

Martin Loebel · Jaroslav Nešetřil  
Robin Thomas *Editors*

# A Journey Through Discrete Mathematics

A Tribute to Jiří Matoušek

 Springer

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*Editors*

Martin Loebel  
Department of Applied Mathematics  
Charles University  
Praha, Czech Republic

Jaroslav Nešetřil  
Computer Science Institute of Charles  
University  
Charles University  
Praha, Czech Republic

Robin Thomas  
School of Mathematics  
Georgia Institute of Technology  
Atlanta, GA, USA

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# Contents

<b>Simplex Range Searching and Its Variants: A Review</b> .....	1
Pankaj K. Agarwal	
<b>Fair Representation by Independent Sets</b> .....	31
Ron Aharoni, Noga Alon, Eli Berger, Maria Chudnovsky, Dani Kotlar, Martin Loebl, and Ran Ziv	
<b>Computing Heegaard Genus is NP-Hard</b> .....	59
David Bachman, Ryan Derby-Talbot, and Eric Sedgwick	
<b>Approximation-Friendly Discrepancy Rounding</b> .....	89
Nikhil Bansal and Viswanath Nagarajan	
<b>A Tverberg Type Theorem for Matroids</b> .....	115
Imre Bárány, Gil Kalai, and Roy Meshulam	
<b>Gershgorin Disks for Multiple Eigenvalues of Non-negative Matrices</b> .....	123
Imre Bárány and József Solymosi	
<b>Computing the Partition Function of a Polynomial on the Boolean Cube</b> .....	135
Alexander Barvinok	
<b>Siegel’s Lemma Is Sharp</b> .....	165
József Beck	
<b>On Codimension One Embedding of Simplicial Complexes</b> .....	207
Anders Björner and Afshin Goodarzi	
<b>Using Brouwer’s Fixed Point Theorem</b> .....	221
Anders Björner, Jiří Matoušek, and Günter M. Ziegler	
<b>Beyond the Borsuk–Ulam Theorem: The Topological Tverberg Story</b> ....	273
Pavle V.M. Blagojević and Günter M. Ziegler	

<b>One-Sided Epsilon-Approximants</b> .....	343
Boris Bukh and Gabriel Nivasch	
<b>A Note on Induced Ramsey Numbers</b> .....	357
David Conlon, Domingos Dellamonica, Steven La Fleur, Vojtěch Rödl, and Mathias Schacht	
<b>ARRIVAL: A Zero-Player Graph Game in <math>NP \cap coNP</math></b> .....	367
Jérôme Dohrau, Bernd Gärtner, Manuel Kohler, Jiří Matoušek, and Emo Welzl	
<b>Constant-Factor Approximation for TSP with Disks</b> .....	375
Adrian Dumitrescu and Csaba D. Tóth	
<b>Transport-Entropy Inequalities and Curvature in Discrete-Space Markov Chains</b> .....	391
Ronen Eldan, James R. Lee, and Joseph Lehec	
<b>Bounding Helly Numbers via Betti Numbers</b> .....	407
Xavier Goaoc, Pavel Paták, Zuzana Patáková, Martin Tancer, and Uli Wagner	
<b>Ruled Surface Theory and Incidence Geometry</b> .....	449
Larry Guth	
<b>Approximating the <math>k</math>-Level in Three-Dimensional Plane Arrangements</b> .....	467
Sariel Har-Peled, Haim Kaplan, and Micha Sharir	
<b>Schrijver Graphs and Projective Quadrangulations</b> .....	505
Tomáš Kaiser and Matěj Stehlík	
<b>Near-Optimal Lower Bounds for <math>\epsilon</math>-Nets for Half-Spaces and Low Complexity Set Systems</b> .....	527
Andrey Kupavskii, Nabil H. Mustafa, and János Pach	
<b>Random Simplicial Complexes: Around the Phase Transition</b> .....	543
Nathan Linial and Yuval Peled	
<b>Nullspace Embeddings for Outerplanar Graphs</b> .....	571
László Lovász and Alexander Schrijver	
<b>Homology of Spaces of Directed Paths in Euclidean Pattern Spaces</b> .....	593
Roy Meshulam and Martin Raussen	
<b>Sperner's Colorings and Optimal Partitioning of the Simplex</b> .....	615
Maryam Mirzakhani and Jan Vondrák	
<b>Teaching and Compressing for Low VC-Dimension</b> .....	633
Shay Moran, Amir Shpilka, Avi Wigderson, and Amir Yehudayoff	

