

BENEDICT KLÖCKNER PLAYS „ÜBER DIE LINIE“ BY WOLFGANG RIHM

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„Über die Linie“ recorded by Benedict Klöckner is the first interpretation of Wolfgang Rihm’s ambitious cello piece. It was recorded on September 25th 2019 at a Bunker under the UFO studios in Berlin.

The composition deals with the crossing of a line, *Linie*, the mapping of the limits of what is possible on the instrument. Crossing over that line is musically embodied by the extreme dynamics and accentuation, the infinity of the line is highlighted by beginning and ending in a void, as if had always been there.

It is specifically the complexity of the piece that attracted Benedict Klöckner to it. “‘Über die Linie’ is one of the most demanding cello pieces that I know. When I asked the extraordinary cellist Heinrich Schiff for advice on the piece, he told me that he considered the work unplayable. That pushed me even more to dedicate my time to ‘Über die Linie’”, Klöckner explains.

The sound is pure, raw and unaltered. Keeping the natural reverb of the cello in the space, post-production was kept to a minimum. Hardly anyone will get this close to a cellist during a performance than with this recording. You can hear Benedict Klöckner breathe as well as the bow touching the strings. This production is a very personal journey through Rihm’s opus. Klöckner describes it like this: “I love what a tour de force the piece is. The emotions, the adrenalin of pushing your own limits, starting and ending in a void feels like a paraphrase of human existence.”

Klöckner’s interpretation of Rihm’s music lives by its great dynamic range. Effortlessly and with great commitment, Klöckner moves between powerful, loud parts and quiet, whispering sections. The cellist does not just seem to play his instrument but also the performance space itself. He reacts to the reverb, which informs his playing, in real-time. The sound of the room responds to each different touch of the bow on the strings.

The recording has a hyper realistic sound quality, which not only includes overtones and reverb but also presents the sound behind the sound. The quality of the sound is described by the composer Alexander Hawkins as “curiously claustrophobic”. The heavy confinement of the former Nazi bunker surrounds this recording.

The setting had been carefully chosen by the producers Christian Lillinger and Johannes Brecht for its unique acoustics. However, reclaiming the structure with what would have been described by the Nazis as “entartete Kunst”, degenerate art, played a big role too. Benedict Klöckner sees the setting as an important aspect of the recording: “This unusual recording room with its special acoustics created a magically sinister atmosphere. The setting fitted the mood of the piece perfectly, not least because it was a dark, extremely damp cellar of an industrial ruin far away from busy Berlin; a buzzing fly the only sound of life.”

The recording is presented as one track apart from the vinyl version due to obvious physical constraints. This is deliberate and was chosen to counter the fast-moving pop world with a production that deliberately pushes for a confrontation with the listener during the full-length of this piece. This helps to protect the integrity of the work.

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Benedict Klöckner – Cello

About Benedict Klöckner:

Benedict Kloeckner is a highly regarded representative of the new generation of cellists, a great voice for his instrument, which he performs worldwide.

He is a winner of the European radio competition, the Verbier festival Academy Nicolas

Firmenich award and the Emanuel Feuermann competition Berlin.

He is performing with renowned orchestras such as the Royal Philharmonic, German Radio Philharmonic Orchestras, the Mozarteum Orchestra Salzburg, the NDR and Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestras, the Kremerata Baltica and the Munich chamber orchestra, working with conductors such as Christoph Eschenbach, Howard Griffiths, Ingo Metzmacher, Michael Sanderling and Heinrich Schiff.

Championed by such maestros as Daniel Barenboim and Sir Simon Rattle, he performs at venues including the Berlin Philharmonic Hall, Carnegie Hall in New York, Symphony Hall in Chicago, John. F Kennedy Center in Washington, Tonhalle Zurich, Cadogan Hall and the Barbican Centre in London, Athenäum Bukarest, Concertgebouw Amsterdam and Musikverein Wien.

A keen chamber musician, Benedict is performing with artists such as

Sir András Schiff, Anne Sophie Mutter, Gidon Kremer, Christoph Eschenbach, Antoine Tamestit, Emmanuel Ax, Fazil Say, Lisa Batiashvili, Yuri Bashmet, Benjamin Grosvenor, Lars Vogt and Christian Tetzlaff.

Benedict likes to work with composers. In 2018 he presented the world premiere of Eun-Hwa Cho's cello concerto with the Korean Chamber Orchestra conducted by Christoph Poppen at Seoul Arts Center, as well as the world premiere of Wolfgang Rihm's double concerto for two Cellos.

2020 he will play the world premiere of Eric Tanguy's new Cello Solo work at the Abbaye de Thoronnet. For 2021 Wolfgang Rihm invited him to play his latest Cello concerto, with whom he had been working closely together.

In the 2019/2020 season he will be play Dvorak concerto touring Asia with the Slovak national Orchestra, Beethoven Tripel Concerto on several European Tours and the complete 6 Bach Suites in recitals in Berlin, Washington and the Netherlands. Furthermore he will be on tour in South America Tour with several concerts with Filarmónica de Buenos Aires and Recitals in Teatro Colon Buenos Aires.

2021 he will play a 6 Bach suites integral at Berlin Philharmonic hall, Frankfurt Alte Oper and Carnegie hall New York.

He will be on tour as well with the Schumann concerto conducted by Maestro Shinik Hahm, the Prokofiev Sinfonia concertante with the Lichtenstein national Orchestra , the Capetown and Johannesburg Philharmonic , the Gulda concerto with the German national theatre orchestra and the Haydn D major concerto with the Nordwestdeutsche Philharmonie, in halls such as Gewandhaus Leipzig, Seoul Arts Center and Palais des Beaux Arts Brussels.

His recording catalogue includes a highly acclaimed recording of Robert Schumann's cello concerto, nominated for the German Record Critics prize, and collaborations with Gidon Kremer, the conductors Heinrich Schiff and Michael Sanderling, the pianists José Gallardo, Danae Doerken, Anna Fedorova, and the composer and pianist Howard Blake.

Since 2014 Benedict is the artistic director and founder of the "International Music Festival Koblenz" presenting concerts with artists such as Vilde Frang, Louis

Schwizgebel, Boris Giltburg and orchestras such as the Georgian and Munich Chamber orchestras.

Benedict Kloeckner studied with Martin Ostertag, and as a young soloist of the Kronberg Academy Masters with Frans Helmerson and Gary Hoffman, graciously financed by the “Angela Winkler-Scholarship”, from 2009 to 2017. Benedict Kloeckner is also very grateful to Steven Isserlis, Gidon Kremer, Michael Sanderling, and Sir Andras Schiff for the musical insight and support they have offered for his artistic development.

He plays an Italian Cello by Francesco Rugeri (Cremona 1690), formerly played by Maurice Gendron.

BENEDICT KLÖCKNER PLAYS „ÜBER DIE LINIE“ BY WOLFGANG RIHM is released on PLAIST (EDEL) on Vinyl (Limited Edition), CD und Digital

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