

**markus  
becker**  
pianist

## **Biography Long Version**

*'When it comes to virtuosity, Markus Becker is unbeatable. A musical portraitist of the soul – with brains'. – Eleonore Büning, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*

Markus Becker is a pianist for all formats: his complete recording of Max Reger's piano music is considered 'one of the rare, truly great achievements in German pianism of the last half-century' (Fonoforum), winning the annual German Record Critics' Prize in 2002. His recent readings of select Haydn sonatas were rousing received by the international press. But he also creates a sensation with the 'freestyle' of his masterly jazz improvisations. In the force field of jazz, avant-garde and allusions to the classics, he generates music 'like dust particles in a beam of light: simply brilliant' (Fidelity).

Markus Becker has traversed the continents of his instrument; now he exploits the direct connections between them. Whether on the concert platform or in the studio, he sets standards in the concertos of Bach and Beethoven, Brahms and Gershwin, not to mention his rediscoveries of Pfitzner, Reger, Hindemith, Draeseke, Widor and Franz Schmidt. Besides his interest in little-known repertoire and works of orchestral richness, he indulges in the pleasure of poetic lightness and ingenious amalgams. His freestyle playing thrives on technical elegance and a supreme sense of form.

Markus Becker has improvised at the piano since early childhood. His musical horizons were formed on international tours with the Hanover Boys' Choir, in chamber recitals, jazz combos and pit bands. While studying with Karl-Heinz Kämmerling, the legendary professor at Hanover University of Music, he drew formative inspiration from a longstanding collaboration with Alfred Brendel. National and international awards soon followed, including a first prize at Hamburg's International Brahms Competition in 1987.

Becker is a frequent guest artist at the Ruhr Piano Festival, the Schleswig-Holstein Festival, the Bonn Beethovenfest and the Ludwigsburg Palace Festival. He performs with orchestras of the stature of the Berlin Philharmonic, Germany's radio symphony orchestras and the BBC Welsh Orchestra. His partners at the conductor's desk have included Michael Sanderling, Antonello Manacorda, Marcus Bosch, Steven Sloane and Claudio Abbado. Among the major artists with whom he cultivates chamber music are Albrecht Mayer, Igor Levit and Alban Gerhardt. Today he heads a class for pianists and ensembles as a professor at Hanover University of Music, Theatre and Media.