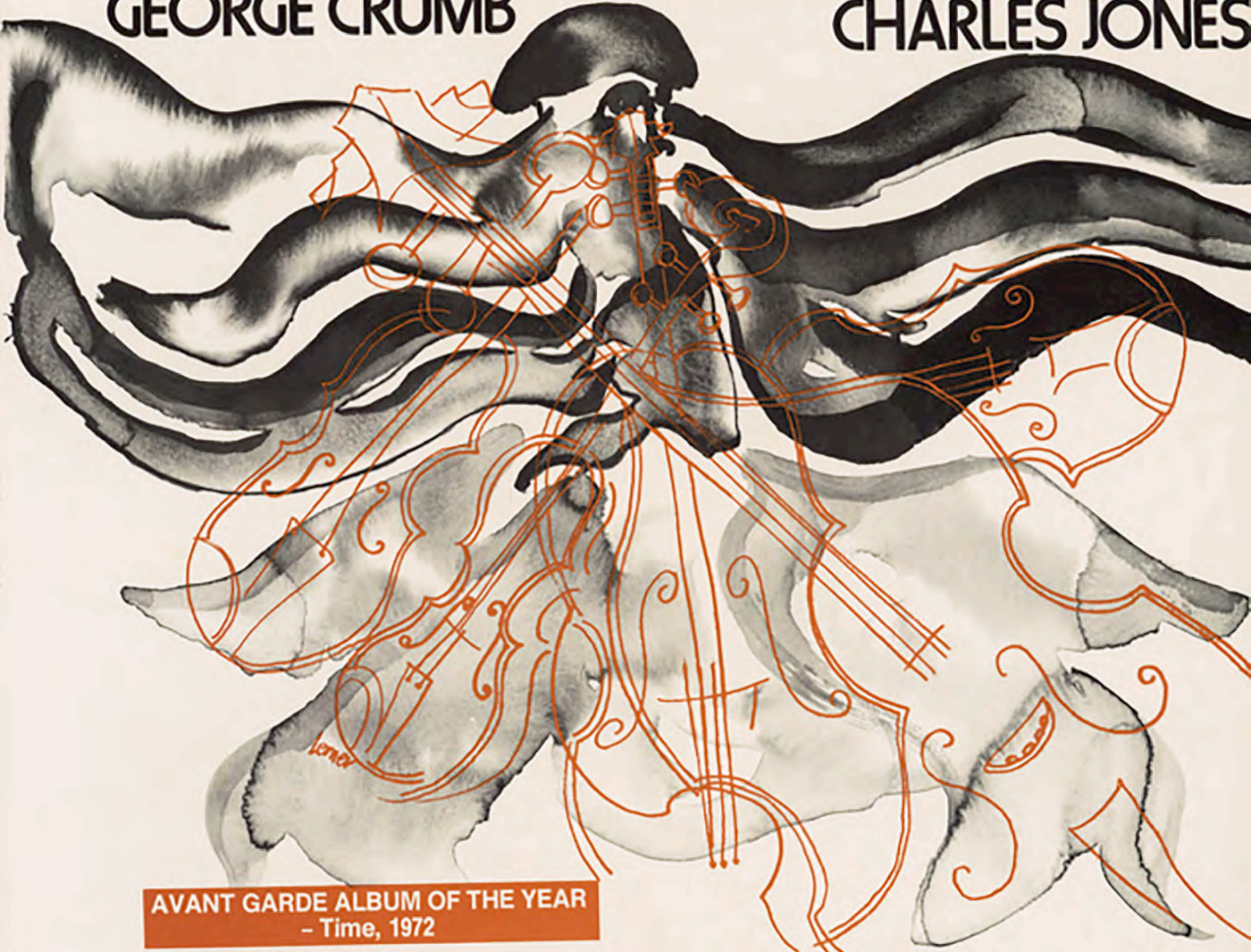


with Paul Zukofsky

GEORGE CRUMB

CHARLES JONES



AVANT GARDE ALBUM OF THE YEAR
- Time, 1972

BLACK ANGELS

for electric string quartet

stereo
CR

STRING QUARTET NO. 6
SONATINA

GEORGE CRUMB

BLACK ANGELS (Thirteen Images from the Dark Land)