**Restricted Invertibility Revisited** ..... 657  
Assaf Naor and Pierre Youssef

**Rational Polygons: Odd Compression Ratio and Odd Plane Coverings** ... 693  
Rom Pinchasi and Yuri Rabinovich

**First Order Probabilities for Galton–Watson Trees** ..... 711  
Moumanti Podder and Joel Spencer

**Crossing-Free Perfect Matchings in Wheel Point Sets** ..... 735  
Andres J. Ruiz-Vargas and Emo Welzl

**Network Essence: PageRank Completion  
and Centrality-Conforming Markov Chains** ..... 765  
Shang-Hua Teng

**Anti-concentration Inequalities for Polynomials** ..... 801  
Van Vu

# Introduction

Professor Jiří Matoušek passed away in March 2015 on the eve of his 52nd birthday. He left behind a large body of work, including over 170 research articles, eight books, and numerous unpublished lecture notes. This book is a celebration of his mathematical, pedagogical, and personal legacy.

Jirka was an excellent researcher whose work transcended individual boundaries of particular areas of mathematics and theoretical computer science. He excelled in every subject in which he was active. The book's content demonstrates Jirka's broad interests and influence. We hope that the carefully selected papers of this volume show the beauty and relevance of his scientific contribution in shaping mathematics and theoretical computer science research of today.

Jirka was an exceptional teacher as many of his colleagues and students can confirm. Over the years, he taught and shaped most of the basic courses offered by his home Department of Applied Mathematics, Charles University, Prague, and later also at ETH Zurich. Several of Jirka's courses, spiced with his particular sense of humor, were the basis of his excellent textbooks and monographs, which became the standard of scientific writing around the world. We tried to reflect the qualities of Jirka's style in this book.

Jirka was a great humanist. He used to say that mathematicians are useful for the society through their wisdom. We hope that this book bears a testimony of the kind wisdom of Jirka Matoušek. We believe that his legacy will be here for many years to come.

Prague, Czech Republic  
Prague, Czech Republic  
Atlanta, GA, USA

Martin Loebel  
Jaroslav Nešetřil  
Robin Thomas





Photo courtesy of ETH Zurich, Giulia Marthaler

# Curriculum Vitae of Jiří Matoušek

March 10, 1963–March 9, 2015 Prague, Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic.

## Academic History

- Charles University, Prague, Faculty of Mathematics and Physics, 1981–1986, Diploma, RNDr. degree (analogue of master’s degree).
- CSc. degree (analogue of Ph.D.): Charles University, Prague, 1991.
- Habilitation (“docent” at Charles University) 1995.
- Dr.Sc. (higher doctorate) degree in mathematics, 1996.
- Professor at Charles University, 2000.
- Professor (35% position) at ETH Zurich, 2012.

## Employment Record

Charles University, Prague 1986–2015 (1986–1997 doctoral study, 1987–1995 assistant professor of mathematics, 1995–2000 associate professor (docent), 2000–2015 full professor).

ETH Zurich 2012–2015 full professor (35 %).

## *Visiting Positions*

- 1991, visiting assistant professor, Georgia Institute of Technology, 6 months.
- 1992, Humboldt research fellow, Freie Universität Berlin, 12 months.
- 1996–2011, ETH Zurich, visiting position every year, 3–4 months each year (6 months in 2011).

## ***Other Longer Visits***

Freie Universität Berlin 1989 (1 month), 1990 (7 weeks), and 1994 (7 weeks); DIMACS Center, Rutgers University, and Princeton University, 1989 (6 weeks), 1990 (2 weeks), 1993 (3 weeks), and 1994 (3 weeks); Macquarie University, Sydney, 1994 (3 weeks); Tel Aviv University, 1995 (2 months); University College London, 2001 (1 month); Univ. Santiago de Chile, 2003 (5 weeks); and Japanese Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, 2005 (5 weeks).

