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“In stilo Mahleriano” Quotation and Allusion in the Music of George Crumb

In Memory of Paul Parmelee

The spirit of *déjà vu* is so implicit in the music of George Crumb that one feels familiar with it even when it is entirely new. It is modern music which drips with an ineffable antiquity.

—Jamake Highwater

George Crumb's preoccupation with the great tonal tradition is manifested in many ways, most notably in his quotation of familiar passages from past music. Such “direct” quotations, often identified in the score and notated within quotation marks, are usually obvious to listeners and have attracted some amount of interest from scholars.¹ Crumb's earliest such quotation is his Ivesian use of the hymn tune, “Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?”, in “Remembrance of Time,” the second movement of his Pulitzer Prize-winning 1967 orchestral work, *Echoes of Time and the River*.² But this instance of direct quotation is surrounded by a series of compositions—using borrowings of various kinds—extending from his 1963 *Night Music I* through the works of the 1970s and '80s. Nearly every Crumb composition from 1963 through 1974 incorporates both direct and indirect quotations. After 1974, Crumb uses quotation more sparingly.³

Crumb has, of course, frequently been asked in published interviews to comment on his use of quotation, and his remarks provide at least the starting point for an analytical investigation of the topic. In a July 1988 interview, answering the question, “do you ask yourself when you decide to incorporate a quotation, ‘What is the function of this?’ or is it simply intuitive,” Crumb responds, “well it's intuitive, but trying to articulate it, I would say that quotation can produce different effects: nostalgia for a past world, or a strange spanning of time—by juxtaposing something that was written two centuries earlier with something new.”⁴ In the same interview, the composer offers a telling self-description: “I sense that I'm further elaborating seeds that were already planted in earlier works. I think I'm that type of composer, the type of a Debussy or a Mahler. One can speak of *the* symphony of Mahler. I think one can speak of the total work of Debussy as being of a piece, in contrast to other composers who experience significant stylistic breaks.”⁵ Indeed,

Crumb's subtle and pervasive musical borrowings extend as a kind of connecting thread, unifying movements within a single opus, as well as linking them to his earlier and later compositions.

This article is a preliminary exploration of the issues raised by the composer's extensive, and sometimes exceedingly subtle, allusions to music of the past. Crumb's pieces show the profound influence of the past in virtually every dimension: in their titles, formal and tonal designs, instrumentation, notation, poetic imagery, motivic structure, and even theatrical effects. And for Crumb, the past includes not only the music of his illustrious predecessors, but also his own earlier works. I shall trace several intertextual strands through a series of compositions, beginning with *Night Music I* (1963) and proceeding approximately in chronological order to *Ancient Voices of Children* (1970). Nearly all of Crumb's settings of Federico García Lorca's poetry date from this time, and his Lorca songs are so intimately related to each other that they may be thought of as, in many ways, a single, extended cycle. To be sure, the intertextual references I shall describe are only one facet of this composer's music. Comprehensive analyses of individual works by Crumb remain to be undertaken, and I hope to suggest possible directions such studies might take. A full understanding of an individual Crumb work, however, seems impossible without taking into account the myriad associations linking each work to other Crumb compositions as well as to the music of his forebears.

Night Music I, the first of the many Lorca settings, was completed in May 1963 in Boulder, Colorado.⁶ This work for soprano, piano (doubling on celesta), and two percussionists, is the point of origin for a web of allusions to and quotations from the music of Gustav Mahler, whom Crumb has frequently cited as a powerful influence. In following these references from *Night Music I* through the works of the next seven years, one discovers not only Mahlerian connections, but also a rich network of intertextual cross-references back and forth among Crumb's own works. In other words, Crumb not only quotes Mahler, but also himself by incorporating elements from his earlier pieces. One begins to hear each Crumb work situated in a number of contexts—as a *Ding an sich*; as a modern work “echoing” or responding to music of the antique tonal tradition, and as one link in a continuous series of works which, recalling the composer's earlier remarks, may be thought of as only a part of the single, “total work” of Crumb. *Night Music I* does not incorporate direct quotations, but this composition nevertheless prefigures the works to come. To begin with, Crumb's title alludes to Mahler, and to the whole tradition of “night music” in Western art music. The reference is to the two extraordinary *Nachtmusik* movements that flank the central Scherzo movement (“Schattenhaft”) of Mahler's Seventh Symphony.⁷ The quasi-symmetrical five-movement plan of Mahler's Seventh may have inspired Crumb's symmetrically arranged seven “Notturmo” movements. The central “Notturmo IV,” an instrumental movement marked “Vivace, molto ritmico,” is framed

by the only two vocal movements: “Notturmo III,” a setting of Lorca’s “La Luna Asoma” (“The Moon Rises”), and “Notturmo V,” Lorca’s “Gacela de la Terrible Presencia” (“Gacela of the Terrible Presence”).⁸ “Notturmo II,” an instrumental “Piccola Serenata,” corresponds with the other subtitled instrumental movement, “Notturmo VI, Barcarola.” With the latter title, Crumb hints at another famous precursor, Bartók’s 1926 five-movement piano suite, *Out of Doors*, the second and fourth movements of which are entitled respectively “Barcarolla” and “Musiques Nocturnes.” Bartók would seem to be paying homage to Chopin and Mahler; Crumb thus extends the string of references one step further.⁹ Beyond the evocative titles, Crumb recalls Bartók in the harmonic language of *Night Music I*. The concentration of minor seconds, tritones, major sevenths, and minor ninths strongly resembles characteristic sonorities in Bartók’s “Musiques Nocturnes” movement.¹⁰ Finally, Crumb’s fondness for “arch” forms, with formal units arranged symmetrically about a central point, is also reminiscent of Bartók.

In “Notturmo III,” the first vocal movement of *Night Music I* (pp. 4-5), Crumb notates the instrumental parts around two red circles.¹¹ This is apparently his first use of a notational idiosyncrasy that has become one of the most celebrated features of his scores. The first circle is played by piano and celesta, and the second, on the facing page, by the two percussionists. Far from simply a compositional conceit, Crumb’s circular notation here is a brilliant reflection of Lorca’s poetic imagery. The first two stanzas of “La Luna Asoma” each begin with the line, “Cuando sale la luna” (“When the moon rises”). The round moon is then reflected in the second half of the poem by miniature replicas: “naranjas” (“oranges”) in the third stanza, and in the fourth and final stanza, “de cien rostros iguales” (“[moon] of a hundred equal faces”) and “la moneda de plata” (“the silver coins”). In Crumb’s score, the lunar shape of the notation for the piano/celesta circle is likewise reflected by the percussion circle. The two circles are played in tandem, but the players may begin with any segment and proceed in either direction around the circle. And so, just as the moon is echoed by a scattering of round images through the rest of Lorca’s poem, the singer’s recitation of the text is imitated by “circular” accompanimental fragments. The concert audience, of course, doesn’t see the score, but Crumb dramatizes Lorca’s imagery in other ways. The stage is filled with circular percussion instruments—the suspended cymbal, antique cymbals, three sizes of tam-tam, and the drumheads of the timpani, tenor drum, and bongos. While these visual associations may be fortuitous, two instrumental effects in “Notturmo III” are accorded almost ritualistic status. Firstly, in her hands the soprano holds two finger cymbals (the representatives of Lorca’s silver coins?), and she articulates the four-part form of the piece by striking them together at the end of each stanza. Secondly, the song ends with one of Crumb’s most astonishing instrumental effects, the so-called “water gong.” As the poem ends, the audience witnesses the smallest tam-tam (13-inch diameter) rising slowly out of a tub of

water, as the percussionist executes a roll. The resultant aural effect, a descending glissando, is a final mirroring of the poem's rising moon. The striking visual image, perhaps Crumb's first use of a theatrical effect, recalls the opening of the second stanza, near the mid-point of Lorca's poem: "Cuando sale la luna, el mar cubre la tierra" ("When the moon rises, the sea covers the land"). Perhaps to ensure that this memorable event be seen as well as heard, Crumb's diagram for the placement of the players specifies that the "water-gong" be at the front of the stage, just right of center.¹²

