MTO 18.2 Examples: Johnston, George Crumb’s *Black Angels*

(Note: audio, video, and other interactive examples are only available online)


Example 1. Crumb’s diagram of Black Angels

**PROGRAM**

**I. DEPARTURE**

1. [Tutti] THRENODY I: Night of the Electric Insects
2. [Trio] Sounds of Bones and Flutes
3. [Duo] Lost Bells
4. [Solo: Cadenza accompagnata] Devil-music
5. [Duo] Danse Macabre
   (Duo alternativo: Dies Irae)

**II. ABSENCE**

6. [Trio] Pavana Lachrymae (Der Tod und das Mädchen)
   (Solo obbligato: Insect Sounds)
7. [Tutti] THRENODY II: BLACK ANGELS!
8. [Trio] Sarabanda de la Muerte Oscura
   (Solo obbligato: Insect Sounds)
9. [Duo] Lost Bells (Echo)
   (Duo alternativo: Sounds of Bones and Flutes)

**III. RETURN**

10. [Solo: Aria accompagnata] God-music
11. [Duo] Ancient Voices
12. [Trio] Ancient Voices (Echo)
13. [Tutti] THRENODY III: Night of the Electric Insects

(!) This central motto is also the numerological basis of the entire work

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Example 2. Palindromic form and programmatic form in *Black Angels*

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Example 3. *Black Angels*, “God-music” (no. 10), measures 1–4

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Example 4. Analysis of “God-music” (no. 10), Vox Dei (solo cello)

Example 5. Analysis of Vox Dei, measures 3–4
Example 6. Analysis of “Threnody I” (no. 1), beginning

Example 7. Analysis of “Threnody I” (no. 1), end
Example 8. The “devil chord” in relation to 7 and 13 and the tritonal axis

“Devil-music” (no. 4)

Example 9. Analysis of “Sounds of Bones and Flutes” (no. 2)
a. measures 1–4; b. measure 7

pentachordal OCT\,(2,3)\, segment: \{A♭, B♭, D♭, D♯, F♭\}

with:
increasing B♭ melodic centricity
tritonal axis (A♭ / D♯)

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b.

hexachordal OCT\textsuperscript{(2,3)} segment: \([A\flat, B\natural, D\flat, D\natural, F\natural, A\flat]\) 

\textit{with:}

increasing \(B\natural\) melodic centricity
tritonal axis (\(A\natural / D\natural\))

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Example 10. Analysis of “Lost Bells” (no. 3), middle groups

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seven-stroke bell gesture: 
perfect fifths harmonics

(026): 
\([B\natural, D\natural, F\natural]\) from earlier melodic segments

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Example 11. Analysis of “Devil-music” (no. 4), beginning

Example 12. Analysis of “Threnody II: BLACK ANGELS!” (no. 7), beginning
Example 13.

a. Schubert, “Death and the Maiden” Quartet, movement II, measures 1–24; b. Crumb, “Pavana Lachrymac” (no. 6), Insect Sounds

a. corresponds to No. 6: Pavana Lachrymac, mm. 1–8

b. corresponds to No. 6: Pavana Lachrymac, mm. 9–11

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**Example 14.** Chromatic complementation and saturation in “Pavana Lachrymae.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
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</table>

- **Pitch-class content of “Death and the Maiden” quotation**
- **Pitch-class content of violin 1 obbligato: Insect Sounds**

**Example 15.** Lack of fit between insect sounds and pastiche music in “Sarabanda de la Muerte Oscura” (no. 8), measures 7–12

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**Example 16.** Chromatic complementation and saturation in Crumb, *Makrokosmos I*, no. 11: Dream Images (“Love-Death Music”)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>opening gestures</th>
<th>First Chopin melodic segment, measures 1–5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>C♯/D♭</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Chopin, *Fantasy-Impromptu*, op. 66: pitch-class content of melody

Crumb’s original music: pitch-class content of primary melody

First Chopin Melodic Segment:

Second Chopin Melodic Segment:

Third Chopin Melodic Segment:

First and Second Crumb Melodic Gestures:

“Background”: Schubert, “Death and the Maiden” Quartet, movement II

Andante con moto

```
mm. 1–4
^3
m. 5–8
```

```
\begin{align*}
\text{i} & \quad \text{V} & \quad \text{i} \\
\text{i} & \quad \text{V} & \quad \text{i}
\end{align*}
```

“Foreground”: Crumb, *Black Angels*, “Pavana Lachrymae” (no. 6)

Grave, solemn

```
mm. 1–4
^3
m. 5–8
```

```
\begin{align*}
\text{i} & \quad \text{V} & \quad \text{i} \\
\text{i} & \quad \text{V} & \quad \text{i}
\end{align*}
```

\text{**solo obbligato (violin I): insect music**}

\begin{itemize}
  \item [+]: tonic chord with no third
  \item [x]: dominant chord with no bass
  \item [\wedge\wedge\wedge]: inner-voice material omitted
\end{itemize}

Foreground:
**Example 18.** Analysis of “Pavana Lachrymae” melody in relation to “God-music,” Vox Dei

Schubert melody

first, last, highest, lowest: (014)

omission of 2 clarifies (014)

Vox Dei, opening

total melodic content: (0134)

**Example 19.** Analysis of pastiche material in “Sarabanda de la Muerte Oscura” (no. 8)

first, last, highest, lowest: (014)
Example 20. Analysis of “God-music” (no. 10), crystal glasses
Example 21. Analysis of “Threnody III” (no. 13), end

- Crystal glasses
- (Violin I)
- (Violin II)
- (Violin II)
- 7 attacks: Lost Bells contour “seven” and “thirteen”
- Tritonal axis (A♭/D♯)
- (0146): {A♯, B♭, C♯, D♯}

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