

NAXOS

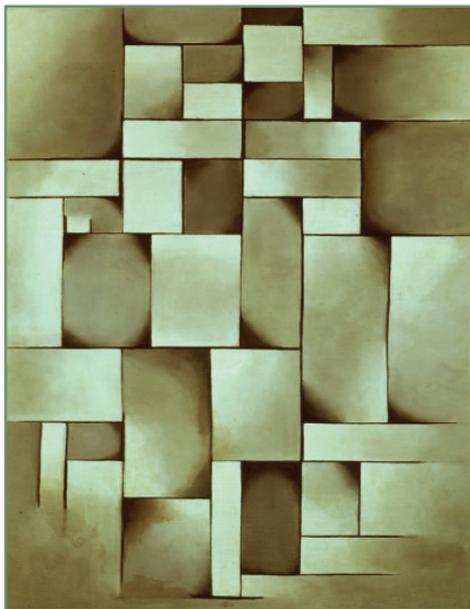
Ulrich
LEYENDECKER

Violin Concerto • Symphony No. 3

Roland Greutter, Violin

North German Radio Symphony Orchestra

Johannes Kalitzke



Ulrich Leyendecker (b. 1946) Violin Concerto · Symphony No. 3

After 8th May 1945 everything was supposed to be different. Never again, swore the generation of artists born in the 1920s and early 1930s, who often enough had lost their own fathers, or, at least, their intellectual mentors. Never again should art and music bow under the yoke of tyranny, nor let itself again be misused as an aid to the reality of National Socialism in glossing over the worst atrocities.

Yet so long as humanity is incapable of drawing the right conclusions from its historical mistakes, from every 'never again' the exact opposite will come about, as is frighteningly clear to us from a glance at the music of the years after the war: hardly had defiant late-maturing backs been turned on the traditions and the Establishment responsible for the disaster in order to find inspiration and future perspectives in composers such as Schoenberg and Anton Webern, regarded for some few years as 'degenerate' - hardly, then, was the eloquent experimentalist reforming avant-garde born, than 'it had itself developed the symptoms of an Establishment. This manifested itself in an intellectual hardening of attitude, and, going hand in hand with that, in doctrinaire arrogance and repression towards 'deviators'. Thus many young composers through this pressure, seen, for example, in the demand that every prize must be 'new', were forced into sterility', wrote the composer and writer Hans Vogt a quarter of a century ago in his book *Neue Musik seit 1945* (New Music since 1945) [2nd edition, Stuttgart 1982] worth reading now as before, a work that hits the nail on the head. He could only have topped this statement by denouncing the phenomenon that such gifted musicians as the young Hans Werner Henze found himself facing, as what it really was: a new kind of intellectual fascism.

Artists born after the war had again completely different possibilities. Certainly not everyone in this 'young' generation that today dominates the scene, would have admitted in the 1970s and 1980s that the avant-garde had long since become the rearguard. In this way

many sensed their 'big chance' on the running-board of a train that in quick time would come to a halt against buffers on a remote sidetrack where few listeners would be found and where, in the course of time, there would be ever less in the form of subventions. Yet many others wanted again to find certainty from the spirit perceived in past traditions, turned to the old masters, wrote variations, permutations and reflections on Gesualdo, Mozart and Schubert, discovered for themselves the value of emotion, and even of euphony (often vilified by a gradually shrinking clique of phoney one-time revolutionaries). Others again succeeded in freeing themselves from the obsolete avant-garde and also from the new widespread desire for historical support and - successful through their creative individuality - entered upon a new path.

One of these is Ulrich Leyendecker, who was born in Wuppertal in 1946. From 1962 to 1965 he studied composition with Ingo Schmitt, then until 1970 with Rudolf Petzold at the Cologne Musikhochschule, where he also was a piano pupil of Günter Ludwig. Already in 1968 he had a scholarship from the German People's Study Foundation, and three years later became Lecturer in Theory at the Hamburg Academy for Music and the Performing Arts. In 1975 he received an award from the North-Rhine-Westphalia region. After a year's residence at the Villa Massimo in Rome he was appointed Professor of Composition and Theory at the Hamburg Music and Theatre Hochschule. In 1984/85 there was an award from the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris, in 1986 he became a member of the Hamburg Free Academy of Arts, and in 1987 was honoured with the Von der Heydt Prize of the city of Wuppertal. Since 1994 he has been Professor of Composition at the State Hochschule for Music and the Performing Arts of Heidelberg-Mannheim, and since 1997 member of the Mannheim Free Academy of Arts. In 2001/02 he received a second award from the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris.