In a later work, *Eleven Echoes of Autumn*, 1965 (subtitled *Echoes I*, for violin, alto flute, clarinet, and piano), one discovers a number of references pointing backward to Mahler and *Night Music I*. The very title of the work suggests reverberating sounds and memories of the past. Might Crumb's "Autumn" refer to Mahler's "Der Einsame im Herbst" ("Autumn Loneliness"), the second movement of *Das Lied von der Erde*, a composition that resounds through much of Crumb's music? This allusion to *Das Lied* is reinforced by a remarkable "dramatic" effect in "Eco 3." Here, the violinist momentarily assumes the rôle of "a distant mandolin," holding the instrument like a mandolin and imitating a plectrum tremolo (the dynamic marking is *pppp*). This is an uncanny echo of the transcendent closing pages of "Der Abschied," the final movement of *Das Lied*. At rehearsal 64, Mahler's mandolin part utilizes, for the first time in the piece, a plectrum tremolo and is marked *kaum hörbar* (scarcely audible) at a pianississimo dynamic level. Moreover, in having the violinist "impersonate" a mandolinist, Crumb reminds us that Mahler's mandolin part is doubled at the unison by first violins.¹³

Crumb's *Eleven Echoes* are arranged in an arch form, recalling the design of *Night Music I*. In *Eleven Echoes*, the centerpiece comprises three Cadenza movements, for alto flute, violin, and clarinet, respectively. Here the composer incorporates an ingenious constellation of punning self-quotations. "Echi 5-7" bear the subtitle, "and the broken arches where time suffers," a direct reference to *Night Music I*. In that earlier composition, at the climactic passage of "Gacela de la Terrible Presencia" ("Notturmo V," p. 12, bottom), the soprano shouts fortississimo, gradually decreasing to a softer dynamic, the words "y los arcos rotos donde sufre el tiempo." In the 1965 work, at the start of "Eco 5," the violinist and alto flutist whisper Lorca's words, at once referring backward to the climax of "Notturmo V" from *Night Music I*, and signalling the beginning of the central section of *Eleven Echoes*, the keystone, so to speak, of Crumb's arch form.¹⁴ As Christopher Rouse has observed, Lorca's words inspire other aspects of the passage, most remarkably the unusual notation (see Example 1): "Each of these three central echoes contains a cadenza superimposed over a circularly notated accompaniment for piano and one other instrument. Closer examination, however, reveals that these 'circles' are actually two semicircular *arches* which are 'broken' by fermatas" [emphasis added].¹⁵ Of course, the circular notation here also recalls the red circles in the score of "Notturmo III," the first vocal movement of *Night Music I*.

[illegible]

Example 1. *Eleven Echoes of Autumn*, 1965, "Eco 5" Quotation of Lorca fragment from *Night Music I* and *Echoes of Time and the River* (p. 6).
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Elements of both *Night Music I* and *Eleven Echoes of Autumn* return in *Echoes of Time and the River*, completed in winter, 1967. That the latter work is the pendant to *Eleven Echoes* is clear from its subtitle, *Echoes II*. Circular notation appears again in the second movement, “Remembrance of Time” (pp. 7-8), and near the end of the third movement, “Collapse of Time” (pp. 13-14). In the latter passage, the end of each of the four circular passages is signalled by a two-plate finger-cymbal clash, in the same manner as the singer’s finger-cymbal strokes in “Notturmo III” of *Night Music I*. In the second and third movements of *Echoes of Time and the River*, the Lorca phrase used in *Night Music I* and *Eleven Echoes*, “Los arcos rotos donde sufre el tiempo,” returns once more, serving as a kind of motto. At their first appearance in the orchestral piece, these words are whispered by three trombonists, *through* their instruments, from the edge of the stage. Crumb marks this “distant Wind-music” at a soft dynamic. Rouse sees the most significant innovation of *Echoes of Time and the River* as Crumb’s abandonment of arch structure, replacing it with a four-movement formal design.¹⁶ Thus, the visual and musical metaphors associated with Lorca’s “arcos rotos” (“broken arches”) in Crumb’s earlier pieces take on yet another meaning. In “breaking” from the “arch” forms of his previous works, the composer ends the series of intertextual references to Lorca’s evocative words.

We turn now to the longest and darkest of the Lorca settings, *Songs, Drones and Refrains of Death*, a work for baritone voice and chamber ensemble. Initial sketches for the piece date from 1962 (the time of *Five Pieces for Piano* and *Night Music I*), but the main work of composition waited until 1968.¹⁷ This composition intensifies and extends techniques already observed in the preceding works, and these effects often take on a morbidly ironic, nightmarish quality. The final song, “Casida del Herido por el Agua” (Casida of the Boy Wounded by the Water), is the composer’s favorite of his many Lorca settings. And, as Crumb describes it, “the dream-like beginning of this song, with its gentle oscillation between the pitches B/G-sharp and the tender lyricism of the baritone melody, is *consciously reminiscent of Mahler*” [emphasis added].¹⁸ Indeed, the “Casida del Herido” is the culmination of the Mahlerian allusions contained in the piece as a whole; it also continues the chain of intertextual references from the earlier works.

The first Song movement, a setting of Lorca’s “La Guitarra,” features rhapsodic cadenzas for the electric guitar, to be played “as if improvised, in a dark, impassioned style, quasi Flamenco guitar” (p. 7). Beyond the obvious appropriateness of the Flamenco style to the Spanish poem, listeners hearing “La Guitarra” in the context of Crumb’s other music may perceive additional associations. Lorca’s poem extols the power of the guitar’s lament and personifies it as a kind of hypnotic, ancient voice:

Empieza el llanto de la guitarra.

Es inútil callarla. Es imposible callarla.
Llora monótona como llora el agua,

Llora por cosas lejanas.

¡Oh, guitarra! Corazón malherido por cinco espadas.

The lament of the guitar begins.

It is useless to hush it. It is impossible to hush it.
It weeps monotonous as the water weeps,

It weeps for things far away.

Oh, guitar! Heart grievously wounded by five swords.

