Mp3 Matthew Black Orchestra - That's All There Is



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60s 70s-inspired symphonic pop featuring piano, string section french horn 11 MP3 Songs POP: Beatles-pop, POP: Piano Details: I can trace the origins of Matthew Black Orchestra to the first time I heard "Philadelphia Freedom" on the radio in my parents' car. MBO updates the symphonic pop sound of the 60s 70s, combining an electric lineup with piano, string section french horn. I was a fan of 70s music back before it was cool -- that is, when it was still the 70s. As a young pianist growing up in the great state of New Hampshire, I strayed from the path of classical training early on and starting learning how to play ELO songs by ear. My friends who played electric guitar had no shortage of heroes from the era -- Randy Rhoads, Eddie Van Halen, et al. But the golden age of piano rock was already on the wane -- Billy Joel, Elton John, Carole King and even Barry Manilow had already put out their best work. My problem with most bands with a "retro" sound is they occupy an uncomfortable place between mockery and homage. For me, the orchestral piano pop sound of the 70s was just a flat-out cool sound. I like all those records. Including Manilow. And these days, the only time we hear string sections on the radio is behind Celine Dion. That alone was reason enough to attempt this project. Of course, as an indie project, I couldn't afford to bring a full symphony orchestra into the Capitol Records studio to track this masterwork. But I ended up preferring the sound of a string trio with horn (occasionally double- and triple-tracked, I admit) because you get to hear more of the personality of the instruments -- you can tell it's a real player and not a sample library. That said, while the roots of the record might be in the 70s, it's also inflected with the 60s and 80s pop I liked the most. I enjoyed making this record a lot and I hope you enjoy listening to it. (And buying it.) The players: Nick Moselle (guitar), Ana Lenchantin (cello), Amy Sanchez (french horn), Heather Lockie (viola), Vivi Rama (bass), Martin St Pierre and Julie Carpenter (violin), Dan Thompson (drums). Addicted: my guitarist always would bug me about putting more "uptempo" songs in the set like

this one. I think maybe he meant songs where he could do long, obscene outro solos, like this one. When I wrote the song, the only thing I was sure about was that there needed to be a trombone solo in the middle. A vision realized. That's all there is: the one track on the CD where I played everything but the little string fills. Even bass. I was a huge New Order fan so this the most 80s-inflected song in the bunch. The solo was done on an arpeggiated synthesizer. The good old days: A slightly disco beat and a slightly REO Speedwagon-ish Wurlitzer riff. Album trivia: this song features the only section of 7/4 time on the CD. For that, you can be grateful. When I was a star: Excellent french horn work by Amy on this one. One of my favorites when playing live. I'm not: I wrote this song thinking a) I wanted to use a swing rhythm and b) I wanted to write in D flat. The swing rhythm was a good idea. D flat, not so much. I like how it came out, but I can never remember how to play it. I'm losing you: a song built around the famous Mellotron flute sound that appeared on countless 60s and 70s records. Space invader: I had recorded an earlier version of this song that was more straight-up electro, but after I put the band together I thought I'd arrange it for the bigger lineup, where it took on a more disco feel. Consider it done: This is one of my favorite tracks on the CD, though nobody else agrees. That's ok, there's always one like that. Dan the drummer did an excllent job keeping the six different rhythms straight. Turn of the screw: One of the first songs I arranged for the big band. A slow number also featuring a cameo appearance by my Jupiter 6, making odd noises. Today's the day I die: A friend of mine once described my songs as "catchy melodies attached to bummer lyrics". Let me assure the public the 'death' in this song is purely metaphorical. Big nowhere: I asked myself, how can I write a long song that isn't boring? The answer: write two songs and then just join them together. It's not quite as long as "Stairway to Heaven", but that can be a challenge for the next album.

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