

Stefan Schultze – Large Ensemble (Tour 2019)

“Sparkling, exciting, unconventional and unpredictable”

Uwe Bräutigam, nrwjazz.net, December 2019

Stefan Schultze Solo – Prelude concert at Berlin Jazz Week #1

“Schultze's performance on prepared piano reflected everything that provides so much pleasure in the musical playground that is jazz. Experimentation, conventions revealing themselves in endless complexity, the structures of surprise and understatement. The game of playing with expectations and the way these are so productively disappointed. Last but not least, the style of live performance of unconditional adaptation to the venue – in this case, a venue with the eloquent name of *Sowieso* (Anyway) located in the heart of Neukölln (Berlin).”

Martin Hufner, Jazzzeitung, June 2019

“And this is supposed to be jazz, one could ask with that incredulous amazement that destroys all prejudices about a kind of music so often defined by either over-exact, or completely nebulous ideas. These are clichés that a pianist like Stefan Schultze throws over his shoulder while he digs and gropes on his prepared piano with mallets or his bare hands. A percussive sound worker among a small forest of wooden sticks between the strings, giving them a completely different coloration than if they were swinging freely under the piano hammers.

Between mighty thunder and finely chiselled minimal patterns, tones rise from the body that sometimes sound like the slats of an African thumb piano, the mbira or the kalimba. Then again you wonder if you are hearing a Hungarian cimbalom, a dulcimer struck with mallets. And sometimes the gongs and metallophones of a Javanese gamelan orchestra seem to interfere. Despite the subtle use of amplification, a distant beckoning comes from the forefather of these purely acoustic manipulations, John Cage. Even in times of synthesizers, these acoustic manipulations radiate a magic that no electronic instrument can match. I want more of that!

Yes, it's jazz in a complete gesture: the physical sense of rhythm, the improvisational approach, and the sound design based on personal expression. And if you have any sense of how much is happening here, even a hard-boiled classical listener or tired pop fan can utter: "I want more of that!"

Gregor Dotzauer, Der Tagesspiegel, 26th June 2019

Stefan Schultze Solo Debut Album 'System Tribe', 2018 (WhyPlayJazz)

“In equal terms angular and tender, German composer and pianist Stefan Schultze's debut album as a soloist is a futuristic expedition into minimalism: I'm a sucker for prepared piano and this particular album makes me think about performing open-heart surgery on a grandfather clock, in a good way! It's not a novelty though – this is serious, beautiful music from one of Europe's most original jazz musicians.”

Chris Elcombe, BBC Late Junction Albums of the Year 2018

“Every piece on his debut album as soloist is different, but all offer surprising, daring and even futuristic sonic characteristics of the piano, extended by assorted preparations, special microphone setups, a bit of overdubbing and some bubbling sounds of the Fender Rhodes. [...] Obviously, Schultze compositions are influenced by the seminal work of John Cage, negating the familiar sounds of the piano and incorporating sonic elements from abstract sound art, noise music, minimal music and even techno. His solo pieces suggest independent sound habitats, with strong auditory images, surrealist, alien, dreamy or

simply industrious and distorted images.”

Eyal Hareuveni, salt peanuts, 2018*

“The pianist and composer Stefan Schultze is best known for his work with large ensembles in which complex arrangements have a decisive influence on the sound. When he plays solo [...] composition and improvisation interpenetrate each other and the interior of the prepared grand piano resembles a toy box with countless small parts.”

Ulf Drechsel, kulturradio on rbb, December 2018

“[...] However, Schultze treats the minimal motifs that form the basis of this music and are bound by modular thinking, more freely and radically than comparable pianists, such as Nik Bärtsch or Nils Frahm. [...] In making music, Schultze strives for a state of mind that is also characteristic of Zen art: simultaneous serenity and concentration with natural ease and absolute presence.”

Tom Fuchs, PIANONews, January 2019 (CD of the month(s) Jan. - Feb.)

“A fabulous roller coaster of sensual noises (‘Tong-Gu’) and great emotions that ends sensationally with a delicate track ‘Fade’.”

Sven Thielmann, Fono-Forum, 09/2018 (5 out 5 star music / 5 out of 5 star sound)

“Smart layering, delicate timing, powerful density –That's what some protagonists of ‘neoclassical music’ should be trained for!”