Lorca's personification of the guitar is aptly depicted by Crumb's "surreal" (the composer's term) electric guitar. We are reminded of the violinist's "impersonation" of a mandolinist in the third of the *Eleven Echoes of Autumn*. Recall the latter as an allusion to the characteristic mandolin part in Mahler's *Das Lied* and the second *Nachtmusik* movement of the Seventh Symphony. Mahler's Seventh includes his only use of the guitar, thereby according that instrument the same exalted status as Crumb's electric guitar seems to have in *Songs, Drones and Refrains of Death*. Perhaps the most remarkable electric guitar passage in the piece occurs in the middle of "Casida del Herido" (p. 20), where the instrument plays a pentatonic obbligato pattern in its loudest and highest register (g#, f#, d#, c#, two octaves above middle-c; marked *fff*, "sharp, metallic").¹⁹ This guitar figure is superimposed upon the texture in much the same way as the violinist's "distant mandolin" in "Eco 3" of *Eleven Echoes*. Thus, the quintessential instruments of the serenade—mandolin and guitar—are featured in prominent ways in both pieces. Moreover, the guitar's pentatonic figures are powerfully suggestive of *Das Lied*. In Mahler's closing movement, "Der Abschied," the mandolin is presented as a kind of compositional persona, the phenomenal "voice" of the poet's lute, to which references are made in the first movement ("Hier, diese Laute nenn' ich mein!") and last movement ("Ich wandle auf und nieder mit meiner Laute").²⁰ Crumb's own compositional persona is also symbolized by the mandolin; in *Makrokosmos, Volume I*, the initials inscribed at the end of the fifth piece, "The Phantom Gondolier," are the composer's own (G.H.C.).²¹

Another technique linking *Songs, Drones and Refrains of Death* with its predecessors is Crumb's symbolic use of circular notation in two of the movements. As before, the composer's notation is a response to Lorca's poetic imagery. In the second Song movement, "Casida de las Palomas Oscuras" ("Casida of the Dark Doves"), Crumb uses paired "music wheels" as he had

done in “Notturmo III” of *Night Music I*. Lorca’s poem contains a dialectical pairing of images connected with the two doves of the title. One dove is the sun and the other is the moon (“La una era el sol, la otra la luna”). To the repeated question, “¿Dónde está mi sepultura?” (“Where is my tomb?”), they twice reply “En mi cola, dijo el sol. En mi garganta, dijo la luna” (“In my tail, said the sun, in my throat, said the moon”). At the end of the poem, the two images seem to merge: “La una era la otra y las dos eran ninguna” (“The one was the other and both were no one”). Crumb depicts this imagery, and the arch-like form of the poem, by placing opposing circular pairs at the head (the “throat”?) and the “tail” of the movement. In the opening pair of circles, “El Sol” is echoed by “La Luna” (p. 10). At the end of the movement (p. 11), the imitation is reversed, with “La Luna” echoed by “El Sol.” The pitch content of the two pairs is the same, but the starting point changes, so that the opening figure from the first pair of circles (figure 1 in the score, for electric piano and electric contrabass) becomes the closing figure of the pair at the end of the movement (figure 5, for electric contrabass and electric guitar). The substitution of guitar for piano at the end of this movement at once articulates the end of the movement and the end of the first half of the work, a formal design that is further articulated by the ensuing half-minute pause before “Refrain Three” commences. Thus, the supernatural “voice” of the guitar dominates the beginning and end of part one.²²

The second instance of circular notation occurs near the end of the final song, “Casida del Herido por el Agua” (p. 21). Here, Circle A, for electric guitar and contrabass, is performed in tandem with Circle B, for baritone. The poem is a frightening, dream-like series of images of a boy drowning in a well. At the passage in question, the players of Circle A recite one quatrain,

El niño estaba solo
con la ciudad dormida en la garganta.
Un surtidor que viene de los sueños
lo defiende del hambre de las algas.

The boy was alone,
the city asleep in his throat.
A water spout out of his dreams
wards off from him the hungry algae.

The image of the boy’s throat (“la garganta”) recalls the lunar dove’s throat in the “Casida de las Palomas Oscuras,” the image that closed part one of the piece. And the defensive, sword-like water spout connects this poem with the end of “La Guitarra” (“Corazón malherido por cinco espadas”). It is the imagery of the baritone’s Circle B, however, that seems to have inspired Crumb’s twin images, particularly the first two lines: “El niño y su agonía, frente a frente, eran dos verdes lluvias enlazadas” (“The boy and his agony, face to face, were two green rains enlaced”). Thus, the composer’s face-to-face notations—which are aurally “enlaced” during their virtually simulta-

neous performance—are a wonderfully apt translation of Lorca’s imagery. Crumb’s circles also resemble the mouth of the well in which the boy is drowning. And it seems appropriate to find two wells here: one contains the drowning boy and the other awaits the poet, who, throughout the poem longs to emulate the boy’s death: “Quiero bajar al pozo . . . qué nocturno rumor, qué muerte blanca! . . . Quiero bajar al pozo, quiero morir mi muerte a bocanadas” (“I want to go down to the well . . . such nocturnal murmurs, such a white death! . . . I want to go down to the well, I want to die my own death, by mouthfuls”).²³

As Crumb’s program notes indicate (cited above), the most self-consciously Mahlerian passage in *Songs, Drones and Refrains of Death* is the opening of “Casida del Herido” (Example 2b), the final movement of the piece. It is introduced by “Refrain Four” (Example 2a), which anticipates the Mahlerian allusions of the “Casida.” The discussion below explores the associative resonance of Examples 2a and 2b, which have the character of dream-like improvisations on fragments from numerous Mahler compositions.

We have already seen that Crumb’s appropriation of the mandolin and guitar may be viewed as specific timbral “transplants” from Mahler’s Seventh Symphony and *Das Lied von der Erde*, where these instruments have symbolic significance. In a similar sense, aspects of Crumb’s instrumentation in “Refrain Four” and “Casida del Herido,” may be heard as extensions, or intensifications, of characteristic Mahlerian timbres. To begin with, the tuned cowbells at the end of “Refrain Four” are a radical reinterpretation of the famous *Herdenglocken* episodes in Mahler’s Sixth and Seventh Symphonies.²⁴ Mahler’s first use of *Herdenglocken* occurs in the Sixth Symphony, early in the development section of the first movement (rehearsal 21). In a footnote (p. 35), Mahler instructs that “the cowbells must be handled very discreetly—in realistic imitation of the now unified, now separate ringing of (high and low) bells of a grazing herd, rising *from the distance* ” [emphasis added]. He then warns that the foregoing “technical remark permits no programmatic interpretation.”²⁵ This special effect, inspired as it was by a specific geographical situation (the Austrian mountains where Mahler composed each summer), is apparently to be experienced purely acoustically, without programmatic associations. Compare this with an analogous passage in Crumb. At the end of the sixth piece of *Makrokosmos I*, “Night-Spell I,” the pianist whistles fragments of the hymn tune, “Will There Be Any Stars In My Crown?” (p. 13). The composer’s marking, “Serene, hauntingly; echoing [like an Appalachian valley acoustic],” suggests an autobiographical source for this special effect, as in Mahler’s *Herdenglocken* episodes. Like his predecessor, however, Crumb seems averse to attaching programmatic associations to such passages.²⁶