Orchestral works, chamber and piano music, as well as vocal compositions with the most varied accompaniments (from piano to chamber orchestra) dominate the body of work of the last 35 years or so, by this distinguished and sought-after composer, who gives his music titles from historically defined genres such as symphony, concerto, trio, and so on, without treading in the footsteps of historically established masters. On the contrary, the tension between the respective titles on the one hand and the emotional, formal compositional solution of the problems posed on the other, result in music of 'emotional comprehensibility. The wide arch-forms that are peculiar to many of his works and that decisively determine the character of his creative process are not romanticism, but rather expressive means in a manner of composition that seeks and prefers larger coherence, without forgetting care over detail' (Arnd Richter).

Above all, however, Ulrich Leyendecker's 'directions for use' are, as will be clear in the following, aids to listening and not philosophical treatises on 'what the artist wanted to tell us'. They reveal in simple strokes how something is made, but do not tell us, the listeners, what to hear. That makes the approach easy to this new music, while the listener again has the right to 'have his own idea', instead of being stuck in his seat, with fixed and despairing look obliged to follow a programme book where the wealth of strange words in most cases is remote from what is heard. No wonder that concert-halls largely remain empty if contemporary works are given. Here it is quite different.

Ulrich Leyendecker wrote his *Third Symphony* in 1990/91 as a commission from the Old Opera of Frankfurt am Main. The work, however, had its first performance in Hamburg on 3rd November 1994. The present recording was made one day later.

'In my third symphony the architectural aspect of the tonal arrangement and its relationship with form and instrumentation particularly concerned me. That is, the arrangement of notes and instrumentation stand in a dependent development relationship with form.

'The first movement at the beginning suggests the

emptiness of a large space, at rest, divided into four levels, very deep, medium, high and very high, which gradually ... waver, without producing fixed forms. - This links up with seven related slightly varied sounds that arrange the space as a harmonically perceptible event. Then there appear short, wide-spaced intervals, rhythmically very distinct forms on the different planes of sound, contrasting with the sounds now distinctly forming changes of harmony. - These three elements ('fluctuating large space', 'resting sound' and 'rhythmically marked motif') bring the tonal arrangement process into motion. The objective of this process is the wide space fully unfettered and now filled with the resulting sound, which gives way to a cancrizans (crab-wise) recapitulation.

'The second movement follows a similar, yet in character and form very contrasted structural concept. Here very quickly scurrying figures form the various levels of sound. To these are joined rhythmically and spatially sharply pointed fleeting shapes that displace the arrangement of notes from the start in constant dynamic movement. Various different, contrasting objectives are achieved. At first the fixed space, filled with motifs, which, in a later phase, form a contrasting middle section. The rondo-like recurring first part picks up respectively the new elements of the preceding development, leading to stronger interpenetration and superimposition of different tempi and character. The objective of this development is a kind of 'high plateau' that gradually disperses the rapid figures and motifs dominating the movement and descends completely into the deep.

'The third movement, *Luminoso*, is dominated by a melody with wide intervals that fill the whole space, as a varied *cantus firmus*, very free and remotely resembling a *passacaglia*. Gradually fragments of the first and second movement enter, at first following one another, later superimposed. The movement ends with a confrontation between reminiscences from the beginning of the first and the close of the second movement.'

Leyendecker's *Violin Concerto* was first given in Hamburg on 2nd February 1996 and recorded on this occasion by North German Radio. This live recording

with the dedicatee of the work, the violinist Roland Greutter, and the conductor Johannes Kalitzke, who two years earlier had given the first performance of Leyendecker's *Third Symphony*, is in every respect an authentic event - one of those moments that can never be recaptured, in which a piece of music is first brought before the public. It won success then, and the occasion can be described as a moment of glory.

Ulrich Leyendecker wrote of his work: 'Three main ideas underlie the first movement of my violin concerto: from the regular semiquaver figuration of the solo violin come wide-spaced, sweeping, brightly instrumented forms. The second idea, melodically defined and spacially limited, composed as an antiphonal exchange between the solo violin and solo instruments in the orchestra, is accompanied by diffuse, periodically recurrent decorative figures. Continuous and heavily contrasted, also in instrumentation, the orchestra and soloist embark on the third idea: rapid *martellatissimo* double and triple stops on the violin are counterpointed by the crescendo single note interruptions of the brass. Constant change in the relationship between solo and orchestra and increasingly disparate instrumentation determine still more strongly the working out in the middle section of the first movement. The development runs purposefully into a *tutti* outburst, which, stagnating

spacially and in time, subjects the principal ideas to a process of decline. - The recapitulation appears in varied form. In place of the third principal idea the solo figuration is picked up again, but now accelerated and rhythmically treated. It expands gradually into a quartet of solo strings.

