

# GEORGE CRUMB

## Black Angels

(Images 1)

Electric String Quartet

Facsimile printing from the manuscript by the composer

duration: ca. 24 minutes

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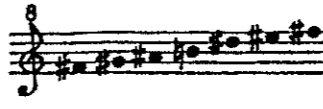
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## PERFORMANCE NOTES



- 1) All players read from score.
- 2) Each note is preceded by an accidental, except in case(s) of an immediate repetition of a pitch or a pattern of pitches. N.B.: the tonal passages are notated in the traditional manner.
- 3) The amplification of the instruments is of critical importance in BLACK ANGELS. Ideally, one should use genuine electric instruments (with a built-in pick-up). Otherwise, fine-quality contact microphones can be attached (by rubber bands) to the belly of the instrument. The player should find the best position for the microphone in order to avoid distortion of the tone. If the amplifier is equipped with a reverb control, this should be set on "high" to create a more surrealistic effect. The dynamic level should also be extremely loud (for the *forte* passages) and the level should not be adjusted during the performance.
- 4) The following percussion instruments and special equipment will be needed:
  - a) Violin I: maraca  
7 crystal glasses  
solid glass rod (about 6 inches in length and 3/16 or 1/4 inch in diameter)  
2 metal thimbles  
metal plectrum (e.g. paper clip)
  - b) Violin II: tam-tam (suspended), about 15 inches in diameter  
soft beater for the tam-tam  
contrabass bow (for bowing tam-tam)  
7 crystal glasses  
solid glass rod (about 6 inches in length and 3/16 or 1/4 inch in diameter)  
2 metal thimbles  
metal plectrum (e.g. paper clip)
  - c) Viola: 6 crystal glasses  
solid glass rod (about 6 inches in length and 3/16 or 1/4 inch in diameter)  
2 metal thimbles  
metal plectrum (e.g. paper clip)
  - d) Cello: maraca  
tam-tam (suspended) about 24 inches in diameter  
soft beater for the tam-tam  
very hard beater for the tam-tam (this should produce a percussive, metallic sound)  
contrabass bow (for bowing tam-tam)
- 5) The crystal glasses (used for the "glass-harmonica" effect in *God-music*, on page 7) should be goblet-shaped (like wine glasses, with a stem). A fine grade of crystal will produce a truly beautiful effect. The glasses should be securely mounted on a board (by taping). The glasses can be

tuned by adding water, although the tone loses in purity if too much water is used. The following pitches are required (N.B.: the glasses sound one octave higher than written):

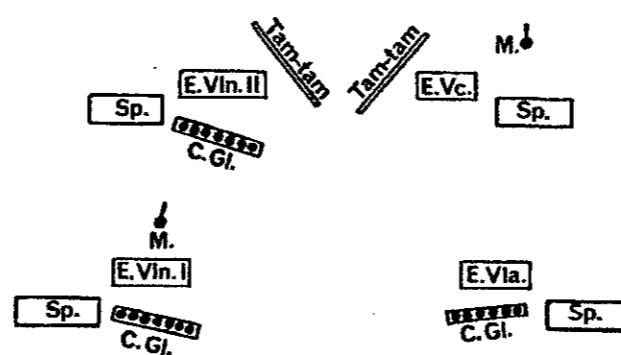
Violin I: 

Violin II: 

Viola: 