Crumb’s well-known fascination with spatial effects may also be seen as an extension of Mahler’s technique in the Sixth Symphony. Directly next to the *Herdenglocken* parts in the score, Mahler specifies the effects to be created by the players: “situated in the distance” (“in Entfernung aufgestellt,”

p. 35); “coming nearer” (“näher kommend,” p. 36); “disappearing [into the distance]” (“sich entfernend,” p. 37); “remaining in the distance” (“immer in der Ferne,” p. 39); and finally, “dying away” (“morendo,” p. 40). In the Sixth, the players remain on the stage, although Mahler had achieved “distance” effects by using off-stage performers in numerous other works, even as early as his 1880 student effort, *Das Klagende Lied*. Crumb’s scores are full of similar passages, and they are almost always designated as “a distant music” or “music lontano” (cf. Example 2a, “Refrain Four”). Besides instructing players to imitate spatial, and perhaps psychological, distance (e.g., the “distant mandolin” in the third of the *Eleven Echoes of Autumn*), Crumb actually has the players move about the stage (e.g., the processional in *Echoes of Time and the River* and the exiting players in the fourth movement of *Night of the Four Moons*). The effect is often combined with players heard from off-stage, as at the end of *Night of the Four Moons*.

In “Refrain Four” of *Songs, Drones and Refrains of Death*, Crumb recalls Mahler’s *Herdenglocken* as a kind of faint memory, announcing the most overtly Mahlerian episode he had yet composed (Example 2a). The rich, orchestral clothing enveloping Mahler’s *Herdenglocken* is here stripped away, leaving the solo cowbells as a bare, ghostly echo of that distant music. There follows the deliberately monotonous intoning of a minor third (G#/B) in all instruments at the opening of “Casida del Herido” (Example 2b). The electrically amplified piano harmonics and pizzicato contrabass evoke a number of typically Mahlerian plucked string sonorities, a reference that is highlighted by the incantation of the isolated minor third.²⁷ In addition, the process of gradually unfolding a few motivic intervals—here set into bold relief by the initially static focus on G# and B—brings to mind at least three Mahler works with similar beginnings. The first example is probably Mahler’s most popular composition, the Fifth Symphony’s intimate Adagietto. This movement seems to grow organically from the single minor third (A/C, a half-step higher than Crumb’s) intoned by harp and strings alone during the opening two bars, before the entrance of the violin melody. Crumb’s “Casida del Herido” intensifies the effect by focusing on G#-B for a full thirty seconds (!) before the entrance of the baritone melody.²⁸ Mahler’s great orchestral Rückert song, “Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen,” was composed in August 1902, after a summer of work on the Fifth Symphony, and it is in many respects a companion piece to the Adagietto.²⁹ Before the singer’s entrance, there is an extended unfolding of three motivic intervals: major second, minor third, and perfect fourth. Again, the harp is prominent and is the first sound we hear. Added to plucked and bowed string sonorities, are double reed timbres in three registers: English horn, bassoon, and oboe. The process of unfolding in this introduction is slower, more “self-conscious” than in the Adagietto. One absorbs the motivic intervals one at a time, as the English horn melody gradually materializes from the initial rising major second. A third Mahlerian introduction that anticipates Crumb’s “Casida del Herido” is the opening of the Ninth Symphony. In the Andante first movement, the in-

tervallic evolution is so gradual that the principal theme in first violins does not seem really to be underway until rehearsal 2, some seventeen measures into the piece. Mahler exploits the timbral possibilities of the orchestral strings and harp, using a full range of plucked and bowed motives. Most of these motives are only a half-measure long and are articulated by rests. The passage has the quality of a slowly evolving timbral mosaic, another clear anticipation of Crumb. All of these openings seem almost improvisatory, as if the music is creating itself before our ears.

As Crumb's "Casida del Herido" proceeds, the vocal and plucked string timbres are joined by an ever richer variety of tone colors. Two bell-like sonorities, the vibraphone and glockenspiel, appear near the opening of the movement (Example 2b). This timbral category is subsequently extended to include a tiny Japanese bell and very small triangle (p. 19, second system), water-tuned crystal glasses (p. 19, end of second system), sleighbells (p. 19, bottom system), and tubular bells (p. 21, top system). The exposed, pianissimo trembling of the sleighbells (p. 19) will immediately remind Mahlerites of the famous opening of the Fourth Symphony.

In 1969, the year after he completed *Songs, Drones and Refrains of Death*, Crumb composed another Lorca setting for singer and chamber ensemble, *Night of the Four Moons*. As his program notes tell us, this four-movement work expresses the composer's "rather ambivalent feelings *vis-à-vis* Apollo 11," the first manned space mission to land on the surface of the moon.³⁰ All types of quotation and allusion discovered in Crumb's earlier works—evocative titles, timbral allusions, formal design, motivic figures, self-quotations, etc.—are present in *Night of the Four Moons*. In fact, the technique is refined to such a degree that one may describe the work as a thoroughgoing parody of two famous compositions: Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* and Haydn's Symphony No. 45 ("The Farewell").³¹ This article cannot present a comprehensive analysis of this rich composition. For our purposes, it is enough to highlight representative aspects of Crumb's "parody" technique in *Night of the Four Moons* as they relate to topics considered above.³²

The overall tonal and formal design of *Four Moons* reflects salient features of the Mahler and Haydn works. Crumb's four movements divide into two main parts. Part I comprises the first three movements (lasting nine minutes and seven seconds) and Part II is the extended fourth movement (eight minutes and twenty-six seconds). As the composer tells us, the first three songs are "merely introductory to the dramatically sustained final song."³³ Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* also divides into two main parts. Part I consists of the first five movements; it begins and ends in A and lasts about thirty-two minutes. Part II is the magnificent closing movement, "Der Abschied," which begins in C minor and closes in C major and lasts about twenty-eight and a half minutes. The formal proportions of the Mahler and Crumb works are remarkably similar, with the opening movements serving as introduction to the expansive closing movement. Moreover, A and C are

primary tonal centers in both compositions. Crumb simultaneously grafts elements of the “Farewell” symphony onto his piece. Haydn’s symphony has four movements, but the Presto finale is expanded into a two-part structure, culminating in the extraordinary, slow epilogue. Haydn’s closing Adagio is preceded by a dramatic silence; it begins in A major and progresses to F# major by the end. Crumb also borrows from Haydn’s “Farewell” the famous theatrical gesture of having the players exit one by one until an all-but-deserted stage remains at the end (Haydn’s two violinists are replaced by Crumb’s solitary cellist). Crumb’s “exit music” (p. 9) likewise is preceded by silence (seven seconds). Then, each player strikes the crotale (the pitch is A) upon exiting the stage (the cellist sustains a high A harmonic throughout). Once off-stage, the players begin the closing “Farewell-music” in F# Major, an obvious parody of late Mahler. The on-stage cellist plays in C major at the end, the same closing tonality as *Das Lied von der Erde*. We have observed Crumb responding in other compositions to formal designs of his predecessors (e.g., Bartók’s symmetrical arch forms are recalled in *Night Music I* and other early works), but the sophisticated “double-parody” in *Night of the Four Moons* is unprecedented in Crumb’s music.