Karsten Zimalla, Westzeit, September 2018 (5 out of 5 stars)

“With his very first album as a soloist, Stefan Schultze has almost started a revolution.”

Andreas Schiffmann, music reviews, September 2018

“Yes, the piano can do all of that when someone has the courage to break boundaries.”

Christian Bakonyi, CONCERTO 5/2018 (4 out of 4 stars)

“The term ‘minimal music’ would be too crude to describe Stefan Schultze’s lonely journey into the infinite cosmos of sounds. [...] booming electro sounds flicker in his head, which he translates into an acoustic vocabulary in an astonishingly light way, uninhibited by the kind of intellectual unwieldiness that is unfortunately common in projects of this kind. The counter-model to all things techno.”

Reinhard Köchl, Jazz thing, September/October 2018

“His composer's personality is also fully apparent in the solo programme with a concise formal will and a sense of structure. [...] As if he wanted to bow to the genius loci of the Weimar Bauhaus, Schultze is averse to any ornamental playfulness, his musical thought is potently concise.”

Achim Doppler, CONCERTO, August/September 2018 (4 out of 4 stars)

“Schultze is successfully convincing with nuances and wide variations without reaching into the bag of tricks of electronic alienation.”

Ferdinand Dupuis-Panther, jazzhalo.de, 2018

“Stefan Schultze, pianist, arranger and composer, uses his skills in a wide variety of ways on his solo album. The compositions played are his own, and Schultze plays all the instruments himself, creating walls of sound with piano, prepared piano and sometimes with multi-track recordings that move away from conventional piano playing, only to return to the corresponding sounds.”

Michael Brinkschulte, Der Hörspiegel, 2018

“This is how people are, this is art, and this is a strong statement! You can feel that the music is born from the pleasure of playing, very infectious and unpretentious! This creates space and a great empathy with the listener! Electronic sounds in your head, acoustically implemented, wonderfully contemporary, and an

enriching change from the flood of techno-like albums.”
Claudio Puntin, 2018

Stefan Schultze – Large Ensemble ‘Ted The Bellhop’, 2017 (WhyPlayJazz)

“In the episodic film ‘Four Rooms’ unexpected things happen behind the doors of four hotel rooms. Stefan Schultze has now made the bellhop Ted, the connecting figure in the film, the role model for his new album. Because in his music, too, doors are always opening up to new surprises between jazz, new music, blues and noise. Schultze’s sound hotel also offers space for a feature of the sheng player Wu Wei or for a Carla Bley composition (‘Fleur Camivore’). For more than ten years, Schultze has been collecting important music awards, and this album shows us why. The enormous complexity of his scores and the virtuosity in dealing with the big band body of sound makes ‘Ted The Bellhop’ a small sensation. Some hot talent from the jazz scene have helped, including Schultze’s long-time comrades-in-arms Martin Schulte (guitar) and Peter Ehwald (sax), as well as former members of the WDR Big Band.”
Hans-Jürgen Schaal, Jazz thing 9-10/2017

“This is big band played in the beer hall. This is whip smart jazz rolled out as boozy fun. Stefan Schultze’s 18-piece ensemble is about as unconventional as a big band gets, and yet their personable enthusiasm and magnetic charm and a willingness to dive into a blues at will create an environment that makes this music completely embraceable. Included among the ensemble’s personnel is saxophonist Charlotte Greve, who has been mentioned frequently on this site and anywhere else I’ve laid my pen.”
www.birdistheworm.com, September 2017

“This is the second orchestral / Big Band album by the German pianist / composer Stefan Schultze released on the WhyPlayJazz label and his third recording with the Large Ensemble. The music is performed by an eighteen piece orchestra and Schultze composed five of the six extended pieces the album presents. The remaining piece was composed by Carla Bley. Schultze himself does not play on this album. The Chinese sheng player Wu Wei guests on one track.

The music is a brilliant amalgam of Jazz sub-genres and orchestral sound, which characterizes the European approach to Big Band music, which although powerfully swinging, is able to extend the idiom in many different directions, often simultaneously, encapsulating decades of the Big Band tradition and European instrumental music.

The compositions, although melody based, are very modern and always fascinating. Schultze wrote intricate and masterly woven arrangements, which present the full scale of possibilities of the Big Band and the many balances existing between the orchestra’s sections, the soloists and the overall sound.

The performances by all the musicians involved in this project are absolutely stunning, especially so in view of the complexity of the music and the challenges it presents both to the ensemble players and the soloists.