## **Publications**

Published eight books (four of them with co-authors), over 170 original research papers, and several surveys.

## **Honors and Awards**

- Several prizes in high-school and university mathematical competitions.
- Prize of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences (1986) for a joint paper with M. Loeb.
- Prize of the Second European Mathematical Congress for young mathematicians (Budapest, 1996).
- Prize of the Czech Learned Society for Young Scientists (2000).
- Elected member of the Czech Learned Society in 2006.
- The book *Thirty-Three Miniatures* published by the AMS was included among the “Outstanding Academic Titles 2011” of the journal *Choice*.
- Best paper award of the ACM-SIAM Symposium on Discrete Algorithms (2012) for a joint paper with M. Čadek, M. Krčál, F. Sergeraert, L. Vokřínek, and U. Wagner.
- Computational Geometry: Theory and Application 2016 Test of Time Award for *Reporting Points in Halfspaces*, *Comput. Geom.* 2: 169–186 (1992).

## **Teaching Activity**

- Teaching regularly since 1987, courses given in Prague, Zurich, and Atlanta; many subjects in mathematics and computer science including basic undergraduate courses (discrete mathematics, linear algebra), graduate courses (discrete and computational geometry, programming languages, program construction and verification, data structures, algorithms, probabilistic method), and advanced

courses on more special topics (topological methods in combinatorics and geometry, metric embeddings, semidefinite programming and approximation algorithms, advanced topics in discrete geometry).

- With J. Nešetřil developed the introductory course of discrete mathematics in Prague and wrote a successful textbook based on the course (so far published in six languages). With E. Welzl developed a course “Algorithms, Probability, Computing” at the ETH Zurich. Wrote books based on several other courses taught in Prague and/or Zurich.
- Taught two intensive block courses for Ph.D. students (“Topological Methods in Combinatorics and Geometry,” ETH Zurich, 2001; “Metric embeddings,” Univ. Autònoma de Barcelona, 2009).
- Supervised ten Ph.D. students (seven of them have finished successfully) and numerous M.Sc. and B.Sc. theses.
- Led research seminars for undergraduate students (combinatorics) and a reading seminar for Ph.D. students for many years.

## Lecture Activities

- Invited speaker at the International Congress of Mathematicians in Berlin (1998) and European Congress of Mathematics (Budapest, 1996).
- Invited tutorial at the 39th IEEE Symposium on Foundations of Computer Science (FOCS), 1998.
- Invited lectures at several other conferences (e.g., Random Structures & Algorithms, Eurocomb, Graph Drawing, MFCS).
- Erdős Memorial Lectures at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (2000).
- Plenary lecture at the annual meeting of the London Mathematical Society (1999).
- Plenary lecture at the joint meeting of the German Mathematical Society and the German Society for Mathematical Education (Berlin, 2007).
- Colloquia and invited lectures at numerous universities and research centers over the world, e.g., Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, Princeton Univ., Univ. of Tokyo, Univ. College London, Cambridge Univ., Oxford Univ., ETH Zurich, Courant Institute of Math. Sciences in New York, University of California at Berkeley, EPFL Lausanne, Rutgers Univ., Tel Aviv Univ., Techn. Univ. Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin, IBM Tokyo, and Xerox Parc in Palo Alto. Several invited lectures every year.
- For other conference contributions (IEEE Symposium on Foundations of Comput. Sci., ACM Sympos. Theor. Comput., ACM Symposium on Comput. Geom., and others), see publications list.

## Organization, Program Committees, and Refereeing

- Member of the program committee of the Int. Congress of Mathematicians (Section Combinatorics) 2006 and member of program committees of over ten conferences in computer science (STOC, ESA, ICALP, SODA, Eurocomb, LATIN, MFCS).
- Member of editorial boards of several journals (*Order*, *Discrete Computational Geometry*, *Random Structures and Algorithms*, *Theory of Computing*, *Contributions to Discrete Mathematics*, *Comment. Math. Univ. Carolinae*, *Comput. Geom. Theor. Appl.*, *SIAM J. Discrete Math.*).
- Co-organized several conferences, including three Oberwolfach seminars on “Discrete Geometry” (2005, 2008, 2011).
- Co-organized with J. Nešetřil three intensive 3-month international programs for Ph.D. students in Prague “DocCourse”(2004–2006).