'The main idea of the first movement underlies the second movement too, in strongly melodic and rhythmic form and in narrower register. - Taken up by the soloist it opens into a wider range, suggesting wide expanse and emptiness. - Increasing density of texture and colourful sounds gradually fill this space in the manner of an endless counterpoint; the texture at the same time becomes more excited and characteristic until the point of sudden collapse, leaving behind segments of the 'empty space'. The movement ends with a 'quasi cadenza' and final reminiscences of the beginning of the movement.

'A song from my song-cycle *Hebrew Ballads* is the basis of the nine variations of the third movement. There is a connection with the preceding movements: the new structures of the individual variations are related with the expressive character of the first and second movement.'

Cris Posslac

English version by Keith Anderson

Roland Greutter

The Austrian violinist Roland Greutter was born in Linz in 1957 and studied with Jürgen Geise and Sandor Vegh at the Salzburg Mozarteum, making his debut in the Salzburg Mozart Weeks at the age of fourteen. He continued his studies at the Juilliard School in New York with Ivan Galamian, Feliz Galimir and the Juilliard Quartet. He went on to teach at Indiana University, while undertaking further study with Josef Gingold. He was successful in the Juilliard Wienawski Competition, the Mozart Prize of the Mozarteum, and the Artists International Competition in New York, among other triumphs. His work with Rudolf Serkin at the Marlboro Festival and his teaching collaboration with Leonard Bernstein and Lorin Maazel at the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival marked important steps in his artistic development. He soon established himself as a leading soloist and chamber-music player, appearing with the most distinguished conductors and colleagues throughout the world. His repertoire extends from the classical to the contemporary, and he has given the first performance of works dedicated to him. He is the first concertmaster of the North German Radio Symphony Orchestra and enjoys a notable reputation as a teacher, with master-classes in the United States, Japan, Brazil and elsewhere, and a continuing commitment to the Schleswig-Holstein Festival. His recordings include releases of the concertos of Mozart and Bach.

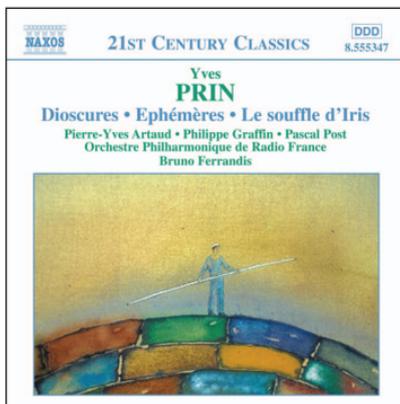
North German Radio Symphony Orchestra

The North German Radio Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1945. For more than a quarter of a century it was Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, its first principal conductor, who stamped his artistic profile on the orchestra, and quickly made it well known far beyond the bounds of the City-State of Hamburg. It made its first tour of Germany as early as 1949, and only a year later made its first foreign tour, important politically as well as musically, to Paris. Other major concert tours brought the NDR Symphony Orchestra great international acclaim as one of the leading German symphony orchestras. Conductors such as Wilhelm Furtwängler, Hans Knappertsbusch, Erich Kleiber, Otto Klemperer, Ferenc Fricsay, and Karl Böhm appeared as guest conductors during the Schmidt-Isserstedt era. In addition to maintaining the classical and romantic repertoire, one of the main priorities in the orchestra's work has always been the presentation of contemporary works. Conductors such as Bruno Maderna, Hans Rosbaud, Pierre Boulez, Michael Gielen, and Krzysztof Penderecki, who was a guest conductor for many years from 1988 onwards, conducted important first performances in Hamburg. After Moshe Atzmon and Klaus Tennstedt, the principal conductors in the 1970s, twenty years of intensive co-operation between the orchestra and Günter Wand gave it a significance such as it had not known since the Schmidt-Isserstedt era. He was appointed its principal conductor in 1982 and soon afterwards, in 1987, its Honorary Director for life. He dominated the artistic work of the NDR Symphony Orchestra until his death in 2002, bringing it to its apogee with worldwide acclaim for its Bruckner interpretations. Numerous recordings and television productions provide impressive testimony to the extraordinary artistic standing of this collaboration. The series of principal conductors continued in the 1990s, initially with John Eliot Gardiner and Herbert Blomstedt. In 1998 Christoph Eschenbach was appointed to this position, and during his five years with the orchestra recorded major cycles of works such as Mahler's and Shostakovich's symphonies. He also devoted himself intensively to contemporary music, which he presented to his audience in concert programmes of innovative design. From 2004 Christoph von Dohnányi has continued the tradition of major conductors leading the NDR Symphony Orchestra, supported by Alan Gilbert as first guest conductor. The NDR Symphony Orchestra holds its own series of subscription concerts in Hamburg, Lübeck, Kiel, and Bremen, and regularly makes guest concert tours to the most important European festivals, appearing on all the major concert stages. It has also earned itself great respect from its tours to Japan, China, South America, and the United States.