Overall this is a brilliant album from start to finish, especially so in view of the fact that Big Bands are almost extinct on the contemporary Jazz scene, a sad reflection of the cultural climate today. Both the music and the performances are inspired and highly aesthetic, which makes this album an absolute delight for all Big Band enthusiasts and in fact all Jazz connoisseurs. A must!”
Adam Baruch, adambaruch.com, June 2017

Schultze Ehwald Rainey ‘Behind Her Eyes’, 2017 (jazzwerkstatt)

"[...]an extremely sensitive and at the same time expressive album, a successful example of intimate chamber jazz with ascetic, concentrated power."

Heinrich Brinkmüller-Becker, nrwjazz.net, 11th December 2017

"A breath that becomes a sound, that becomes a melodic motif. A piano motif like an echo. A caesura that has at least as much to say as the emphatically-open dialogue afforded by saxophonist Peter Ehwald and his pianistic partner Stefan Schultze that reveals itself as a process of searching, especially at the beginning of the new album. Better to raise one question too many than to succumb to the temptation of a hasty answer at some point. What the two have now been tackling for years shows a deep harmony that can only exist with the affirmation of the differences between their two characters. From this approach, the pair took on New York drummer Tom Rainey into their midst. And in this constellation he proves to be a powerful contributor and source of inspiration – for it is precisely the intertwined, asymmetrical rhythmic patterns that immensely enriches the intuitive symbiosis of Ehwald/Schultze.

The pieces that emerge from this go in different, rarely predictable and often somewhat labyrinthine directions – but never without a decisive approach in the form of a compositional idea. Nothing is superficial in this common kaleidoscope of musical fantasy. They let it run when something is good, and sometimes boldly take it to the extreme. Without being contrived, because everyone remains confidently true to themselves when connect with the ideas of the other two. For example, when Stefan Schultze solos turn highly emotionally on the piano and Peter Ehwald delivers spherical, sometimes even hymnic answers on the saxophone. This and much more releases abrupt eruptions on this new recording, but also carries you away into enchantingly atmospheric dream sequences, some of which are intended as a homage to Morton Feldman.

This listening pleasure is complex, unpredictable, and often profound. But the experience behind it is exemplary!"

Stefan Pieper, Jazzzeitung, July 2017

"Schultze und Ehwald both relish exploring the melodic contours of the pieces, which are often reflective, even dreamy, while Rainey's cymbal color play remains the epitome of sensitivity."

John Sharpe, The New York City Jazz Record, 2017

"One of the most exciting Jazz albums this year!"

HIFI Stars, 2017

"The attraction of this extremely emotional music lies in the tension between these three individuals – from the diversity of their musical paths leading to a common goal."

Rainer Bratfisch, Jazzpodium, 09/2017

"The eleven tracks of this incredibly refined, rousing concept album are exciting – getting under your skin and tingling upon it, both exciting and meditative."

Sabine Kaufmann, musenblaetter.de, 2017

"Something happens all the time, constant movement demands attention that is very fulfilling, because you can imagine yourself in the midst of these conversations, either listening dreamily or rocking along with your whole body."

Wolfgang Giese, musikansich.de, 2017

"A strong album, where three protagonists play with at least as much devotion to each other as they give their own virtuosity while playing together."

Daniel Kluger, musikreviews.de, 2017

“Free jazz without noise, because even in the most spontaneous moments there is that quiet restraint that Morty Feldman (to whom the trio tip their hats with the opener ‘Edgewise’) used to create pure beauty.”
Karsten Zimalla westzeit.de, 2017

“Great competence is generously displayed in the interweaving of goal-orientation with flexibility, cautiousness with consequential follow-through, and elaboration with ad hoc situations. For the ears.”
Concerto, 2017

Simon Rose Stefan Schultze Duo ‘The Ten Thousand Things’, 2015 (Red Toucan)

“Joining forces to extract as many undiscovered textures from their instruments as humanly possible, British alto and baritone saxophonist Simon Rose and German-prepared piano specialist Stefan Schultze come across less like mad scientists and more like dedicated epistemologists. Like researchers confronted with unexpected by-products from their experiments, they assiduously dissect the results for further trials.”