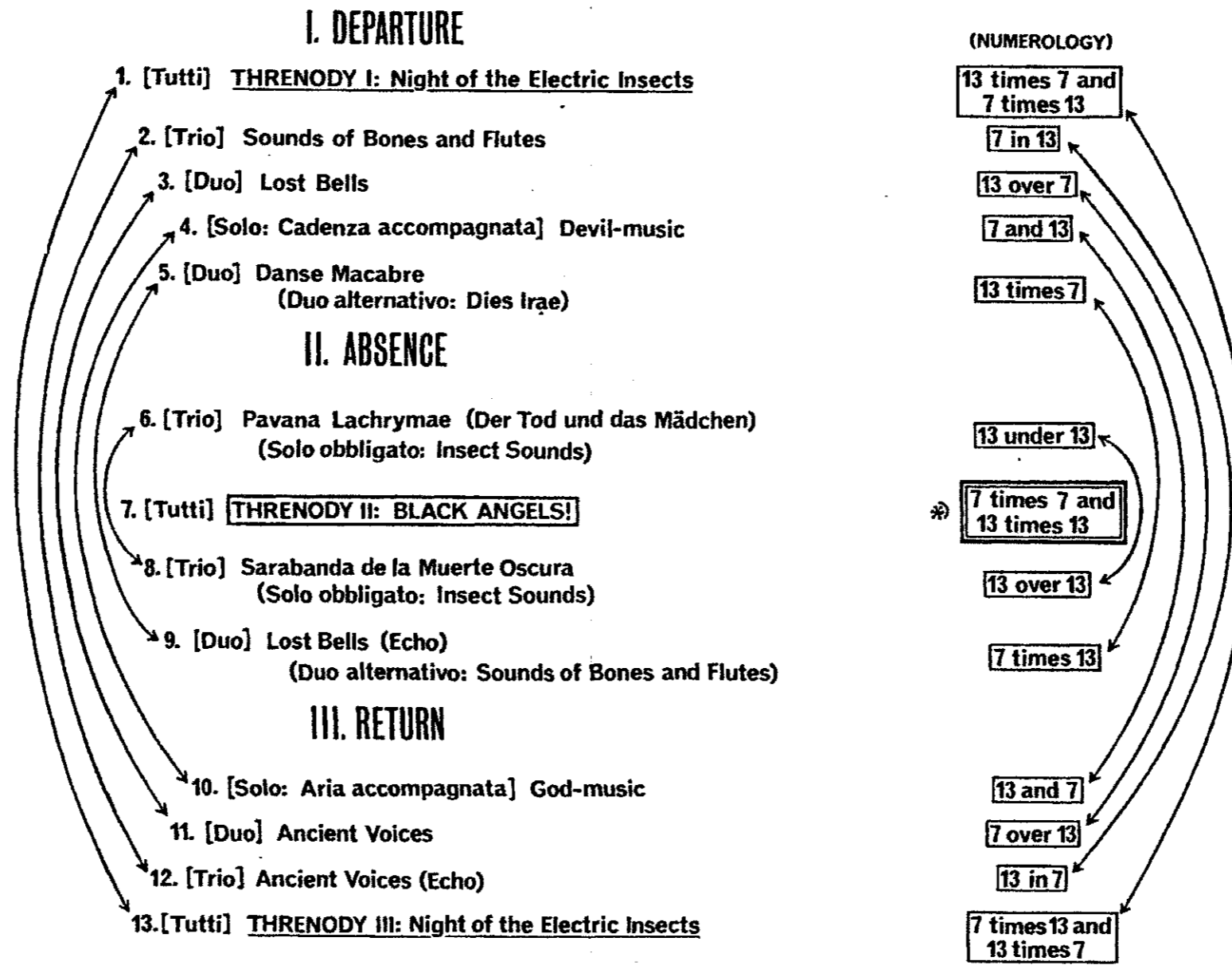
- 6) The tam-tam harmonics are variable in pitch. The player should bow the "lip" of the tam-tam with a well-rosined contrabass bow.
- 7) All glissandi occupy the total duration of the note to which they are affixed. Use portamento only where indicated in the score.
- 8) All spoken sounds (whispering, shouting) must project! The whispered passages can be slightly voiced if the acoustics of the hall require this. The tongue clicks (in "Sounds of Bones and Flutes," on page 2) are percussive clicks off the upper palate (not clucking sounds).
- 9)  $\uparrow$  = a quarter tone higher than written pitch  
 $\downarrow$  = a quarter tone lower than written pitch  
 $\left(\frac{\square}{3}\right)$  = three seconds      $\overbrace{\quad\quad\quad}^5$  = five seconds  
 $\square$  = fermata lunga  
 $\frown$  = normal fermata  
 $\text{9}$  = slight pause or "breath"  
 $\text{9}$  = extremely short pause or "breath"  
 $\text{tr}(\frac{1}{2})$  = trill a half step above principal note  
 $\cdot d.$  =       $\cdot d.$  = 

## STAGE POSITIONING



(Sp.=Speaker, C.Gl.=Crystal Glasses, M.=Maraca)

# PROGRAM



\* This central motto is also the numerological basis of the entire work

[IMAGES I]

Commissioned by the University of Michigan and Dedicated to the Stanley Quartet  
(G. Ross, G. Rosseels, R. Courte, J. Jelinek)

# BLACK ANGELS

THIRTEEN IMAGES FROM THE DARK LAND  
for Electric String Quartet

George Crumb  
(in tempore belli, 1970)

## I. DEPARTURE

### 1. Threnody I: Night of the Electric Insects [Tutti] 13 times 7 and 7 times 13

Vibrant, intense!  $\text{♩} = 60$   
sempre sul pont. e glissando

Electric Violin I.  
Electric Violin II.  
Electric Viola.  
Electric Cello.