## Research Interests

Discrete geometry, algorithms, combinatorics, topological methods, metric embeddings, and combinatorial optimization.

## Professional Orientation and Summary of Major Results

Main Areas of Interest: Combinatorics and combinatorial geometry, geometric discrepancy, computer science (design and analysis of algorithms mainly computational geometry), topology, and some aspects of metric space theory.

Most of the papers belong to the fields of discrete and computational geometry. Series of works built efficient tools for removing randomization from geometric algorithms. Other works give new solutions to simplex and halfspace range searching problems, which have been investigated by many researchers for more than 10 years, and investigate various bounds on complexity of geometric configurations, geometric discrepancy, linear programming algorithms, motion planning, etc.

Works on geometric discrepancy developed new techniques for proving upper bounds. Asymptotically tight bounds were obtained in some long open cases, such as for the discrepancy of point sets with respect to halfspaces.

In papers on embedding finite metric spaces into Banach spaces, new bounds on the required distortion and dimensions were obtained; in particular, a question of Johnson and Lindenstrauss was answered.

The joint work with J. Kratochvíl deals with intersection graphs of planar geometric objects and some aspects of planar drawings of graphs.

Other results concern problems in mathematical analysis, graph algorithms, undecidability of combinatorial statements, Euclidean Ramsey theory, generalized convexity, and numerical taxonomy (with microbiology applications).

Some experience in applied areas was gained while developing computer software (e.g., numerical simulation of daylight conditions in a room, Lisp and Prolog language interpreters, syntax-driven editor).

# List of Publications

Jiří Matoušek

## Books

1. *Invitation to Discrete Mathematics*  
with Jaroslav Nešetřil  
Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1998, 432 pp.; revised 2nd edition 2008  
Czech version: *Kapitoly z diskrétní matematiky*  
preliminary version KAM Series 95–299, 1995, 218 pp.;  
1st edition Matfyzpress, Praha 1997; 2nd edition Nakladatelství Karolinum,  
Praha 2000, reprinted 2003; revised 3rd edition 2008; revised 4th edition 2009.  
German translation: *Diskrete Mathematik (Eine Entdeckungsreise)*, Springer,  
Heidelberg, 2002; revised 2nd edition 2007.  
Japanese translation: Springer, Tokyo, 2003.  
French translation: Springer, Heidelberg, 2004.  
Spanish translation: Editorial Reverte, 2008.
2. *Geometric Discrepancy. An Illustrated Guide*  
Volume 18 of *Algorithms and Combinatorics*, 288 pp., Springer-Verlag,  
Berlin, etc., 1999.  
Revised second printing 2010.
3. *Lectures on Discrete Geometry*  
Graduate Texts in Mathematics 212, 481 pp., Springer, New York, April 2002.
4. *Using the Borsuk–Ulam theorem. Lectures on topological methods in combinatorics and geometry*  
Universitext, Springer, Berlin, etc., 196 pp., 2003.  
Revised second printing 2008.
5. *Understanding and using linear programming*  
with Bernd Gärtner  
Universitext, Springer, Berlin, etc., 222 pp., 2006.  
A shorter Czech version in *Lineární programování a lineární algebra pro informatiky*, ITI Series 2006-311, Charles University, Prague 2006.

6. *Thirty-three miniatures (Mathematical and algorithmic applications of linear algebra)*  
Student Mathematical Library, Amer. Math. Soc., Providence, 182 pp., 2010.  
Japanese translation: Springer, Tokyo, 2014.
7. *Approximation Algorithms and Semidefinite Programming*  
with Bernd Gärtner  
Springer, Berlin, etc., 251 pp., 2012.
8. *Mathematics++ (Selected topics beyond the basic courses)*  
with Ida Kantor and Robert Šámal  
Student Mathematical Library, Amer. Math. Soc., Providence, 343 pp., 2014.