for Electric String Quartet
The New York String Quartet

Paul Zukofsky, Timothy Eddy, Jean Dupouy, Romualdo G. Teco

CHARLES JONES

STRING QUARTET NO. 6

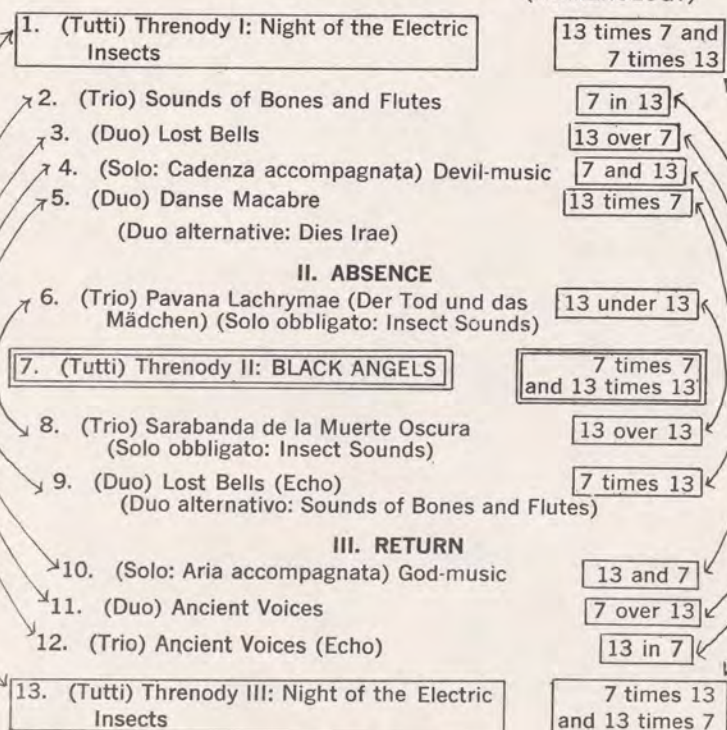
The New York String Quartet

SONATINA

Paul Zukofsky, violin; Gilbert Kalish, piano

I. DEPARTURE

(NUMEROLOGY)



BLACK ANGELS (THIRTEEN IMAGES FROM THE DARK LAND) was conceived as a kind of parable on our troubled contemporary world. The numerous quasi-programmatic allusions in the work are therefore symbolic, although the essential polarity — God versus Devil — implies more than a purely metaphysical reality. The image of the "black angel" was a conventional device used by early painters to symbolize the fallen angel.

The underlying structure of BLACK ANGELS is a huge arch-like design which is suspended from the three "Threnody" pieces. The work portrays a voyage of the soul. The three stages of this voyage are Departure (fall from grace), Absence (spiritual annihilation), and Return (redemption).

The numerological symbolism of BLACK ANGELS, while perhaps not immediately perceptible to the ear, is nonetheless quite faithfully reflected in the musical structure. These "magical" relationships are variously expressed — e.g. in terms of phrase-length, groupings for single tones, durations, patterns of repetition, etc. An important pitch element in the work — ascending D-sharp, A, and E — also symbolizes the fateful numbers 7-13. At certain points in the score there occurs a kind of ritualistic counting in various languages, including German, French, Russian, Hungarian, Japanese, and Swahili.

There are several allusions to tonal music in BLACK ANGELS: a quotation from Schubert's "Death and the Maiden" quartet (in the *Pavana Lachrymae*, and also faintly echoed on the last page of the work); an original *Sarabanda*, which is

stylistically synthetic; the sustained B Major tonality of *God-music*; and several references to the Latin hymn *Dies Irae* ("Day of Wrath"). The work abounds in conventional musical symbolisms such as the *Diabolus in musica* (the interval of the tritone) and the *Trillo di diavolo* (the "Devil's trill," after Tartini).

The amplification of the stringed instruments is intended to produce a highly surrealistic effect. This surrealism is heightened by the use of certain unusual string effects, e.g. pedal tones (the intensely obscene sounds of the *Devil-music*); bowing on the "wrong" side of the strings (to produce the viol-consort effect); trilling on the strings with thimble-capped fingers. The performers also play maracas, tam-tams, and water-tuned crystal glasses, the latter played with the bow for the "glass-harmonica" effect in *God-music*.

BLACK ANGELS was commissioned by the University of Michigan and first performed by the Stanley Quartet. The score is inscribed: "finished on Friday the Thirteenth, March, 1970 (in tempore belli)."

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GEORGE CRUMB was born in Charleston, West Virginia in 1929. His numerous awards include grants from the Rockefeller, Koussevitsky, Guggenheim, and Coolidge Foundations, and the National Institute of Arts and Letters. His *Echoes of Time and the River* (*Four Processionals for Orchestra*) (1967) was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1968. His *Ancient Voices of Children* for mezzo-soprano, boy soprano, and instruments (1970) received the International Rostrum of Composers (UNESCO) Award and the Koussevitsky International Recording Award in 1971. George Crumb's *Night Music I* for soprano, keyboard, and percussion (1963) and *Eleven Echoes of Autumn*, 1965 for violin, alto flute, clarinet, and piano (1966) have also been recorded by CRI (CRI SD 218 and CRI SD 233).

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"I was born in Tamworth, a small village in Canada, in 1910. I was, however, an American citizen owing to my father's American birth. When I was 18 I came to New York, graduating from the Institute of Musical Art as a violinist and then continuing composition studies at the Juilliard Graduate School under Bernard Wagenaar. I began my teaching career at Mills College in Oakland, California, where I became associated with Darius Milhaud. Other teaching assignments have included the Seminar in American Studies in Salzburg, Austria; the Bryanston School in England; the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, California; the Juilliard School, New York, and, since its inception in 1951, at the Aspen Music School in Aspen, Colorado. Since the retirement of Milhaud in 1970, I have continued the classes and seminars which he and I had done over this period. At present I live and work in New York.