Another technique familiar from preceding works is Crumb’s extension and intensification of characteristic Mahlerian timbres. In this case, as well, *Night of the Four Moons* refines the technique further. As summarized in Figure 1, nearly every instrument in *Four Moons* may be traced to Mahler. As before, Crumb expands the possibilities of each basic timbre, thereby intensifying the characteristics of the original. For example, the plucked string sonorities in “Der Abschied” are transformed and made even more pungent in *Four Moons*: cello and banjo both use metal plectra at times, and the banjo also uses two metal thimbles. The resultant dry, percussive plucked sounds sound like distillations of the *chinoiserie* in Mahler’s score. The same is true of the other timbres. It is worth considering the symbolic resonance of the banjo here. If *Four Moons* is a continuation of the path first taken in *Night Music I*, the banjo is the ultimate metamorphosis of Mahler’s and Crumb’s “lute.” Let us retrace the steps. *Night Music I* does not contain a mandolin part, but alludes to a piece that does, Mahler’s second *Nachtmusik* movement from the Seventh Symphony. *Eleven Echoes* has the violinist “impersonate” a “distant” mandolinist. *Songs, Drones and Refrains* presents an electric guitar, a “surreal” version of Mahler’s other serenading instrument from the Seventh, the guitar. *Four Moons*, with its overt references to Mahler’s “Farewell-music,” reminds us of the mandolin’s rôle as the poet-composer’s “lute” (“diese Laute”) in *Das Lied*. The banjo, then, is a conflation of Mahler’s mandolin and guitar; Crumb’s “lute,” appropriately enough, is an instrument associated with his Appalachian homeland.

Night of the Four Moons includes at least two self-quotations. The second movement, “Cuando sale la luna. ” (“When the moon rises. ”), is at once a quotation of “Notturmo III” from *Night Music I* and a parody of it. “Notturmo III” is the movement that ends with Crumb’s memorable “water-

**MAHLER: *Das Lied von der Erde*
VI. "Der Abschied"**

ALTO VOICE

First vocal entrance (mm. 19–26):
"Die Sonne scheidet hinter dem Gebirge"
("The sun is sinking [literally: is parting] behind
the mountains")
Accomp. Solo Flute & tutti celli (tonic pedal)

FLUTE (often in lowest octave)

CRUMB: *Night of the Four Moons*

ALTO VOICE (with extended techniques)

First vocal entrance (p. 4, 2nd system):
"La luna esta muerta, muerta"
("The moon is dead, dead")
Accomp. Flute, plucked cello & banjo

ALTO FLUTE (plus piccolo in III. & IV.)

PLUCKED STRINGS

CELLI & BASSES (mm. 1–17)

HARP

mm. 1–17: doubles tonic pedal in celli & basses
mm. 55ff.: minor-3rd ostinato ("mit Mediator")
mm. 137–44: imitative development of minor-3rd
ostinato (harmonics)
mm. 166–71: "Ewig" motive added to minor- 3rd
ostinato (mandolin enters)
mm. 229–50: Development of min. 3rd (with
bowed & pizz. violas & 2nd violins)
mm. 288–302: min.-3rd ostinato
mm. 430–441: min-3rd ostinato returns ("Ich
wandle nach der Heimat . . .")

MANDOLIN



"diese Laute"



BANJO

mm. 166–71: "Ewig" motive (D-C)
mm. 229–36: "Ewig" motive (D-C)
mm. 509–14: tremolo, "kaum hörbar,"
chromatic embellishment of "Ewig"
mm. 534–end: "Ewig" (E-D)

First movement "ritornello":

Cello pizz. (modo ordinario)
Cello pizz. with metal plectrum

Second movement:

Cello pizz. harmonics, "Ewig" motive
(E-D) (p. 6, end of first system)

First movement "ritornello" (with cello):

pluck with finger
pluck with metal plectrum (sul pont.)

Second movement:

harmonics, "Ewig" motive (A-G)

PERCUSSION

Tamtam (mm. 1–8, 371–91, 405–10)

Cymbals (first movement)
Glockenspiel

Triangle (fifth movement)
Tambourine

Celesta (mm. 494–570, closing of "Der
Abschied": "blauen licht die Fernen, ewig,
ewig . . .")

PERCUSSION

Large tam-tam (4th mov't., pp. 8–9, top)
Small tam-tam (played by singer in 2nd mov't.)
Chinese temple gong (first entrance: "La luna
esta muerta")

Suspended cymbal

Glockenspiel plates

Crotales (A is used for Exit music, 4th mov't.)

Finger cymbals (played by singer in 1st mov't.)

Tambourine

Vibraphone (first entrance: off-stage Epilogue,
"Farewell-music as Berceuse: in stilo
Mahleriano")

Figure 1. Timbral Reminiscence and Intensification.

gong” effect, a visual and aural reflection of the second stanza of Lorca’s poem: “Cuando sale la luna, el mar cubre la tierra y el corazón se siente isla en el infinito” (“When the moon rises, the sea covers the land, and the heart feels like an island in infinity”). These are precisely the words Crumb reuses for the second movement of *Four Moons*. A comparison of the two scores reveals a rather free parody of the earlier piece: the vocal line shares similar contours in spots, but the instrumental parts in *Four Moons* strongly evoke Mahler’s “Der Abschied.” The pentatonic fragments (alto flute, banjo, and plucked cello) just before the singer’s first entrance (p. 6, top two systems) resemble the many pentatonic motives in *Das Lied*, and seem almost to quote the “Ewig” motive (a descending major second) from the closing pages of “Der Abschied.” In reusing the Lorca passage, Crumb may also be alluding to the “autumn loneliness” of the second movement from *Das Lied*. In “Der Einsame in Herbst,” the poet wanders by a mist-covered lake, and confides, “mein Herz ist müde” (“my heart is weary”), and later, “der Herbst in meinem Herzen währt zu lange” (“the autumn in my heart endures too long”). In any case, a spirit of existential loneliness (“like an island in infinity”) pervades all of *Das Lied von der Erde*, making the connection with Lorca’s words, and Crumb’s “echoes” of autumn, all but irresistible.

The second self-quotation occurs at the end of the third movement of *Four Moons*, as the singer utters the phrase, “donde el niño de luz se irá quemando” (“where the child of light will be kindling”). As shown in Example 3, the melodic figure at the climax of the singer’s line (“niño de luz”) is an unmistakable quotation of the violinist’s final fragments from the end of *Eleven Echoes of Autumn*. The registers are identical, and the transposition levels differ by only a half-step. In Example 3a, the singer’s phrase is punctuated by a very soft stroke on the large tam-tam, quietly echoing the opening of part two of *Das Lied*, “Der Abschied.” Part two of *Four Moons* commences immediately after the passage shown as Example 3a. In Example 3b, the eerie violin fragments, played with the bow hair completely slack, may be heard as a chromatic ornamentation of a Mahlerian minor third. This is answered by scarcely audible descending-second harmonics in the piano (“Ewig, ewig”). *Eleven Echoes of Autumn* opened with the same descending-second motive sounding throughout “Eco 1,” as if the solo pianist is remembering the “ewig” figure from the closing of “Der Abschied.” In returning to the same figure at the end (played also as piano harmonics), one has the sense that the *Eleven Echoes* were triggered by this simple Mahlerian memory.