## Research Papers in Journals

9. *Approximate symmetric derivative and monotonicity*  
Comment. Math. Univ. Carolinae 27,1(1986), 83–86.
10. *Few colored cuts or cycles in edge colored graphs*  
Comment. Math. Univ. Carolinae 29(1988), 227–232.
11. *Line arrangements and range search*  
Information Processing Letters 27(1988), 275–280.
12. *On polynomial-time decidability of induced minor-closed classes*  
with Jaroslav Nešetřil and Robin Thomas  
Comment. Math. Univ. Carolinae 29,4(1988), 703–710.
13. *A typical property of the symmetric differential quotient*  
Colloquium Math. 57,2(1989), 339–343.
14. *Selecting a small well-discriminating subset of tests*  
with Jiří Schindler  
Binary 1(1989), 19–28.
15. *On-line computation of convolutions*  
Information Processing Letters 32(1989), 15–16.
16. *NP-hardness results for intersection graphs*  
with Jan Kratochvíl  
Comment. Math. Univ. Carolinae 30,4(1989), 761–773.
17. *Construction of  $\varepsilon$ -nets*  
Discr. Comput. Geom. 5(1990), 427–448 (invited paper).  
Extended abstract: Proc. 5. ACM Symposium on Computational Geometry  
1989, 1–9.
18. *Extension of Lipschitz mappings on metric trees*  
Comment. Math. Univ. Carolinae 31,1(1990), 99–104.
19. *Bi-Lipschitz embeddings into low-dimensional Euclidean spaces*  
Comment. Math. Univ. Carolinae 31,3(1990), 589–600.
20. *Algorithms finding tree-decomposition of graphs*  
with Robin Thomas  
J. Algorithms 12,1(1991), 1–22.



21. *Lower bound on the length of monotone paths in arrangements*  
Discr. Comput. Geom. 6,2(1991) 129–134.
22. *Approximate halfplanar range counting*  
KAM Series in Discrete Mathematics 87–59 (tech. report), Charles University, Prague 1987.  
revised in 1989 as *Approximate levels in line arrangements*, SIAM J. Computing 20,2(1991), 222–227.
23. *Spanning trees with low crossing number*  
Informatique théorique et applications 6,25(1991), 103–123.
24. *Computing dominances in  $E^n$*   
Information Processing Letters 38,5(1991), 277–288.
25. *String graphs requiring huge representations*  
with Jan Kratochvíl  
J. Combin. Theory ser. B 31,1(1991), 1–4.
26. *Cutting hyperplane arrangements*  
Discr. Comput. Geom. 6,5(1991), 385–406 (invited paper).  
Extended abstract: Proc. 6. ACM Symposium on Computational Geometry (1990), 1–9.
27. *Randomized optimal slope selection*  
Information Processing Letters 39(1991), 183–187.
28. *Hercules versus Hidden Hydra Helper*  
with Martin Loeb  
Comment. Math. Univ. Carolinae 32,4(1992), 731–741.
29. *Good splitters for counting points in triangles*  
with Emo Welzl  
J. Algorithms 13(1992), 307–319.  
Extended abstract: Proc. 5. ACM Symposium on Computational Geometry (1989), 124–130.
30. *Note on bi-Lipschitz embeddings into normed spaces*  
Comment. Math. Univ. Carolinae 33,1(1992), 51–55.
31. *Relative neighborhood graphs in three dimensions*  
with Pankaj K. Agarwal  
Computational Geometry: Theory and applications 2,1(1992), 1–14.  
Preliminary version: Proc. 3. ACM-SIAM Symposium on Discrete Algorithms (1992), 58–65.
32. *Efficient partition trees*  
Discr. Comput. Geom., 8(1992), 315–334 (invited paper).  
Extended abstract: Proc. 7. ACM Symposium on Computational Geometry (1991), 1–9.
33. *Reporting points in halfspaces*  
Computational Geometry: Theory and Applications 2,3(1992) 169–186.  
Extended abstract: Proc. 32. IEEE Symposium on Foundations of Computer Science (1991), 207–215.

