

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*)

Viola

mf confident, daring but elegant and noble

4

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

10 *f*

Tempo a piacere (*molto rubato**)

13 *mf* suspenseful, gaining impetus

*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

19

B More relaxed, serene, romantic (♩. = c. 50)

f lovingly, luminous, noble

27

C Reverent, graceful

*Differentiate the two voices: lower voice (main melody) vs. upper voice (double stops).
The upper voice should be flautando, legato, delicate and gentle (reminiscent of a graceful curtsy)*

sweet, light and graceful

35

D 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

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

*Keep the lower fanfarre rhythmic,
but make the upper melody as expressive as possible*

f luminous, joyful

A piacere

confident, daring but elegant and noble

a tempo

luminous, joyful

F Reverent, graceful (♩. = c. 46) (freely, almost like a cadenza)

very light tremolo very light tremolo

confident, daring but elegant and noble confident, daring but elegant and noble

57

almost heroic

Detailed description: This section consists of two staves of music. The first staff contains measures 54, 55, and 56. It features a melodic line with a long slur over measures 54 and 55, and a final note in measure 56. The notes are mostly eighth and sixteenth notes. The second staff contains measures 57, 58, 59, and 60. Measures 57-59 have a slur over them, with a '3' under each measure indicating a triplet. Measure 60 has a slur over the first two notes, with a '*' above it, and a '3' under the last note. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#).

G 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

A piacere **Tempo giusto**

mp passionate *mf* graceful, like a Baroque dance

66

A piacere **Tempo giusto** (D)

mp passionate *mf* graceful, like a Baroque dance

69

A piacere **Tempo giusto**

mp passionate *mf* graceful, like a Baroque dance

Detailed description: This section is divided into four systems, each with two staves. The first staff of each system contains measures in 'A piacere' tempo, and the second staff contains measures in 'Tempo giusto'. The first system (measures 61-64) has a slur over measures 61-63 in the first staff and a '3' under measure 64 in the second. The second system (measures 65-68) has a slur over measures 65-67 in the first staff and a '3' under measure 68 in the second. The third system (measures 69-72) has a slur over measures 69-71 in the first staff and a '3' under measure 72 in the second. The fourth system (measures 73-76) has a slur over measures 73-75 in the first staff and a '3' under measure 76 in the second. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#).

H Serene, bright, romantic (♩. = 50)

f luminous, stately, noble

Ad lib (♩. = c. 40)

(start slowly, with rubato, gradually accelerating)

accel.

gradually increasing in intensity

un po' tenuto

*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.

I 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**

(*cresc.*)

(*cresc.*)

fp *sfz*
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.