Ancient Voices of Children, for soprano and chamber ensemble, is widely considered to be Crumb’s masterpiece. The work was composed in 1970, and it marks the culmination of the many Lorca settings initiated in 1963 by *Night Music I*.³⁴ As might be expected from the technical refinements of the preceding work, *Night of the Four Moons*, *Ancient Voices* is rich in quotations and allusions, and it warrants a full analysis on its own, but this is beyond the scope of the present article. Instead, we shall focus on a passage that is Crumb’s most extensive parody of Mahler. Near the beginning of the

Example 3a. *Night of the Four Moons*, end of third movement (p. 7, third system).

Example 3a shows the end of the third movement of *Night of the Four Moons*. The score is for Alto and Piano. The Alto part has a tempo marking of "più lento" with a metronome mark of 44. The Piano part has a tempo marking of 60. The lyrics are "don - de el ni - fio - de - luz - se i - ra que-man-do."

Example 3b. *Eleven Echoes of Autumn*, end of "Eco 11" (p. 11, second system).

Example 3b shows the end of "Eco 11" from *Eleven Echoes of Autumn*. The score is for Violin and Piano. The Violin part has a tempo marking of "più lento" with a metronome mark of 44. The Piano part has a tempo marking of 60. The lyrics are "don - de el ni - fio - de - luz - se i - ra que-man-do."

Example 3. Self-quotation of *Eleven Echoes of Autumn* in *Night of the Four Moons*.

fifth and final movement, “Se ha llenado de luces mi corazón de seda” (“My heart of silk is filled with lights”; p. 6), there is an unmistakable quotation of the opening from Mahler’s “Der Abschied.” The passage is a kind of apotheosis of the multifarious Mahlerian strands running through the preceding works. If the Mahler quotations in earlier works were at times elusive—with hazy distinctions among original fragments of Mahler and Crumb’s (and the listener’s) “memories” of Mahler—the passage shown as Example 4b (the start of the “Abschied” quotation) is an immediately recognizable reworking of Mahler’s original (Example 4a shows Mahler’s oboe solo).

The movement opens with a series of luminous, *fffz* chords played by piano, harp, and the full complement of “bell” sounds (glockenspiel plates, antique cymbals, tubular bells, and vibraphone). Emerging from their resonant decay is a flurry of figuration in the mandolin (pianissimo harmonics), harp (pianissimo upper-register harmonics), and toy piano. Supporting this sonic glitter is the barely perceptible tremolo of the sleighbells and suspended cymbal (played using wire brushes). Needless to say, all of these instruments evoke a multitude of Mahlerian (and, by this point in the Lorca cycle, Crumbian) associations.³⁵ Crumb’s paraphrase of “Der Abschied” begins as the sleighbells and suspended cymbal die out. Mahler’s ponderous opening low C’s (scored for contrabassoon, horns, tamtam, harps, and pizzicato cello and basses) are distilled by Crumb in the scoring for tam-tam, harp, and pizzicato piano. The C/G-flat diminished fifth here is a refracted echo of the perfect fifth, C/G, that Mahler uses in restatements of the opening chords (at rehearsal 2 and later). The tritonal “cloud” also influences Crumb’s version of the famous oboe solo, heard in Example 4b transposed upward to F from the original location on the note C. Mahler’s oboe melody has the improvisatory, evolutionary quality we have observed elsewhere, and Crumb here seems to dwell on two aspects in particular: the opening turn figure and the two “echoes” of that figure shown in Example 4a. Mahler’s diatonic turn figure is reinterpreted by Crumb chromatically, including microtonal neighbors to F. This turn figure is an emblematic, indeed almost iconic, reminder of “Der Abschied.” It is a single, brief clue that is sufficient to recall Mahler’s piece, in the same way as the solitary minor thirds in the last movement of *Songs, Drones and Refrains of Death* evoke a whole range of Mahlerian precursors.

The second salient feature of Mahler’s opening oboe solo is the pair of answers to the opening turn figure (Example 4a). The diatonic answer in mm. 5–6 is followed immediately by a chromatic version in mm. 7–8. The final three notes, A-flat, C, and D, constitute a trichordal motive that is repeated incessantly in Crumb’s transposed version (G, F, C#). The rhythm and contour of Crumb’s “improvised” repetitions reinforce the connection, and the peculiar whole-tone flavor is radically intensified. I shall refer hereafter to this whole-tone echo of the opening turn as the “Abschied” motive. Following the excerpt shown in Example 4b, the oboist once more repeats the turn and “Abschied” motive, and then slowly exits. The reiterations of the two motivic figures are later played from off-stage, and Mahler’s music

4a. Mahler, *Das Lied von der Erde*, opening of VI. “Der Abschied” (mm. 1-8).

Schwer Oboe I

4b. *Ancient Voices of Children*, V. “Se ha llenado de luces mi corazón de seda”; Quotation of “Der Abschied” near opening of movement (p. 6, middle system).

Example 4. “Abschied” Motive in Crumb’s Music from 1965–1970.

is thus both actually and metaphorically distant (characteristically, Crumb marks the offstage oboe passages “lontano”). The final, rhapsodic oboe solo (p. 7, middle system) fades into the sleighbell tremolo and a final, single stroke of the low C (piano, harp, tam-tam). Two valedictory fragments—the turn figure and “Abschied” motive—are the last sounds played by the oboist, who is instructed to move to a yet more distant off-stage position (“lontanissimo, remote, almost inaudible”). As this extended Mahlerian memory fades away, the transcendental closing section commences.

The beautiful text for the closing section, the composer tells us, was “the original impulse—the ‘creative germ’” for the entire piece:³⁶

Y yo me iré muy lejos,	and I will go very far,
más allá de esas sierras,	farther than those hills,
más allá de los mares,	farther than the seas,
cerca de las estrellas,	close to the stars,
para pedirle a Cristo	to ask Christ the Lord
Señor que me devuelva	to give me back
mi alma antigua de niño.	my ancient soul of a child.

This passage is powerfully evocative of two extracts from the text for Mahler’s “Der Abschied,” both of which are also germinal ideas for the entire opus. Late in “Der Abschied” (mm. 410 ff.), the poet’s friend, for whom we have waited throughout the movement, arrives on horseback and utters words strikingly similar to the first few lines of the Lorca passage quoted above:

Wohin ich geh’? Ich geh’, ich wandre in die Berge.
 Ich suche Ruhe für mein einsam Herz!
 Ich wandle nach der Heimat, meiner Stätte!
 Ich werde niemals in die Ferne schweifen.
 Still ist mein Herz und harret seiner Stunde!

To where do I go? I go, I wander in the mountains.
 I seek rest for my lonely heart!
 I journey to the homeland, to my resting place!
 I shall never again go roaming in the far distance.
 My heart is still and waits for its hour!