E.Vln.I.  
E.Vln.II.  
E.Vla.  
E.Vc.

7 3 4 7

7

\*) Make a continuous glissando, without dwelling on given pitches. The tremolo should be extremely rapid.

\*\*) The numbers under brackets indicate duration in seconds; and since quintuplets = 1 second, play 7 quintuplet groups in first bracket, 3 groups in second, etc.



### 4. Devil-music [Solo: Cadenza accompagnata] 7 and 13

**Vox Diaboli**  
In romantic-phantastic style!  
arco sul pont. (con bravura)

**Electric Violin I.**  
pizz. modo ord. l.h. arco sul pont. (accel.)  
sul pont. (sul pont.) sul G----- (accel.) modo ord. (marf. non arpegg.) pizz.

**E.Vln. II.**  
pp (♩=60)

**Electric Violin II.**  
pedal tones!

**Electric Viola.**  
pedal tones!

**(Vc.) Tam-tam**  
strike center with a very hard beater

**E.Vln. I.**  
arco (accel.) pizz. l.h. arco sul pont. (con bravura)

**E.Vln. II.**  
Pedal tones (come sopra)

**E.Via.**  
Pedal tones (come sopra)

**(Vc.) Tam-tam**  
(with very hard beater)

**E.Vln. I.**  
arco modo ord. (Allarg.) (grad. to) sul pont. (sul pont.) l.h. arco modo ord. (V) pizz. arco modo ord. sul pont. (sul pont.) l.h. arco modo ord. (V) pizz. arco modo ord. sul pont. (sul pont.)

**E.Vln. II.**  
Pedal tones (come sopra)

**E.Via.**  
Pedal tones (come sopra)

**(Vc.) Tam-tam**  
(with very hard beater)

**E.Vln. I.**  
arco modo ord. (accel.) V pizz. arco sul pont. (accel.) bow on 4 strings behind bridge (trém. sempre) pp sub. l.h. pizz. furioso

**E.Vln. II.**  
(lay bow aside)

**E.Via.**  
(lay bow aside)

**(Vc.) Tam-tam**  
bowed harmonic (VIV) (lasc. vibr.)

**(E.Vln. II.)**  
col legno batt. (m-a)

**(E.Via.)**  
col legno batt.

**(E.Vc.)**  
col legno batt.

attacca subito

### 5. Danse Macabre [Duo] 13 times 7

Grotesque, satirical (♩=240 sempre)

**Electric Violin II.**  
pizz.

**Electric Viola.**  
pizz. sempre

**Knuckles on wood (or fingertips)**

**(take up bow)**

#### Duo Alternativo: "Dies Irae"

(♩=♩) pizz.

**Electric Violin I.**

**Maraca**

**Electric Cello**

**Maraca**

\*) Gradually increase bow pressure until pitch becomes pure noise.

\*\*) Pedal tones are produced by moving bow very slowly while exerting great pressure. Since various "partials" are obtainable, the player should calculate carefully distance from bridge and bow pressure in order to produce the lower octave.

\*\*) Hold maraca in right hand. If necessary, use left hand pizzicato.

\*\*) Several bow changes might be needed in order to produce a powerful sound.

\*\*) Strike with bow near pegs for a more percussive effect.

II. ABSENCE

Solo Obligato: Insect Sounds

6. Pavana Lachrymae [Trio]

(der Tod und das Mädchen)

13 under 13 Grave, solemn; like a consort of viols (a fragile echo of an ancient music)

♩ = 30 (♩ = 60) subito più lento (♩ = 50)

ancora più lento (♩ = 40)

\*) ♯ = a percussive pizzicato (string rebounds from fingerboard)  
\*) The Hungarian numerals one through seven. Pronounce: ehdy, keh-ty, hab-rohm (trilled r), naydy, oahf (ö like German), hahf, hate.