Ken Waxman, The Whole Note, Toronto, Vol 21 No 5, Jan. 2016

“Baritone and alto saxophonist Simon Rose and pianist Stefan Schultze met in 2013 in Berlin, and even if the first came from the free improv scene and the second from a more standard jazz background, their collaboration on this album makes you wonder about these different perspectives because it all sounds so seamless and integrated.

On eleven improvisations these two musicians find a wonderful balance between ferocious destruction and sensitive construction, starting with their instruments, as the piano is prepared with all kinds of plastic sticks and bags, and Rose is a real fan of circular breathing, rhythmic tongue slapping, and other harder to define techniques, yet at the same time, and despite the obvious harshness, the music strikes a deep emotional chord, like a cry full of agony and pain, with vulnerability and even tenderness and intimacy. And that may explain the title, as “The Ten Thousand Things” is a buddhist expression of all the things that make up our world, and their musical reflection gives us this: a myriad of sounds and interactions that make us feel these ‘ten thousand things’, with all their qualities, and complexities and simplicities and gentleness, and so much more.

What I love about the album is that the two artists have a strong common vision and they go for it, all the way. There's nothing half-hearted here, or no compromising, no crowd-pleasing treats, but only authentic and creative expressivity, like life itself, hard and real like life itself.

It is one of those albums which take you over completely, and because of its emotional power, it has been a soothing album for me, and listening to it dozens and dozens of times, the raw sensitivity of the baritone, the bell-like sounds of the piano, the physical intimacy, the sometimes violent percussiveness, matched the emotional need of your humble servant, at moments when he felt he wanted to smash the things around him while at the same time needing some consolation and sympathetic sentiments. Apologies for the subjectivity, but there is no other way to approach this music : you love or you hate it. This guy loves it.”

Stef Gijssels, Free Jazz Collective, 01/2016

Stefan Schultze – Large Ensemble feat. Wu Wei ‘Erratic Wish Machine’, 2015 (WhyPlayJazz)

“A tour de force of contemporary big band jazz.”
Gregor Dotzauer, Der Tagesspiegel, 9th August 2017

“The label WhyPlayJazz, otherwise known for its experimental combo recordings, has landed a great break-through with its first jazz orchestra CD – also a real achievement for composer and WDR jazz-award winner 2010, Stefan Schultze. Produced by radio broadcaster Deutschlandfunk, this album moves away from the usual theme-solo-theme-big-band-program with a build-up of tightly composed mood pieces through non-strophic, sometimes minimalistic motif and riff developments that are encompassed by expansive soloist soundscapes.”

Frithjof Strauß, Jazz Podium, 07/08 2015

“Overall this is a very unusual album, which is definitely worth of the attention of connoisseurs searching non-trivial musical explorations. Schultze, on the other hand, deserves praise and encouragement for pursuing his dreams, which eventually result in such superb recordings as this one.”

Adam Baruch, adambaruch.com, 06/2015

“For the production of Erratic Wish Machine, Stefan Schultze invited the virtuoso Chinese mouth organist Wu Wei (amongst others, heard with Pascal Contet and Ensemble Intercontemporain): very unusual and very successful. Unpredictable machine-wishes that yield a lot of surprises. Definitely worth a listen!”

Thierry Giard, Culturejazz.fr, 06/2015

“The sheng is a kind of Chinese mouth organ, and the pianist and composer Stefan Schultze was so fascinated by the virtuoso Wu Wei and his instrument that he composed a big band album around it. ‘It is a particularly loud instrument that is nevertheless capable of a lot of contrast, and I wanted to find a way to integrate it in my kind of big band music,’ says Schultze. ‘One has to create enough quiet moments to give this instrument the space it needs. The sheng should do more than glimmer through as a yet another minimal tone color.’ This approach has worked superbly on Erratic Wish Machine (WhyPlayJazz) by Stefan Schultze and his Large Ensemble.”

Rolf Thomas, Jazz thing #109, 05/2015

“Schulze is an impressive composer in his ability to break out of all big band traditions. His music goes through phases that range from introverted melodies through to extreme heavy rock. [...] The CD is rich in variety, consistently fascinating and beautiful, and gives Wu Wei the opportunity to really utilize the unlimited possibilities of the Sheng instrument.”

Tom Beetz, JazzFlits #239, 05/2015

“His music is among the most original that the international big band scene has to offer. His compositions are full of surprising developments, full of original ideas, full of breaks in style and not the least, full of unusual sounds. Stefan Schultze continues to be a master of contrast and diversification.”