Lorca’s final lines, a nostalgic longing for youthful innocence, are movingly dramatized in *Ancient Voices* by the long-awaited appearance of the boy soprano, who slowly moves on stage as the soprano sings “mi alma antigua de niño.” This theme is sounded in a parallel passage in Mahler’s “Der Abschied” (mm. 118–28):

Die müden Menschen geh’n heimwärts,
 Um Schlaf vergess’nes Glück
Und Jugend neu zu lernen. [emphasis added]

Weary mortals go homewards,
 So that, in sleep, forgotten joy
And youth they may learn anew.

The startling poetic parallelisms strongly reinforce the musical parallelisms. The appearance of the boy at the end of *Ancient Voices* is perhaps the most touching moment in the entire piece, and it is impossible to imagine its impact merely from the score or a recorded performance. The dramatic impact of witnessing the young child as the embodiment of an idealized, absolute innocence is reminiscent of two other Mahlerian antecedents. In the fourth movement of the Third Symphony, the darkly introspective setting for contralto solo of the “Midnight Song” from Nietzsche’s *Also Sprach Zarathustra* (“O Mensch! Gib acht!”) is immediately followed by Mahler’s supremely naïve setting of “Es sungen drei Engel” (from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*) for alto solo, women’s chorus, and a boy choir imitating the ringing of bells (“bimm, bamm!”). As in Crumb, the adult’s song of experience is answered by the child’s song of innocence. The other Mahlerian antecedent is the *Wunderhorn* song that closes the Fourth Symphony. This child’s vision of heaven, sung by an adult soprano, is the spiritual center of the Fourth Symphony, the culmination of all that has come before it.³⁷

As I have already asserted, the entire episode described above is a kind of Mahlerian apotheosis, a moment during which the full range of Crumb’s quotations of and allusions to Mahler seem to converge, as if indistinct, half-remembered echoes of the past are coming into conscious focus. At this significant juncture, one may in retrospect associate the “Abschied” motive with a whole series of more or less identifiable precursors, extending at least as far back as *Eleven Echoes of Autumn, 1965*. The excerpts collected here as Examples 4c through 4i illustrate this remarkable string of associations, all of them emanating, so to speak, from the motivic sources shown in Examples 4a and 4b. Nearly all are already familiar to us from the earlier analytical discussion, and so only brief commentary is necessary.

The examples are arranged approximately in reverse chronological order, moving backward, as it were, through our memories of Crumb’s preceding pieces. Example 4c shows the closing duet for the soprano and the boy; their preverbal sounds are a return to the phonemic explorations of the opening of the piece. All three of the last pitch fragments are derived from the “Abschied” motive, a relationship clarified by the contour of the soprano’s last phrase (F#, A-flat, D). The bottom note of the boy soprano’s imitation simplifies the motive and transposes it up a *minor third*. Moreover, his final calling figures highlight the descending major second (“ewig, ewig”). Examples 4d and 4e may be heard as improvisatory anticipations of the oboe motives that appear in a simpler form in Example 4b. That is to say that both of these oboe solos incorporate neighbor figures (i.e., the turn) and various incarnations of the “Abschied” figure. The final example from *Ancient Voices*, Example 4f, is the opening three vocal phrases of the piece. The soprano is

4c. *Ancient Voices of Children*, V. “Se ha llenado de luces mi corazón de seda;” parody of “Abschied” motive during closing measures (p. 8, second system).

4d. *Ancient Voices of Children*, III. “¿De dónde vienes, amor, mi niño?” oboe’s rhapsodic improvisation on “Abschied” motive in “Dance of the Sacred Life-Cycle” (p. 4, “music wheel”).

4e. *Ancient Voices of Children*, I. (second part), “Dances of the Ancient Earth;” oboe improvisation on “Abschied” motive; mandolin, harp, and finger cymbals as compressed parody of opening of “Der Abschied” (p. 2, beginning of second system).

Example 4 cont. “Abschied” Motive in Crumb’s Music from 1965–1970.

Very free and fantastic in character [♩ = ca. 90]

4g. *Songs, Drones and Refrains of Death*, IV. “Casida del Herido por el Agua;” “Abschied” motives in electric piano (F, D#, B) and tubular bells (A, G, D#), the “circle” music begins at the piano’s final quintuplet (p. 21, top).

4h. *Songs, Drones and Refrains of Death*, end of “Refrain Four;”
“Abschied” motive (G, F, C#) in tuned cowbells (p. 18, top system).

4i. *Songs, Drones and Refrains of Death*, opening of “Refrain Two;” “Refrain” motive in piano anticipates “Abschied” motive (same whole-tone trichord) (p. 9, second system).

Example 4 cont. “Abschied” Motive in Crumb’s Music from 1965–1970.

dramatizing the boy “searching for his voice” in a bravura vocalise. In a subtle way, the vowel alternations on her initial C# embellish that pitch as do the diatonic, chromatic, and occasionally microtonal neighbors that characterize the turn figure. The first move away from C# is a very rapid, condensed version of the “Abschied” motive. Many of these associations do not become fully conscious until the overt parody of “der Abschied” at the opening of the final movement. Thus, we begin to see in these few excerpts how the motivic resonance of that Mahlerian “epiphany” reverberates across the entire piece.

In a similar way, reflections of the “Abschied” motive are present in most of the works composed before *Ancient Voices*. Examples 4g through 4j juxtapose four fragments from *Songs, Drones and Refrains of Death*, all of them containing more or less exact copies of the motive. In reviewing the cowbell solo that announced Crumb’s conscious Mahlerian incantation of the minor third (Example 4h), we discover that the timbral associations with the Sixth and Seventh Symphonies are supplemented by this anticipatory quotation of the “Abschied” motive as it appears in *Ancient Voices*. In fact, the cowbells are tuned to the same three pitch classes as the oboe’s version of the motive in Example 4b (G, F, C#)! A comparison of the accompanying excerpts from *Songs, Drones and Refrains* reveals that the distant echo of Mahler in the cowbell solo (Example 4h) rings outward, as it were, in both directions to the beginning and end of the work.

The parodistic dialogue between electric contrabass and pizzicato piano (Example 4i) is clearly a development of the piano motive at the beginning of that example. This variant of the “Abschied” motive is anticipated by the extraordinary “distant mandolin” passage in “Eco 3” of *Eleven Echoes of Autumn* (see Example 4k). The dramatic timbral reference to Mahler’s mandolin in “Eco 3,” is subtly reinforced by this pitch association. The two distinct major-second figures in Example 4k are allusions to the “ewig” motive from the end of Mahler’s “Der Abschied,” where the mandolin part is almost totally confined to repetitions of that motive (cf. score of *Das Lied*, mm. 509–end). Finally, a comparison of Examples 4k and 4l reveals that the pitch content of the instrumental ritornello in the latter (G, A, C#, E-flat) is identical to the former (though one pitch is enharmonically respelled). The ritornello structure of the first movement of *Night of the Four Moons* (Example 4l is the opening), is inspired by the first movement of *Das Lied von der Erde*. The horn solo from Mahler’s ritornello (mm. 1–5) presents a diatonic version of Crumb’s whole-tone tetrachord: C, D, G, A (instead of C#, D#, G, A). In summary, the constellation of Examples (4a through 4l) together suggest the multiple associations, both backward and forward in time, which link Crumb’s works with each other and with Mahler.