\*)\*) The sound of viols is produced by bowing near pegs (on "wrong" side of left hand). All players should hold bows in the manner of viol players. Violin and viola should be held like viols. The fingering will naturally be reversed, but a little practice will ensure accuracy in pitch. The beginning pitch could be indicated by a chalk mark on the fingerboard.

# 7. Threnody II: Black Angels! [Tutti]

7 times 7 and 13 times 13

Furiously, with great energy! ♩ = ca. 200

The score is divided into several systems. The first system includes parts for Electric Violin I, Electric Violin II, Electric Viola, and Electric Cello. It features a 'trillo di diavolo' section and a 'jū san!' vocalization. The second system continues with similar parts and includes 'trиннадцатъ!' exclamations. The third system features 'kuminatatu!' exclamations and a 'trill(♯) (sempre sim.)' section. The fourth system concludes with a 'trill(♯) (sempre sim.)' section and a '(tutta forza!)' marking.

Ⓜ This piece should be performed in a very free manner. However, all precisely indicated durations should be approximately in tempo.

Ⓜ♯ ♯ = a percussive pizzicato

Ⓜ♯Ⓜ The numeral thirteen in Japanese, Russian, and Swahili. Pronounce: Joo-sahn, Trez-nah!-sahf, Koo-me-nah-tah-too (g = slight pause between syllables)





### III. RETURN

## 10. God-music [Solo: Aria accompagnata]

Adagio (with profound calm)

13 and 7

♩ = ca. 50

Vox Dei

Electric Cello

*pp* molto cantabile *mp*

Glass Harmonica

(Vin. I.) 7 Crystal Glasses

(Vin. II.) 7 Crystal Glasses

(Via.) 6 Crystal Glasses

*col arco, legatiss.*

*col arco, legatiss.*

*col arco, legatiss.*

*pp* *pp* *pp*

*(sempre sim.)*

*più p* *più p* *più p*

E. Vc.

*ppp* (echo) *p* *ppp* *cresc. - - poco - a - poco*

*poco a poco più intenso e pressando il tempo* (part.) (part.)

Crystal Glasses

*pp* *cresc. - - poco - a - poco*

*pp* *cresc. - - poco - a - poco*

*pp* *cresc. - - poco - a - poco*

E. Vc.

*mf* *f* *(molto intenso)* *ff* *molto* *p* *ppp* sub. (tranquillo)

Crystal Glasses

*f* *f* *ppp* *ppp* *ppp*

E. Vc.

*pochiss. più lento* *ancora pochiss. più lento* (part.) *al niente*

*pppp*

Crystal Glasses

*pochiss. più lento* *ancora pochiss. più lento*

*pppp* *pppp*

## 11. Ancient Voices [Duo]

7 over 13

♩ = 60

*bottle-neck* technique (sul E sempre)

E. Vin. I.

*poco f* *f* *pp* *poco f* *pp* *poco f* *pp* *poco f* *pp*

*(accel. - - -)*

*ppp* *poco f* *pp* *poco f* *pp*

*marcato* (with a glass rod) *ppp ma distinto* (sul E sempre)

*(sim.)*

E. Vin. II.

*(sempre sim.)* *pp* *poco f* *pp* *poco f* *pp* *poco f* *pp*

*(gliss. sempre)*

*poco f* *ppp* *bottle-neck* technique (sul E sempre)

\*) The following pitches are required (glasses sound 8va. higher than written):

Vin. I.

Vin. II.


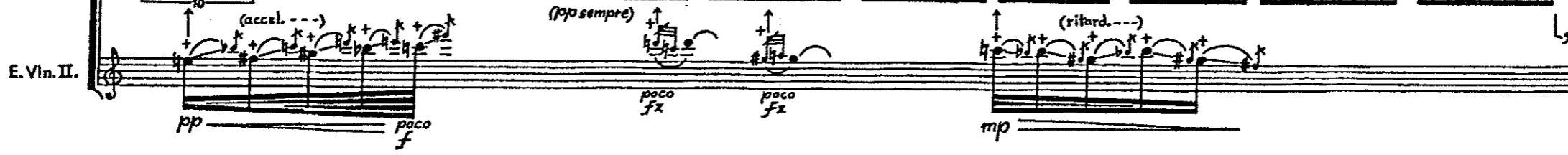
Via.

