

twenty piano pieces
volume 2

mathias ruegg

Solitude Diaries

twenty piano pieces

VOLUME 2

Take 21	
Take 22	
Take 23	
Take 24	
Take 25	
Take 26	
Take 27	
Take 28	
Take 29	
Take 30	

Luegit vo Bärg und Tal – Schweizer Volkslied Luegit vo Bärg und Tal – Swiss folk song Based on rüegg's version from 1984 — Swisslike
Take 32
Take 33
Take 34
Take 35
Take 36 54
Und plötzlich trat eine fröhliche Anarchie zutage And suddenly a cheerful anarchy appeared — Walzerisch
And suddenly a cheerful anarchy appeared
And suddenly a cheerful anarchy appeared - Walzerisch Take 37
And suddenly a cheerful anarchy appeared - Walzerisch Take 37

From the moment of the lockdown on March 16, 2020, a fearful, eerie and paranoid mood laid itself over the city, which did not disappear even from the smallest and most hidden of corners. So there was only one way for me to escape from this collective depression, and that was to escape into creativity, into composing.

That's why I decided on Thursday March 19 to write a short piano piece every day, beginning with that day, exactly between 6 and 10 p.m., from Thursday to Monday. One of my goals was to test my recall of creativity. That's why I didn't allow myself to think about what I was going to write before 6 p.m., but had to "let myself fall stante pede" into another world, into a state of shock, from which I didn't allow myself to wake up from until 10 p.m. At the beginning this went without problems, but from the second week on doubts crept in. Can I bear this, can I do it? What if I didn't come up with something? It was clear to me that I would stop the experiment immediately if it failed. That put me under enormous pressure. On top of that, in the first four weeks I wrote a four-movement suite for a chamber music quartet during exactly eight hours on the sixth day. On the seventh day there was a day of rest, and from the fifth week onwards there were two days of rest. The intensity reminded me of August 2011 when in less than four weeks I had to write the music for a complete show of the Big Apple Circus (NYC).

After not being dissatisfied with the first pieces, the idea of making an album with forty takes soon arose, and the idea of a music book also haunted my mind. I was thinking, for example, of encores for classical pianists who are interested in jazz. Or even lighter pieces for hobby pianists of all genres. There is not too much useful sheet music around in this area.

The choice of pianists was a pleasure for me - albeit with some surprises, and the number of pieces played had a lot to do with the various availabilities or unavailabilities. It was clear to me from the beginning that Ladislav Fančovič would be one of the main players. In František Jánoška, a second one came in (both from Bratislava), also equally at home in classical music and jazz. Four pieces have been brought in by the Swiss Oliver Schnyder who comes from the "hardcore" classical field, together with Soley Blümel, who has just turned twelve, and Johanna Gröbner (pianist of the last edition of the Vienna Art Orchestra). The three Salzburg pianists Elias Stemeseder, Georg Vogel and Lukas Kletzander represent the young Austrian jazz scene. Veteran jazz pianists are the Frenchman Jean-Christophe Cholet and the Viennese Oliver Kent.

The Solitude Diaries were recorded on five days in July/August in the Bösendorfer Showroom at the Vienna Konzerthaus on the excellent 280 VC - Vienna Concert grand piano by Thomas Egger, with whom I've been working successfully for several years now. I would like to thank Bösendorfer and Vladimir Bulzan in particular for their generous and uncomplicated support.

About the individual pieces:

Take 22 was created under very special circumstances: While practicing in the afternoon, suddenly at about 4 p.m., a lumbago pain in my back, coupled with high fever and heavy chills, attacked me. I was just able to escape to my sofa and suddenly was panic-stricken. By the way, this was the only time in the whole period! My motto was "hang in there" and don't call anyone! After about an hour it got a little better and my only thought was, can I make it, at 6 p.m., to drag myself to my piano? I managed it, but I was very weak. So I decided to "cut out" two bars from each of the first 21 pieces and then put them together. Therefore, this piece is compositionally the weakest of all, but somehow also the most important. Because I had managed to do my take anyway on that day and thus I could go on!

The last program the Vienna Art Orchestra played in 2010 was called Songs and Signs from Mahler. I have now rearranged a piece of it, Das irdische Leben (Take 20), from my orchestral version to one for piano, i.e. for the left hand. We have a minor mode version of Der liebe Augustin (Take 16) as well as variations on Jessas Na (Take 33), the first piece I wrote for the VAO in 1977. This set of nine arrangements has taken the pressure off me somewhat. There are further arrangements of Lauren mathias rüegg, 2.9.2020

Bacall - The Smile of Gold from the VAO trilogy 2007 (Take 34) or Aschera (Take 35), to which Georg Vogel has added such wonderful ornaments. By the way, Aschera stands for Schiers, the place in Prättigau where I grew up.

In Take 19 an A4 paper sheet serves as a preparation-object, in that it alienates the notes from f to D". Furthermore, there are a few rhythmically very demanding pieces like the takes 4, 18 or 37, as well as a few (funny) ostinati (takes 10, 30 and 39). In contrast, there are also romantic pieces such as the takes 8, 9, 14, 21 and 29, and of course a few jazzy tunes like the takes 17, 26, 27 or 38. And in the three more abstract pieces (takes 13, 15, 22) I am the performer.

