



# CLUSTER – GROSSES WASSER

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## The essentials

- Cluster, founded in 1971 by Hans-Joachim Roedelius and Dieter Moebius, both key figures in German experimental electronic and ambient music
- "Großes Wasser" from the year 1979 was their fifth album as a duo
- produced by Peter Baumann (Tangerine Dream)
- the release is the first in a series of 23 reissues covering essential electronic /ambient/krautrock albums from the Hamburg label SKY Records
- liner notes by Asmus Tietchens, himself a pioneer of the electronic avant-garde, offering an intimate insight into the scene
- released on CD and vinyl

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Cluster can be counted among the most important international protagonists of the electronic avant-garde. Some credit them with having invented ambient music, others as pioneers of synthesizer pop, whilst to some they are firmly embedded in the krautrock universe. There is some truth in all of these notions. Although Cluster and "rock music" are seldom mentioned in the same breath, their early works in particular are marked by a lack of structure and futuristic, cold soundscapes typical of the krautrock variation known as "Kosmische"

"Großes Wasser" was Cluster's fifth album as a duo. At the outset of their musical odyssey, they had already recorded three LPs with Konrad Schnitzler under the name of Kluster. Later, they collaborated with Brian Eno and with Michael Rother/Harmonia.

The cover art is the first indication of minimalist tendencies on "Großes Wasser", reflecting the concentration, transparency and maturity of the content, almost like chamber music. Whilst nothing is left to chance, each of the six Cluster pieces effervesces with a certain *joie de vivre*, providing ample scope for artistic spontaneity.

"Großes Wasser" was recorded in its entirety in the Paragon Studio which had been set up by Peter Baumann (Tangerine Dream) not long before. Baumann had set aside plenty of time for the recording sessions, enabling Cluster to experiment with sequencers for the first time and explore some of the most up to date (for that period) studio gadgets on offer. Moebius and Roedelius made intelligent, measured use of the latest paraphernalia without being overwhelmed by it. New technology was deployed with an exactness designed to refine their sophisticated and fully developed musical ideas.

More than ever before in Cluster's history, acoustic elements can be heard, with the dulcet tones of the Paragon's Steinway grand piano taking centre stage. Electric bass, guitar, percussion and voice are all embraced. Consequently, "Großes Wasser" is anything but a solely electronic album. It is, however, one of those rare LPs, whose musical substance transcends its own age, still not sounding outdated. This is what really makes "Großes Wasser" so special.

"Großes Wasser" is the first in a series of 23 albums which are to be reissued by Bureau B, comprehensively documenting the superb electronic/ambient/krautrock history of the Hamburg label Sky Records, from whom the material has been licensed. Cluster in their various guises will feature heavily in the series (solo albums as well as collaborations with Brian Eno, Conny Plank, Gerd Beerbohm, Mani Neumeier). The next release will be the excellent Wolfgang Riechmann album "Wunderbar".

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