Odilo Clausnitzer, Deutschlandfunk JazzFacts, 05/2015

Stefan Schultze – Large Ensemble (Bonn Jazzfestival 2015)

“Large Ensemble, a 17-piece big band of top musicians, impresses us with rhythmic finesse, melodious color and a good dose of humor.”

Claudia Wallendorf, General-Anzeiger Bonn, 05/2015

“Music that doesn’t conform to any single category, consummately orchestrated with complex arrangements and a full big band sound with true audience appeal. [...] tremendously interesting for inquisitive lovers of music who can appreciate an immense spectrum ranging from apparently directionless wandering pianissimi to gigantic eruptions from the whole ensemble.”

Bonner Rundschau, 05/2015

"Music at its best! Christof Schlingensief and Frank Zappa would have loved it. Stefan Schultze is definitely a mischievous character who loves surprising turns, contrasting opposites and raw edges."
Cem Akalin, jazzandrock.com, 05/2015

Schultze Ehwald Duo 'Grasp', 2014 (WhyPlayJazz)

"The music is a wonderfully romantic / lyrical contemporary Jazz, very melodic but absolutely non-trivial. Wholeheartedly recommended!"
Adam Baruch, adambaruch.com, 02/2015

"A fresh instrumental approach to the jazz/modern interface without taboos, without borders or reservations – quite an achievement with the six different pieces on the album. It requires patience and sometimes takes a little trust to follow. But how wonderful is it to finally be free of guitar riffs, computer generated beats, over-produced vocals and pimped up sounds. This is where one must listen attentively without waiting for climaxes, but accepting that music can also mean flow. No festooned climaxes. For those not easily satisfied: dig-in."
Sven Ferchow, Neue Musikzeitung, 05/2014

"[...] Ehwald, who has received a lot of exposure lately, engages a nuanced and direct rigour, a thoughtful control and earthy sound that gives a vital immediacy that is rooted deeper than parading and compositional equilibrium. Schulze is exactly the right partner for an eventful dialogue. They have played together in a number of bands and have achieved enough for their union to have its own inner logic without a need to boast their individual strengths."
Dr. Ulrich Steinmetzger, Leipziger Volkszeitung, 2014

"In a year already dominated by duo releases, here's one that you mustn't overlook. [...] Six Haunting themes composed by the pair... four by Peter, two by Stefan. [...] The album is titled Grasp and is released on the WhyPlayJazz record label. And I suggest you grasp a copy when you can."
Pete Butchers, Jazz Today, 05/2014

"[...] the great art of musical togetherness [...]. Their virtuoso instrumental abilities come through from the back seat. Because rather than using regular forms of expression, these two musicians are more interested in exploring unusual forms that they throw in into the fray ad hoc around improvisational processes that are completed and determined by melodies and harmonies."
Martin Laurentius, Jazz thing #103, 2014

"[...] "Grasp", (WhyPlayJazz RS013) is the translated mastery and powers of comprehension when both musicians directly respond and react to each other in half a dozen of their own compositions. Schultze's stark approach is occasionally countered by more expressionistic episodes from Ehwald, which is by no means detrimental to the atmospheric environment, in fact, quite the contrary."
Reiner Kobe, Jazz Podium, 4/2013

"Ehwald and Schultze have got it all. With excellent timing and a great sense of surprising harmonic turns they improvise throughout six of their own pieces."
Hans Hielscher, spiegel.de, 2nd March 2014

Backyard Jazz Orchestra (Tour 2012)

"[...] a splendid concert. [...] breathtakingly pounding jazz inspired by the Balkans."
Osnabrücker Zeitung, 11/2012

"It got obvious how versatile Ehwald and Schultze handle large ensembles. [...] The suite-like compositions of Schultze, Ehwald and the Macedonian arranger Vladimir Nikolov struck with facets and contrasts. These showed an elegant balance between fine jazz harmony, impressionistic orchestra parts, rocky elements and balkanic influences."

Jazz Podium, 2012

"An orchestra as a crossroad between Balkan music and jazz, and between established jazz musicians and newcomers. Artistic directors Stefan Schultze and Peter Ehwald brought together sixteen musicians from Berlin to Bucharest in order to build bridges with improvised music."

