

Handwritten musical score on a page titled "MATH". The page is held by a metal binder clip and is being viewed through a circular opening in a dark surface. The score consists of multiple staves of music, including vocal lines and piano accompaniment. The notation includes notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *mf* and *pp*. The word "MATH" is written in large, bold letters at the top left of the page. The page is numbered "1" in the top right corner. The background is dark and out of focus, showing parts of a person's face and a steering wheel.

MATH

1

*mf*

*pp*



This album is the follow-up to the 2018 album "Three Pictures" and sees a further expansion of the sonic landscape that has become the trademark of the Zurich Jazz Orchestra (ZJO). In his new role of composer-in-residence, Steffen Schorn has been able to fully focus on his compositions and desire to bring a richer orchestration, adding new instrumental colors to the orchestral pool and fully utilizing the instrumentation available to him. The majority of the members of the ZJO are true multi-instrumentalists and this album fully exploits this capacity adding exotic instruments such as bass trumpet, piccolo trumpet, flugabone, C-soprano sax, Bb and Eb tubaxes, two alto clarinets and contrabass clarinet

to the mix. When speaking about his approach to these orchestrations, Steffen explains: "After 'Three Pictures', the first album we did together, and the many concerts with more than 100 performed pieces during my time as chief conductor, we can now more than ever draw from the full instrumental possibilities we have available". He goes on: "In my work, I'm trying to open up new possibilities, expanding and pushing the limits of what is possible with a jazz orchestra".

The music on this album is challenging yet still accessible. Steffen comments: "Listen to how the band is on fire with this fresh material, even without having

played a 'try-out' concert prior to the recording. All of the material on this album was inspired by people I love and admire, even if I never met them personally. It's the principles they stand for that matter".

The album begins with "The Mad Code". This piece was originally written for solo piano for the 2020 Beethoven year celebrations. This version of the piece was fully orchestrated for the Zurich Jazz Orchestra. Musically, the piece is extremely compact and challenging with fast changing, almost mad emotional states trying to stretch the limit of what can be done with a jazz orchestra. Beethoven was known for his outbursts and wild mood swings, especially toward the end of his life, and this arrangement represents this impeccably. The following track titled "Monsieur Pf." recalls a German police officer known to Steffen with a great sense of humour. The piece is based on pan-diatonic principles using all seven degrees of the diatonic scale without the limitations of functional tonality. Decidedly Caribbean in flavour, this piece grooves from start to finish.

"So eine ..." ("... Hektik aber auch immer") is dedicated to Bettina Uhlmann and all of those crazy, hectic last-minute things we all do meet the deadlines and bring something beautiful and meaningful into life. The following track titled "Martha" is dedicated to Steffen's grandmother who passed away when his mother was just 14. Martha had a difficult time in post-war Germany and this piece is dedicated to all traumatized people around the

world. This is an atmospheric piece with extended melodic movement.

"Til Charlotte" is a composition by Lars Andreas Haug and is the only tune on the album not composed by Steffen. Lars Andreas wrote it while staying at Steffen's flat in Nürnberg. He dedicated it to Steffen's teenage daughter Charlotte. A small point of trivia is that Steffen's arrangement of the piece was completed on the train, returning from one of the many concerts the ZJO performed at Moods in Zurich.

The final track, closing out this album is "Walzer", a longtime repertoire piece of Steffen's duo with clarinetist Claudio Puntin. The fully orchestrated 3-part version for the Zurich Jazz Orchestra makes use of a number of specific symphonic compositional techniques such as the unfolding of several harmonic layers, melodic rotations and inversions, bright crystal-clear shimmering sound-scapes and an improvised ultra-low-frequency section leading to a furious tutti climax before an intimate chamber music ending".

This recording highlights not only the great musicianship housed within the Zurich Jazz Orchestra but also spotlights one of Europe's leading Big Bands at the top of its game.

Andrew Read





**Steffen Schorn**  
Conductor, Composer

C-Soprano Saxophone, Soprano Saxophone, C-Melody Saxophone, Bass Saxophone, Bb-Tubax, Clarinet, Alto Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Contraalto Clarinet, Piccolo, Strathmann Alto Recorder, Flute, Alto Flute, Bass Flute, Prepared Trumpet, Fender Rhodes, Synth, Prepared Piano, Melodica

**WOODWINDS**

**Murat Cevik**  
Piccolo Flute, Flute, Alto Flute

**Reto Anneler (lead)**  
Flute, Clarinet, Soprano Saxophone, Alto Saxophone

**Lukas Heuss**  
Alto Saxophone, Clarinet, Alto Clarinet

**Thomas Lüthi**  
Tenor Saxophone, Clarinet

**Tobias Pfister**  
Tenor Saxophone, Bass Clarinet

**Nils Fischer**  
Baritone Saxophone, Eb-Tubax, Bass Clarinet

**TRUMPETS**

**Patrick Ottiger (lead)**  
Trumpet, Flugelhorn, Piccolo Trumpet

**Wolfgang Häuptli**  
Trumpet, Flugelhorn

**Bernhard Schoch**  
Trumpet, Flugelhorn, Flugabone

**Raphael Kalt**  
Trumpet, Flugelhorn

**TROMBONES**

**Adrian Weber (lead)**  
Trombone

**René Mosele**  
Bass Trumpet

**Silvio Cadotsch**  
Trombone

**Don Randolph**  
Bass Trombone

**RHYTHM**

**Gregor Müller**  
Piano, Keyboards

**Theo Kapilidis**  
Electric & Acoustic Guitar

**Patrick Sommer**  
Double Bass, E-Bass

**Pius Baschnagel**  
Drums, Percussion

Produced by Zurich Jazz Orchestra  
Co-Production: SRF2 Kultur, Peter Bürlì

Musical Director: Steffen Schorn  
Musical Co-Director: Daniel Schenker  
Managing Director: Bettina Uhlmann

Recorded by Andy Neresheimer at Hardstudios  
Winterthur, September 25th–27th, 2020

Mixed by Andy Neresheimer & Steffen Schorn  
@ antproduction GmbH, December  
2020, January 2021

Mastered by Christoph Stickel  
@ CS Mastering, January 25th 2021

Photos: Pablo Facchinetto  
Cover photo: Omer Salom

Artwork: Zippo Zimmermann  
[www.designladen.com](http://www.designladen.com)

Liner notes: Andrew Read

Steffen Schorn plays Eppelsheim Tubaxes  
Patrick Ottiger – Yamaha Artist  
Theo Kapilidis plays Fürst guitars and GHS strings

### STEFFEN WANTS TO THANK:

Special thanks to everybody of the Zurich Jazz Orchestra for years of dedication, trust and endless fun on stage and in the studio; Andy Neresheimer for magic ears, unlimited imagination, blind understanding and one hell of a sound; Peter Bürlì for his longtime love and support of the Swiss jazz scene and Daniel Schenker for co-conducting, coordination and commitment.

Very special thanks to Bettina Uhlmann for a giant heart, a strong vision, an iron will – always making the impossible possible. People like you make the world a better place.

### THANKS TO:

Stadt Zürich/Kultur, Kanton Zürich/  
Fachstelle Kultur, Förderverein ZJO