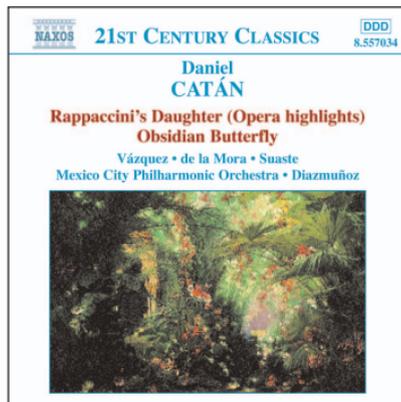
Johannes Kalitzke

The German conductor and composer Johannes Kalitzke was born in 1959 in Cologne and studied church music there. At the Musikhochschule he studied the piano with Aloys Kontarsky, conducting with Wolfgang von der Nahmer, and composition with York Höller, with further study on a scholarship to IRCAM in Paris, where he was a pupil of Vinko Globokar, and in Cologne studied electronic music with Hans Ulrich Humpert. He started his conducting career as chief conductor at the Gelsenkirchen Musiktheater im Revier from 1988 to 1990, while, from 1986, directing the Forum for New Music. In 1991 he became artistic director and conductor of the *Musikfabrik* of the North-Rhine-Westphalia regional ensemble, and has since then been a regular guest conductor of ensembles such as the Vienna Klangforum and symphony orchestras, including the North German Radio, South West Radio, BBC, Vienna Radio Symphony orchestras, and the Basel Sinfonietta, appearing at the Salzburg Festival, the Vienna Festival Weeks, the Styrian Autumn, the Munich Biennale, and the Dresden Festival, with tours to Russia, Japan, and America, in addition to a number of recordings. As a composer he has won a number of awards, and has written two successful operas, in addition to other works. He is a regular guest-lecturer at Darmstadt, the Essen Folkwang Hochschule and the conductors' forum of the German Music Council.

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Booklet notes in English

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Ulrich Leyendecker is one of a younger generation of German composers who have turned their back on the avant-garde and embraced past traditions. This distinguished and sought-after composer gives his compositions titles from historically defined genres, such as the Symphony and Concerto included here, yet he avoids mimicking the styles of past masters. Both the *Third Symphony* and the *Violin Concerto* vividly demonstrate Leyendecker's interest in music as sonic architecture, while managing to communicate directly and emotionally with the listener.



Ulrich
LEYENDECKER
(b. 1946)

WORLD PREMIERE
RECORDINGS

Symphony No. 3 • Violin Concerto

Symphony No. 3 29:24 **Violin Concerto (1995)** 28:19
(1990/91)

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|---------------------------------------|-------|------------------------------------|-------|
| 1 I. Largo leggiero | 9:56 | 4 I. Allegro | 10:03 |
| 2 II. Presto volante (Scherzo) | 8:21 | 5 II. Adagio | 9:44 |
| 3 III. Luminoso | 11:07 | 6 III. Allegro (Variations) | 8:32 |

Roland Greutter, Violin
North German Radio Symphony Orchestra
Johannes Kalitzke

Tracks 1-3 recorded on 4th November 1994, at NDR Studio 10, Hamburg

Tracks 4-6 recorded before a studio audience on 2nd February 1996, at NDR Studio 10, Hamburg

Producer: Gerald Götze • Engineers: Johannes Kutzner (Concerto) and Günter Beckmann (Symphony)

Publisher: Sikorski • Booklet Notes: Cris Posslac

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