"My works have been played by the New York Philharmonic, NBC, CBS, CBC (Canada), St. Louis, San Francisco, Dallas, Denver and Toledo orchestras as well as the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the Zurich and Brussels radio orchestras.

"I have written a sizeable number of works — a good deal of chamber music centering around six string quartets, the last of these being the first work on this record; four symphonies; numerous orchestral works; a concerto for four violins with orchestra, as well as three large settings for voice and various groupings of instruments, based on William Langland's medieval text, *Piers the Plowman*.

"The six string quartets which I have written might be considered as a musical diary which I have kept through the years. The first one dates from student days, the second (1944) is already concerned with the special sonorities possible in this medium, the third (1951) is more complex in texture and probably the most dissonant, the fourth (1954) is more simple and lyrical, and the fifth (1961) again is much taken up with special sonorities.

"I feel that in a large and general way, two diverse elements are juxtaposed in the SIXTH QUARTET (1970). One is the element of fanfare (or other somewhat stirring sounds) and the second is a kind of lyricism normally associated with the voice. As both of these elements are, in a sense, foreign to the nature of the strings, it was necessary to translate them into the medium of the quartet.

"The fanfare-lyric juxtaposition is evident in the first movement. In this section, use is made of left hand pizzicato (plucking the string), retuning on the part of the second violin; and the movement ends with only the sound of the first violinist's fingers dropping on the strings.

"There is a unifying or punctuating element marking off the various sections, which are played without pause. This is made up of eight-part chords, related to a canonic passage which recurs throughout the quartet, and which is used as a formal beacon or guideline in tying the various parts together. The second section (calm, 3/4 time) is in a three part form, having a quicker-moving Trio section before a short return of its first part.

"There is a clearly recognizable slow movement in 12/8 time which is connected to the finale by the chords already mentioned, differently laid out and played pizzicato. In the last movement, use is made of the canonic figure, and the texture is mostly that of a reference (only as regards texture) to the first part with left hand pizzicato, harmonics and *col legno* (striking the strings with the wood of the bow) passages.

"The SONATINA for Violin and Piano was written in California in 1942 and had its first performance at the International Society for Contemporary Music in Berkeley, California that summer. The performers then were Sascha Jacobsen, violin and Maxim Shapiro, piano."

Produced by Carter Harman

Cover by Judith Lerner

Recorded by David Hancock

This recording was made possible by grants from the Ford Foundation and the Alice M. Ditson Fund of Columbia University.

Black Angels — C. F. Peters (BMI): 23' 25"

String Quartet No. 6 — Henmar (ASCAP): 11' 05"

Sonatina — Henmar (ASCAP): 6' 40"

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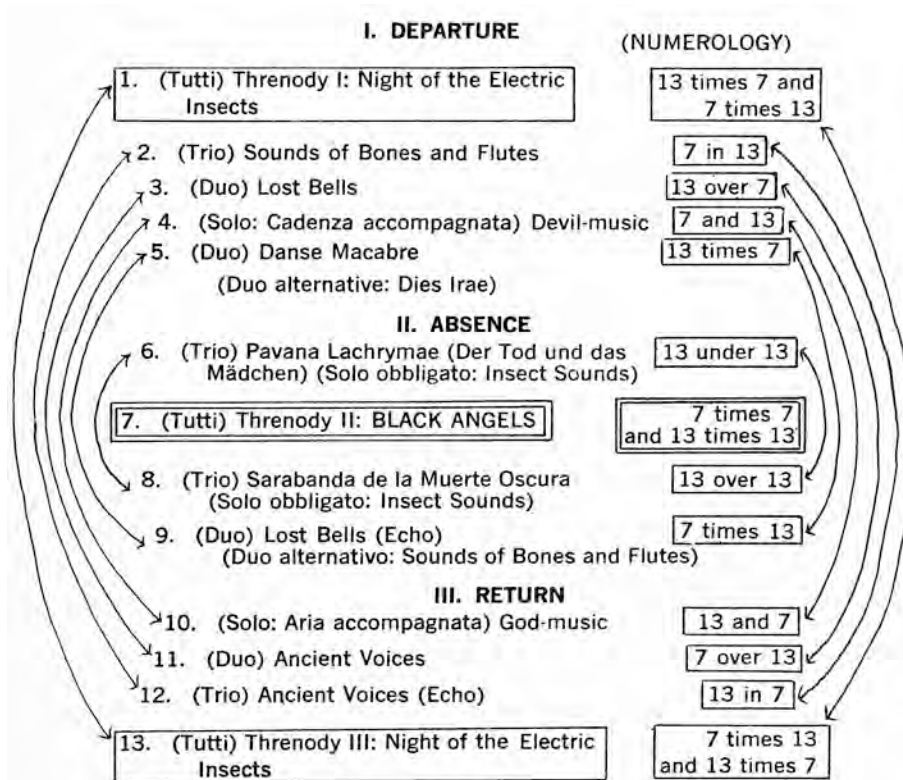
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STRING QUARTET NO. 6

The New York String Quartet

SONATINA

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(Original Liner Notes from CRI LP Jacket)