one. Make sure the tenuto in measure 80 still has enough energy to lead into the next section with excitement.

G With more motion and energy (*like a horse trot*) (♩. = c. 56)

Differentiate the two voices:

upper voice (main melody) vs. lower double stops (reminiscent of a horse trot)

f rhythmic, confident, gallant, noble
crescendo

*molto rubato**

84

(*cresc.*)

86

(*cresc.*)

fp *sffz*
very dramatic

***Suggested rubato (measures 85-86):** Start measure 85 slowly, then accelerate gradually during the 2 measures. Do a tenuto on the last couple of notes of 86 to propel you dramatically and confidently into 87.