The only real difference between jazz and classical music is rhythm, which plays a much greater role in jazz than in classical music. It is about the fact that everything you play must always be in relation to the basic pulse, to "time". Therefore Duke Ellington's famous title: "It Don't Mean a Thing, If it Ain't Got that Swing". And this of course applies to composed music, as in the present case, in exactly the same way. It all stands and falls with rhythm and phrasing.

In parallel to the piano pieces I also wrote a diary-like text every day. It begins very poetically and then becomes more and more political and radical and thus artistically uninteresting. But maybe I will put these texts onto my website www.mathiasrueegg.com sometime.

The lockdown-insanity in combination with the quasi-abrogation of democracy - without even the slightest resistance - was hard to cope with for a free spirit like me. And still is!

But enough of that, here are the amusing lyrics to take 6 instead:

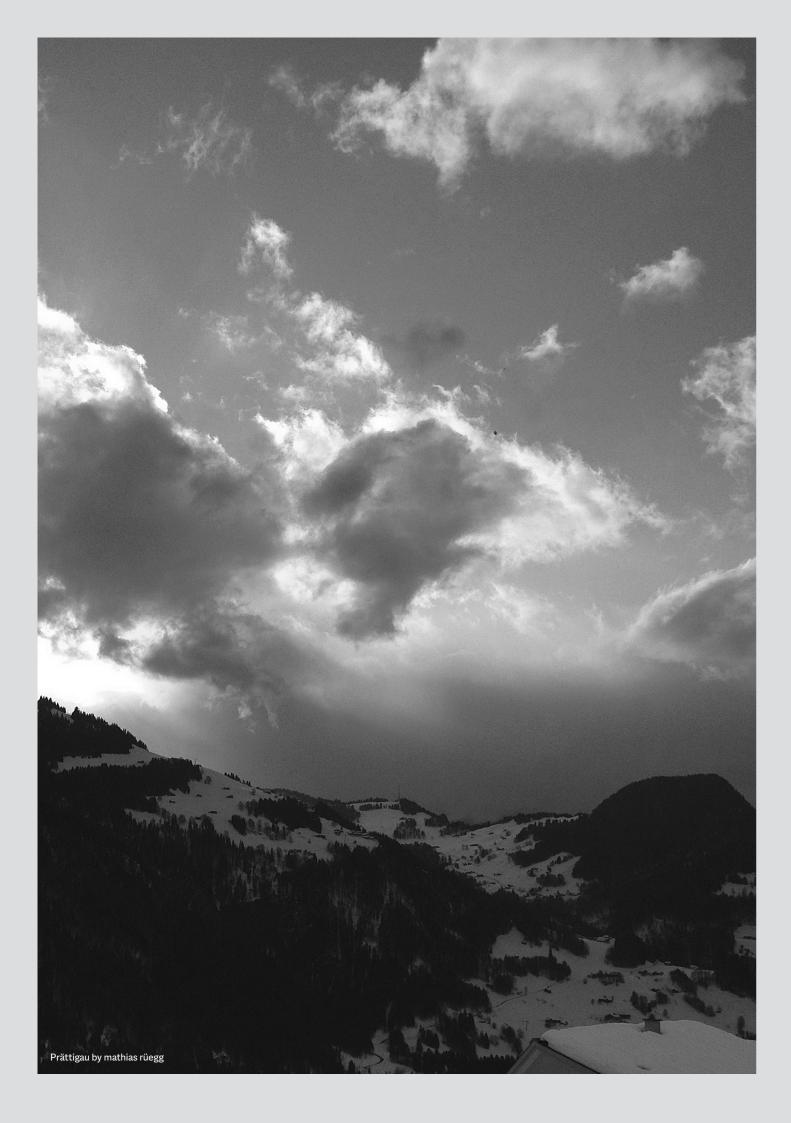
Die Stadt ist groß und sie ist fern, ich lebe dort, und das sehr gern. Weit weg, nicht mehr im Bündnerland (das ich verließ vor langer Zeit sprich einer halben Ewigkeit) in Wien, wo ich mich selber fand!

Musik, die Kunst, das pralle Leben. das alles fand ich eben, so gar nicht in dem Schiers so grau, drum sagt ich "Tschau zum Prettygau".

Doch nun oh weh! ist alles tot. mein Wien verwaist und voller Not! Der Himmel dunkel, finst're Gassen, man kann das alles gar nicht fassen.

Berge, Blumen, Anemonen, in den schönsten Variationen schweben mir im Geiste vor und ich hör den Grüscher Chor,

singend auf der Alp für alle, lauter schöne Intervalle: Dieses Lied, das niemand kennt, nicht einmal der Dirigent!