34. *On the complexity of finding iso- and other morphisms for partial  $k$ -trees*  
with Robin Thomas  
Discrete Math. 108(1992), 343–364.
35. *Ramsey-like properties for bi-Lipschitz embeddings of finite metric spaces*  
Comment. Math. Univ. Carolinae 33,3(1992), 451–463.
36. *Farthest neighbors, maximum spanning trees and related problems in higher dimensions*  
with Pankaj K. Agarwal and Subhash Suri  
Computational Geometry: Theory and Applications 1,4(1992) 189–201.  
Extended abstract: Proc. 2. Workshop on Algorithms and Data Structures,  
Lecture Notes in Computer Science 519, 105–116, Springer-Verlag 1991.
37. *On vertical ray shooting in arrangements*  
Computational Geometry: Theory and Applications 2(1993), 279–285.
38. *Linear optimization queries*  
J. Algorithms 14(1993), 432–448  
new version, with Otfried Schwarzkopf:  
Proc. 8. ACM Symposium on Computational Geometry (1992), 16–25.
39. *Ray shooting and parametric search*  
with Pankaj K. Agarwal  
SIAM J. Computing 22,4(1993), 794–806. Extended abstract: Proc. 24. ACM  
Symposium on Theory of Computing (1992), 517–526.
40. *Range searching with efficient hierarchical cuttings*  
Discr. Comput. Geom. 10,2(1993), 157–182.  
Extended abstract: Proc. 8. ACM Symposium on Computational Geometry  
(1992), 276–285.
41. *On ray shooting in convex polytopes*  
with Otfried Schwarzkopf  
Discr. Comput. Geom. 10,2(1993), 215–232.
42. *Discrepancy and approximations for bounded VC-dimension*  
with Emo Welzl and Lorenz Wernisch  
Combinatorica, 13(1993), 455–466.  
Extended abstract: Proc. 32. IEEE Symposium on Foundations of Computer  
Science (1991), 424–430.
43. *On the sum of squares of cell complexities in hyperplane arrangements*  
with Boris Aronov and Micha Sharir  
J. Combin. Theory Ser. A 65(1994), 311–321.  
Extended abstract: Proc. 7. ACM Symposium on Computational Geometry  
(1991), 307–313.
44. *On range searching with semialgebraic sets*  
with Pankaj K. Agarwal  
Discr. Comput. Geom. 11(1994), 393–418.  
Extended abstract: Proc. 17. Symposium “Mathematical Foundations of  
Computer Science” (1992), Lecture Notes in Computer Science 629, Springer-  
Verlag, 1–13.

45. *Fat triangles determine linearly many holes*  
with János Pach, Micha Sharir, Shmuel Sifrony, and Emo Welzl  
SIAM J. Comput. 23(1994), 154–169.  
Extended abstract: Proc. 32. IEEE Symposium on Foundations of Computer Science (1991), 49–58.
46. *Lower bound for a subexponential optimization algorithm*  
Random Structures & Algorithms 5,4(1994), 591–607.
47. *Ham-sandwich cuts in  $R^d$*   
with Chi-Yuan Lo and William Steiger  
Discr. Comput. Geom. 11(1994), 433–452.  
Extended abstract: Proc. 24. ACM Symposium on Theory of Computing (1992), 539–545.
48. *Intersection graphs of segments*  
with Jan Kratochvíl  
J. Combin. Theory Ser. B 35,2(1994), 317–339.
49. *Complexity of projected images of convex subdivisions*  
with Tomio Hirata, Xue-Hou Tan, and Takeshi Tokuyama  
Computational Geometry: Theory and Applications 4,6(1994), 293–308.  
Extended abstract: Proc. 4. Canad. Conference on Comput. Geometry (1992).
50. *A Ramsey-type result for planar convex sets*  
with David Larman, János Pach, and Jenő Töröcsik  
Bull. London Math. Soc. 26(1994), 132–136.
51. *Derandomizing an output-sensitive convex hull algorithm in three dimensions*  
with Bernard Chazelle  
Comput. Geom.: Theor. Appl. 5,1(1995), 27–32.
52. *On enclosing  $k$  points by a circle*  
Information Processing Letters 53(1995), 217–221.
53. *Dynamic half-space range reporting and its applications*  
with Pankaj K. Agarwal  
Algorithmica 13(1995), 325–345.  
Extended abstract, including also results of D. Eppstein:  
Proc. 33. IEEE Symposium on Foundations of Computer Science (1992), 51–60.
54. *Approximations and optimal geometric divide-and-conquer*  
J. of Computer and System Sciences 50,2(1995), 203–208 (invited paper).  
Extended abstract: Proc. 23. ACM Symposium on Theory of Computing (1991), 506–511.
55. *On Ramsey sets in spheres*  
with Vojtěch Rödl  
J. Combin. Theory Ser. A 70,1(1995), 30–44.
56. *Tight upper bounds for the discrepancy of half-spaces*  
Discr. Comput. Geom. (L. Fejes Tóth Festschrift) 13(1995), 593–601.
57. *An elementary approach to lower bounds in geometric discrepancy*  
with Bernard Chazelle and Micha Sharir  
Discr. Comput. Geom. (L. Fejes Tóth Festschrift) 13(1995), 363–381.