\*) The rests indicate termination of bow stroke. However, the glasses should continue to vibrate so that an overall legato effect is produced.

\*)\*) With a glass rod (held in left hand) and metal plectrum (e.g. paper clip). Pluck string only at points marked +. Slide rod along string to produce pitches.

\*)\*)\*) This effect is produced by striking string with glass rod (by left hand in approx. normal position) at points marked ♯. Open string sounds automatically as rod rebounds from string.




(sempre sim) (sempre sul E-A) [hold rod at an angle to produce tritone]

E. Vln. I.  

E. Vln. II. *pp* *poco f* *mp* *poco fz* *attacca subito*

### 12. Ancient Voices (Echo) [Trio] 13 in 7

Grazioso, flessibile [ $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 60$ ] *sol E* (glissando sempre)

Electric Violin I.   




Electric Violin II. *pp* *p* *mp* *ppp (echo)*

Electric Viola *p* *pp* *ppp*

Electric Cello *pppp non vibr.*

### 13. Threnody III: Night of the Electric Insects [Tutti] 7 times 13 and 13 times 7

Disembodied, incorporeal

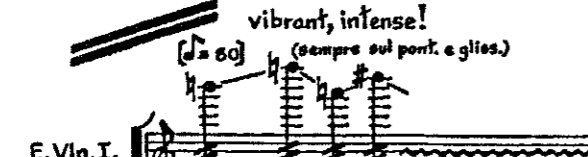

Electric Violin I.   

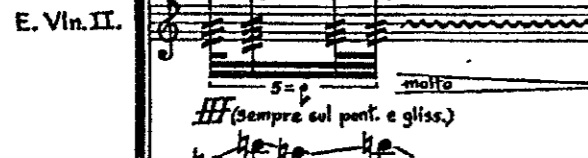

Electric Violin II. *pppp sempre (gossamer, waffing)*

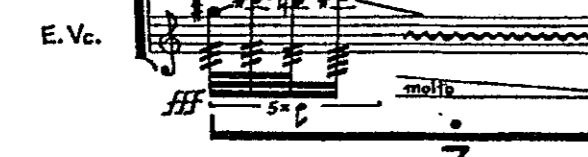

Electric Viola *pppp sempre (gossamer, waffing)*

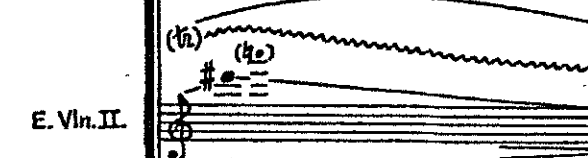

E. Vc. *pppp e non vibr. sempre* *grad. to sul pont.* *pppp sempre (gossamer, waffing)*

vibrant, intense! [ $\text{♩} = 60$ ] (sempre sul pont. e gliss.)


E. Vln. I. *sub. fff* *molto* *ppp*  

E. Vln. II. *sub. fff* *molto* *ppp*  

E. Vla. *sub. fff* *molto* *ppp*  

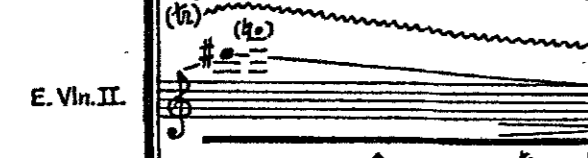
E. Vc. *sub. fff* *molto* *ppp*  


(sul pont. sempre) *gliss. sempre* *pppp (gossamer)*

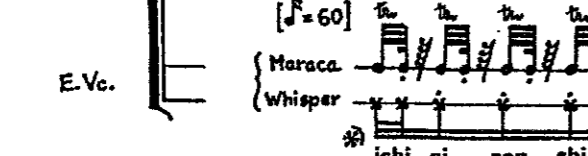
(E. Vln. I.) Maraca  *attach thimbles*


Whisper *pppp* *attach thimbles*

ichi ni san shi go roku shichi (echo) (like an incantation)

E. Vln. I.  *attach thimbles*

E. Vln. II.  *attach thimbles*

E. Vla.  *attach thimbles*

E. Vc.  *attach thimbles*

(sul pont. sempre) *gliss. sempre* *pppp (gossamer)*

\* The Japanese numerals one through seven. Pronounce vowels like Italian, consonants like English.

[begin Sarabanda at bottom of gliss. without interruption]