Von Tauben, die im Volksgarten unter einem Fliederbusch Schatten suchen

Of pigeons seeking shade under a lilac bush in the "Volksgarten"

Week 5

Take 21 16.04.2020 m. rüegg



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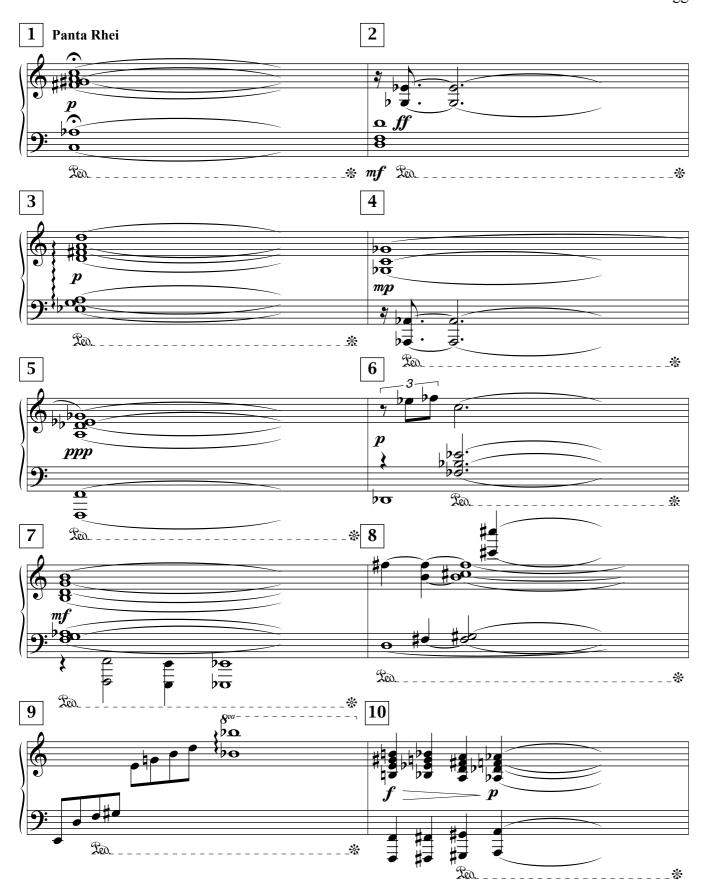


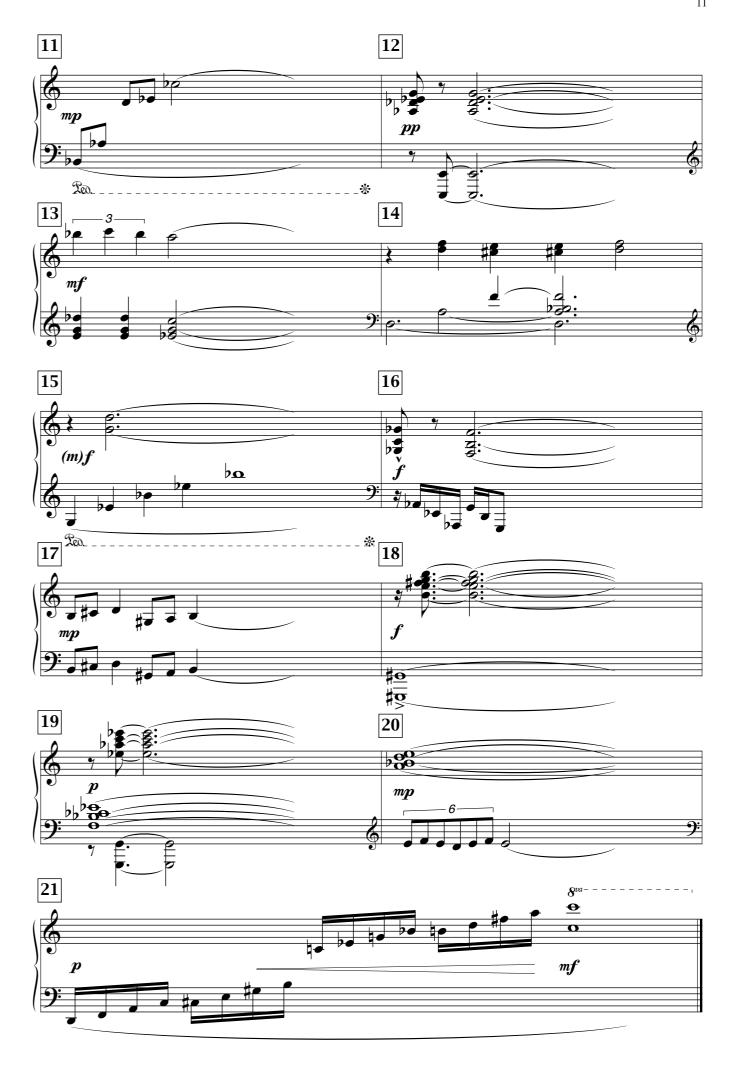
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1.1

Aber woher stammen diese schönen Kirschblüten denn alle? But where are alle these lovely cherry-blossoms coming from?

Take 22 17.04.2020 m. rüegg





Jetzt ist die Katze aus dem Sack!

Now the cat's out of the bag!

Take 23 18.04.2020 m. rüegg