Jazz thing, 2012

Stefan Schultze - Large Ensemble feat. Wu Wei

"Schultze's compositions give impulse to new developments, cause tingling sensations, electrify with new-found freedom for the creative jazz musician, whose improvisational co-creation is fundamental. [...] Schultze creates atmospheric acoustic impressions reminiscent of some of the woodwind weaves in the forays into chamber music of Charles Mingus: dark, bass-heavy, ponderous.[...]"

Olaf Weiden, Kölnische Rundschau, 10/2011

Stefan Schultze - Large Ensemble 'Run', 2011 (Double Moon Records)

"You won't find a more exquisitely balanced big band debut."

Jazz'n'More 08/2011

"Conducting this superb 17-piece German orchestra is a new young writing talent. Stefan Schultze is an award-winning German pianist, composer and orchestrator and an alumnus of Köln's Hochschule für Musik and the Manhattan School of Music, where he studied with Jim McNeely. That must have influenced an already promising voice, which is evident (with hints of Gil Evans) throughout, notably in the subtly differentiated opening and closing thematic sections of his long, swinging Wonderland and the control of orchestral textures and drama of prize-winning compositions Green Falling and Reminiscence. But Schultze's most personal and adventurous scores are for the complex but lucid Karawahn, a slow-medium swinger, and the through-composed Monsterkind. Impeccably performed and recorded, this is a well-crafted album by a richly imaginative writer. See doublemoon.de"

Ray Comiskey, The Irish Times, 29th July 2011

"Solo strength is high on this beautifully scored big band album, produced and directed by the German pianist/composer Stefan Schultze. [...] It is Schultze's writing and the 17-piece band's ensemble work that really stand out. [...] Muted fanfares yield to impressionist vistas and rich harmonies to the occasional bombastic climax."

Mike Hobart, Financial Times, 05/2011

"Schultze creates sparkling spaces that are voluminously filled, and at times iridescent, but never taking leave of the basic beat and song structure. In this way 'Run' is a self-assured, lavish and carefully balanced big band debut."

Ralf Dombrowski, Stereoplay 03/2011 (outstanding sound quality!)

"Run – Karawahn, which Schultze has already presented in Carnegie Hall, and Green Falling, for which he collected the ArtEZ Award in Enschede, Netherlands, aren't even the highpoints of an album that quite by-the-by shows that German jazz has long since won a significant platform on the international stage."

Rolf Thomas, Jazzthetik, 03/2011

"This music breathes, pulsates and maintains a constant awareness of the responsibility for the collective acoustic impression in every moment. Could music be more democratically represented than this?"

Tom Fuchs, Stereo, 03/2011

"Opposites that polarise themselves and get swept along, styles that align, while remaining different. Sounds that sometimes overwhelm, but never become fanciful. [...] This is the way to make a big band sound a whole lot of fun."

Sven Ferchow, Neue Musikzeitung, 02/2011

"Schultze's influences come from progressive rock à la Frank Zappa, just as much as from classical jazz à la Bill Evans, but also from the modernists such as Toru Takemitsu, Béla Bartók, Anton Webern, Arvo Pärt, Steve Reich and György Kurtág. [...] Clearly, the man goes for quality and energy."

Ludwig Jurgeit, Jazz Podium, 02/2011

"Even with the impressive size and power of the big band, Stefan Schultze by no means indulges in the intoxication of this powerful sound experience. In the recently released CD of his Large Ensemble, he changes tack between delicate woodwind-drenched passages, sound experiments à la new music, rock grooves and references to the jazz tradition."

Anja Buchmann for JazzFacts / Deutschlandfunk, 11/02/2011

"Innovative musicians love to compose for large ensembles and, not unusually, to lead a big band – after all, this is how unique sounds are discovered. Hence the existence of jazz groups such as the award-winning Large Ensemble from Cologne."

Hans Hielscher, KulturSPIEGEL, spiegel.de, 01/2011

schultzing 'federleicht', 2011 (JazzHausMusik)

"[...] the focus is on the pianist Stefan Schultze and the saxophonist and clarinetist Peter Ehwald; the pieces of the quartet draw their tension from the contrast between these two musicians. Against Schultze's sometimes stringent economy comes the cheeky playfulness of the saxophonist, who makes use of any means at his disposal, from calling out in a shrill voice to plunking away on toy instruments."

Stefan Hentz, Die Zeit, 06/2011

"Jazz with German lyrics! How brave, you think when you hear the first title. When Hanna Jursch, vocalist of the refreshingly different band schultzing, sings about tidying up and architecture (*My home*) one notices a slightly dadaistic touch and definitely a good dose of humour – a combination which does not always work out in jazz. But here, it does."