58. *Piecewise linear paths among convex obstacles*  
with Mark de Berg and Otfried Schwarzkopf  
Discr. Comput. Geom. 14(1995), 9–29.  
Extended abstract: Proc. 25. ACM Symposium on Theory of Computing (1993), 505–514.
59. *On stabbing triangles by lines in 3-space*  
with Boris Aronov  
Comment. Math. Univ. Carolinae 36,1(1995), 109–113.
60. *On vertical decomposition of arrangements of hyperplanes in four dimensions*  
with Leonidas J. Guibas, Dan Halperin, and Micha Sharir  
Discr. Comput. Geom. 14(1995), 113–122.  
Extended abstract: Proc. 5th Canadian Conference on Computational Geometry (1993), 127–132.
61. *Note on the colored Tverberg theorem*  
J. Comb. Theory Ser. B 66(1996), 146–151.
62. *On geometric optimization with few violated constraints*  
Discr. Comput. Geom. (invited paper) 14(1995), 365–384.  
Extended abstract: Proc. 10. ACM Symposium on Comput. Geom. (1994), 312–321.
63. *Discrepancy in arithmetic progressions*  
with Joel Spencer  
J. Amer. Math. Soc. 9,1(1996), 195–204.
64. *On the distortion required for embedding finite metric spaces into normed spaces*  
Israel J. Math. 93(1996), 333–344.
65. *A deterministic algorithm for the three-dimensional diameter problem*  
with Otfried Schwarzkopf  
Comput. Geom. Theor. Appl. 6(1996), 253–262.  
Extended abstract: Proc. 25. ACM Symposium on Theory of Computing (1993), 478–484.
66. *On linear-time deterministic algorithms for optimization problems in fixed dimension*  
with Bernard Chazelle  
J. Algorithms 21(1996), 116–132.  
Extended abstract: Proc. 4. SIAM-ACM Symposium on Discrete Algorithms (1993), 281–290.
67. *Improved upper bounds for approximation by zonotopes*  
Acta Mathematica 177(1996), 55–73.
68. *A subexponential bound for linear programming*  
with Micha Sharir and Emo Welzl  
Algorithmica 16(1996), 498–516.  
Extended abstract: Proc. 8. ACM Symposium on Computational Geometry (1992), 1–8.
69. *On discrepancy bounds via dual shatter function*  
Mathematika 44(1997), 42–49.

70. *A Helly-type theorem for unions of convex sets*  
Discr. Comput. Geom. 18(1997), 1–12.  
Extended abstract: Proc. 11. ACM Symposium on Comput. Geom. (1995), 138–145.
71. *On embedding expanders into  $\ell_p$  spaces*  
Israel J. Math. 102(1997), 189–197.
72. *On functional separately convex hulls*  
with Petr Plecháč  
Discr. Comput. Geom. 19(1998), 105–130.
73. *An  $L_p$ -version of the Beck–Fiala conjecture*  
European J. Combinatorics 19(1998), 175–182.
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