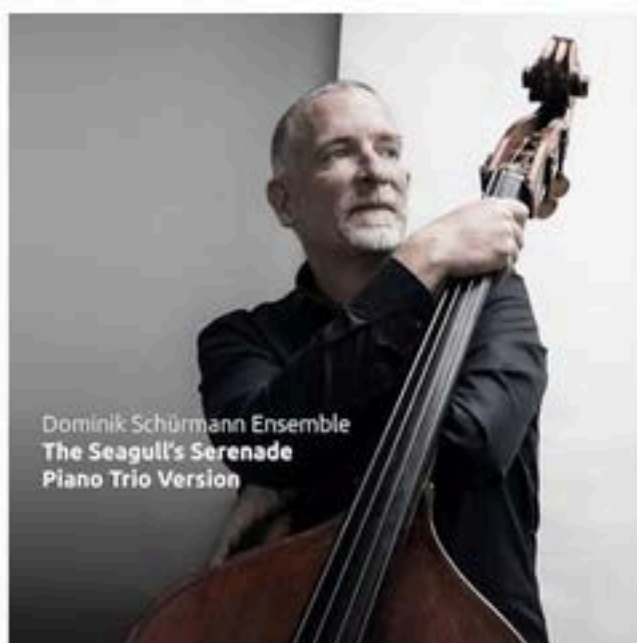


Dominik Schürmann Ensemble – The Seagull's Serenade

by Tim Larsen | Nov 23, 2023 | [Album Reviews](#), [International](#)



This is Schürmann's first large ensemble recording. I hope he'll do more.

Suisa Records

Song Yi Jeon | Vocals (tracks 1, 6, 7); *Marc Ullrich* | Trumpet, Flugelhorn; *Claudio Bergamin* | Trumpet; *Daniel Blanc* | Alto Saxophone, Flute; *Domenic Landolf* | Tenor Saxophone, Soprano Saxophone, Alto Flute; *Patrick Joray* | Tenor Saxophone, Flute; *Lukas Brüggen* | Trombone; *Kira Linn* | Baritone Saxophone (Tracks 3, 4, 6, 8); *George Ricci* | Baritone Saxophone, Bass Clarinet, Clarinet; *Tilman Günther* | Piano; *Dominik Schürmann* | Bass; *Jānis Jaunalksnis* | Drums

Swiss bassist Dominik Schürmann is a busy guy. He's released seven co-produced albums under his own name in the last three years, most of them smaller groups. He's put together a mini big band for his latest, THE SEAGULL'S SERENADE.

Schürmann gathered fellow countrymen but there are musicians from France, Latvia, and Germany. *Song Yi Jeon*, originally from South Korea, now living in Basel, sings on three songs.

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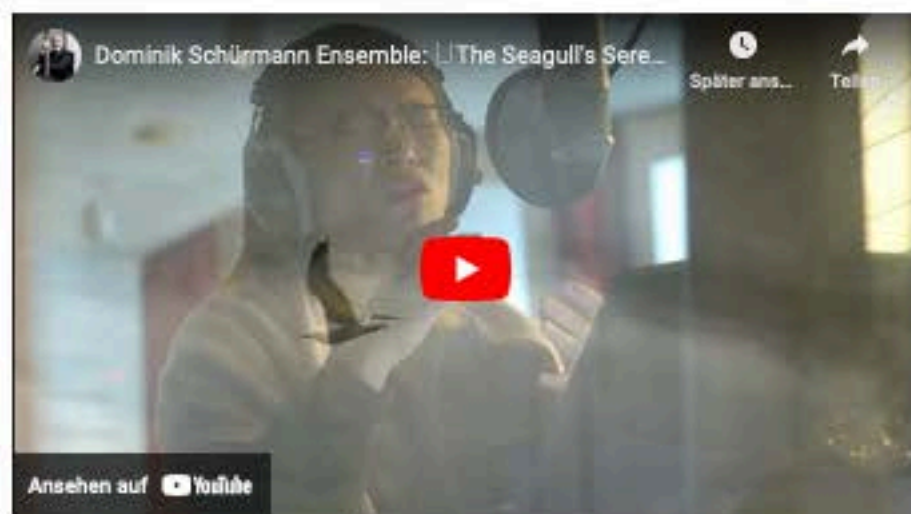


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Schurmann composed and produced everything. He arranged or co-arranged most of the ten songs. Pianist Tilman Gunther helped and George Ricci arranged 'Bird Stories' and 'Coffee Cat.' Schurmann called Ricci "one of my most important musical contacts ever." 'Coffee Cat' was written for his friend Ricci, because, "he loves coffee and cats."

The first track, 'The Seagull's Serenade' was the last song Schurmann composed for the album. He wrote it at the beginning of the war in Ukraine. He said he imagined a seagull flying over the war, looking down and wondering: "What are you people doing down there?"

Song Yi Jean was picked to handle vocals because she was simply the best choice. That's what Schurmann told me and I certainly wouldn't argue with that. Listening to Song Yi Jean feels like your best friend is sharing a playful story.



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Her tone is warm and silky. Her phrasing is oh-so-smooth. She blends beautifully with the horns around her. Halfway through 'The Seagull's Serenade' Song Yi Jean switches to singing wordless and then Schurmann shows us what a gorgeous bass solo sounds like.

'Bird Stories' has a trio of flutes sounding bird-like. Tilman Gunther's piano pokes fun at them. There's some lovely legato bass. The drummer signals a tempo change and two of the flute players pick up their alto and tenor saxes giving us a swinging hard-bop end to a great tune.

'The End Of A Bug Affair' starts with a standard sounding big band arrangement. Daniel Blanc's alto sax solo is straight out of the California cool-school of playing; think Bud Shank or Lennie Niehaus.

'Afternoon Song' is a blistering jazz/funk tune. I love George Ricci's baritone sax solo. Janis Jaunalksnis's drumming is terrific throughout the album but he's outstanding on this. Claudio Bergamin has a great trumpet solo and so does Patrick Joray on tenor sax.

'The Seagull's Serenade Piano Trio Version' closes the album. Tilman Gunther helped arrange besides playing elegant piano.

Dominik Schurmann has referenced a lot of jazz history. There's swing, bebop, the cool school, jazz/funk, latin, and the jazz ballad. It's all there in THE SEAGULL'S SERENADE. This is Schurmann's first large ensemble recording. I hope he'll do more.