WAZ, 06/2011

"*federleicht* (German for: as light as a feather). Only a true musical heavyweight can sound like that."

JazzHausMusik, 04/2011

"schultzing are one of the most amazing bands of the German jazz scene. [...]"

cd aktuell, 04/2011

"schultzing's improvised music is stylistically multifaceted and ranges from sweltering latin jazz (*Regenzeit*) to raucous jazz rock (*In Gent*), and from expressively urban modern jazz (*federleicht*) to a contemporary version of Duke Ellington's classic *Caravan* (schultzing have called it *Karawahn*), a recomposition by Stefan Schultze.[...]"

Jazz thing, 04/2011

Stefan Schultze - Large Ensemble (Days of Macedonian Music, Macedonia, 2010)

“[...] quite different from the well-known mainstream sound that everyone would expect.”

Dragan Stojkovski, Radio Macedonia, Skopje, 04/2010

Stefan Schultze – Large Ensemble (WDR Jazz Prize 2010)

“One could call it generous or noble: Although they already have their own big band that has itself won several Grammys, the WDR awarded its Jazz Prize 2010 to another big band. This distinction is one that Stefan Schultze’s Large Ensemble has definitely earned.”

Hans Hielscher, Spiegel Online Kultur, 19th January 2011

“Stefan Schultze consistently succeeds in blurring the boundaries between swing music from the U.S. and European avant garde. He nonchalantly blends melodious simplicity and harmonic complexity.”

Bernd Hoffmann, Jazz Historian & Head of WDR Jazz radio station, 2010

“The WDR Big Band performed works of Stefan Schultze [...] whose pieces open up pleasant perspectives beyond the already wide field of big band composing – with much unconvivial room for the soloist to improvise and accords like nice, fat clusters.”

Olaf Weiden, Kölnische Rundschau, 2010

“The WDR Big Band demonstrated impressively that 31-year-old composer Stefan Schultze really knows how to manage orchestral balance and harmonic complexity.”

Martin Woltersdorf, Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 2010

schultzing ‚War das schon immer so?‘, 2009 (Granada Jazz)

“[...] schultzing ignore the laws of jazz. [...] The audience almost physically feels them breathing. [...] schultzing have adopted a clear and distinct position, to which the German musical scene must in turn position themselves.”

Frank X.A. Zipperer, Jazzthetik 06/2009

“Jazz full of ideas – It still exists: jazz that can surprise us in any given moment.”

Mannheimer Morgen, 06/2009

“schultzing create something new and original. The nine pieces with ingeniously crafted lines, clever arrangements and fresh improvisations reveal something I miss with a lot of new releases: the courage to take risks.”

Jürgen Overkott, www.derwesten.de, 06/2009

“schultzing are currently one of the most refreshing jazz quintets – performing surprising compositions far beyond the realms of cheap clichés.”

Tobias Richtsteig, Jazz Podium, 05/2009

“[...] schultzing experiments [...] without self-consciousness and fear, and without pampering to the audience, but by challenging them instead. Their pieces are chaotic and abstract, then counterintuitive and as light as a feather. Though the listener is not cow-towed to, when a little more time is given, the listener is all the more rewarded. [...]“

melodie & rhythmus, 05/2009

"Lots of praise and glory for a band who have really deserved it; they have shown courage and have beaten new paths. They play jazz – even if this term doesn't do justice to the music schultzing creates."
Bernd Schwoppe, Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung, 01/2009

Stefan Schultze & Oktoposse

"[...]Stefan Schultze is a multi-talent. [...]"
Kölnische Rundschau, 03/2007

"[...] a performance of great timbre-sensual curiosity [...]"
Kölnische Rundschau, 06/2006 (Stefan Schultze graduation concert 2006)

"Oktoposse demonstrate that, until now, jazz octets have been grossly underestimated. Despite all prejudices to the contrary, a target-oriented and compact way of working can function very well in a line-up of eight. At least, this is what the young formation Oktoposse have proven."
Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, 10/2005

Oktoposse (Winners of „New Generation“ competition, Jazz an der Donau Festival, 2005)

"[...] fresh, cheeky and intelligent music. In short: intellectually stimulating music that is utterly fun."
Mittelbayerische Zeitung, 07/2005