

CONRAD
SCHNITZLER

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Reissue. Originally released 2003.
Recorded 1974–1978
CD / vinyl (180g) / download
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Tracklisting:

(14 untitled pieces ranging from
3:33 to 5:53 minutes)

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Key facts

- Conrad Schnitzler (1937–2011), composer and concept artist, is one of the most important representatives of Germany's electronic music avant-garde. A student of Joseph Beuys, he founded Berlin's legendary Zodiak Free Arts Lab, a subculture club, in 1967/68, was a member of Tangerine Dream (together with Klaus Schulze and Edgar Froese) and Kluster (with Dieter Moebius and Hans-Joachim Roedelius) and also released countless solo albums.
- The golden album is a song collection from Schnitzler's archive, recorded between 1976 and 1978, originally released by the small German label Marginal Talent in 2003.
- On vinyl for the first time
- Liner notes by Asmus Tietchens
- Available on CD (digipak), vinyl (180g) or as download

In the comprehensive canon of Schnitzler releases, the music on the golden album stands out a mile in every respect. Judged on the sound alone, there is little to suggest that the material was recorded as long ago as the 1976 to 1978 period. There is more at play here than two tape recorders, analogue synthesizers and sequencers. Digital keyboards and computer-aided musical progressions are in evidence. With its multi-channel complexity, perfect equalizing, a translucent depth of focus and the brilliance of its signals, the golden album could easily have been recorded today, some 35 years later. Alas, Schnitzler can no longer let us in on the secret of his recording process, nor which equipment he deployed in achieving this feat. It is fair to surmise that this sound owed much to the fact that Schnitzler was often in the company of his friends from Tangerine Dream. Their equipment was always state of the art—and Schnitzler's technical expertise allowed him to take full advantage thereof.

As if the tonal quality is not astounding enough, the compositions are guaranteed to dumbfound even the most enlightened Schnitzler listeners. Structured like a symphony in various movements, utterly abstract atonal passages are followed by solid sequences of rhythm and harmony, as energetic as Cluster, yet equally evocative of 1980s electronic pop music. Once again, his execution bordering on perfection, Schnitzler has pulled off the ultimate balancing trick between pop and so-called serious music.

Asmus Tietchens