CONCLUSION

The kinds of quotations and allusions I have suggested in this preliminary study travel but one of many intertextual pathways through Crumb's music. Many avenues remain to be explored, but it seems clear that no analysis of this composer's music can ignore this aspect of his technique. The importance of considering an individual work's context—both within a composer's oeuvre and the wider context of musical and cultural history—varies from composer to composer. In some cases, one may overlook the question of quotation and allusion almost entirely and still feel secure that the essential content or meaning of the piece in question has been understood. For example, though one may wish to supplement an essentially "structural" analysis of Mozart's G minor symphony (such as Schenker's analysis in *Das Meisterwerk in der Musik*) with an approach that takes into account the semiotic significance of certain stylistic mannerisms (e.g., Ratner's "topics"), it could be argued that the former analytical approach still reveals the bulk of that composition's import.³⁸

In the case of a composer such as Crumb, who seems profoundly conscious of the historical position of each work, it seems to me essential, indeed crucial, for analysts and listeners to be fully aware of each work's context. As we have seen, individual moments in Crumb's pieces are often highly charged with symbolic and metaphorical significance. The multiple allusions—to Crumb's own music and to that of his predecessors (Mahler is only one example)—touch every facet of his compositions: their titles, formal and tonal designs, notation, instrumentation, motivic structure, poetic imagery, and even theatrical effects. In this respect, consider Crumb's remarks:

I think composers are everything they've ever experienced, everything they've ever read, all the music they've ever heard. All these things come together in odd combinations in their psyche, where they choose and make forms from all their memories and their imaginings.³⁹

The same may be said of a composer's performers and audience. The echoes and "ancient voices" resounding in George Crumb's powerfully expressive music speak to us in manifold ways. We have only to listen.

Paul Parmelee was a colleague and close friend of George and Elizabeth Crumb when they were on the piano faculty at the University of Colorado–Boulder during the early 1960's. Parmelee was involved in early performances of Crumb's music, including the first recording of *Night Music I* in 1964, with the composer conducting (CRI SD 218). Parmelee and the Crumbs were together again during the George Crumb Festival in Boulder, October 9–12, 1992, at which Paul played Crumb's *Five Pieces for Piano* (1963).

NOTES

1. The Jamake Highwater quotation is from his review of *Night of the Four Moons* in *Soho Weekly News*, April 7, 1977, cited in *George Crumb: Profile of a Composer*, compiled and edited by Don Gillespie (New York and London: C.F. Peters Corporation, 1986), pp. 32-33. Among the most interesting investigations of the general topic of quotation is Michael D. Hicks, "The New Quotation: Its Origins and Functions" (D.M.A. thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1984). My own intertextual approach to Crumb's music is influenced by Robert S. Hatten, "The Place of Intertextuality in Music Studies," *American Journal of Semiotics*, vol. 3, no. 4 (1985): 69-82. As he points out, "the concept of intertextuality derives from the view of a literary work as a text whose richness of meaning results from its location in a potentially infinite network of texts" and "intertextuality applies equally to author and reader (composer and listener)," p. 69. Following Hatten's example, my analyses seek to "embrace and reveal the richness of meaning afforded by a work's relationships (direct and indirect) with other works (specified or generic) or styles (literal or refracted) as those relationships feed into the strategies of the musical work," p. 75. The topic of quotation is invariably raised in interviews with Crumb. See for example, the interview with Robert Shuffett in Gillespie, 34-37, and with Edward Strickland, *American Composers: Dialogues on Contemporary Music* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991), pp. 162-5.

2. Christopher Chapman Rouse III, "The Music of George Crumb: Stylistic Metamorphosis as Reflected in the Lorca Cycle" (D.M.A. thesis, Cornell University, 1977), p. 100. Rouse admits that the quotation is "difficult to recognize in context." As marked in Crumb's score, the quotation is to sound as "a distant music," played by very soft muted strings at the close of the movement. Refer to p. 8 (bottom system) of the full score (New York: Belwin-Mills, 1968). The Ivesian character of this passage is enhanced by the tolling bell sounds (glockenspiel and vibraphone) accompanying the hymn quotation.

3. Perhaps the best known examples from Crumb's post-1974 music are the quotations of the "Dies irae" in *Star-Child* (1977), the ethereal quotation of the 16th-century "Coventry Carol" in the sixth movement of *A Little Suite for Christmas, A.D. 1979*, and the famous opening theme from Debussy's solo flute *Syrinx*, from which Crumb derives much of the pitch content for *An Idyll for the Misbegotten*, a 1985 work for flute and three percussionists.

4. George Crumb, interview with Strickland, p. 165.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 162.

6. My analysis uses the original version of *Night Music I* (New York: Mills Music, Inc., 1967), rather than the 1976 revised version.

7. Paralleling Mahler, Crumb composed two *Nachtmusik* works; the pendant to *Night Music I* is *Four Nocturnes (Night Music II)*, for violin and piano, composed in 1964.

8. A *gacela* is an Arabic poetic form.

9. Though he does not elaborate, when asked about the *Night Music* title, Crumb has suggested that the Bartók movement is that composer's homage to Mahler's Seventh; see Strickland, pp. 161-62. The details I offer here simply pursue the implications of Crumb's remark. Crumb's Italian titles "Barcarola" and "Notturmo" are, of course, automatically associated with Chopin, to whom both Bartók and Crumb undoubtedly refer. The Italian subtitle for Notturmo II, "Piccola Serenata," may be a sly allusion to Mozart's most famous work in this genre, *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, K. 525. It is tempting to suggest an additional Mozartian reference that may have inspired Mahler as well as Crumb. I am thinking of Don Giovanni's moonlit serenade, "Deh vieni alla finestra" from Act II, Scene 2. Mozart calls this a Serenata, rather than an Aria, and the title character accompanies himself on mandolin. Was Mahler recalling Mozart in featuring mandolin in the second *Nachtmusik* movement of the Seventh Symphony, and later in *Das Lied von der Erde*? Crumb's use of mandolin in *Ancient Voices of Children* (with its quotation of Mahler's *Das Lied* in the final movement) may have been similarly motivated. Finally, *Don Giovanni* anticipates another technique associated with Mahler and Crumb—the self-quotation. Perhaps the most celebrated early example of this technique is Mozart's witty quotation (played by Giovanni's on-stage musicians) near the beginning of the Finale (Act II, Scene 5) of Figaro's aria, "Non più andrai," from *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Act I Finale). Just before the Figaro quotation, Don Giovanni and Leporello are serenaded with arias from Martin's *Una cosa rara* and Paisiello's *Fra i due litiganti il terzo gode*. The complex interplay here

between master and servant—both the onstage characters and, perhaps, Mozart himself as masterful “servant” of his operatic “masters”—is suggestive indeed.

10. Rouse has identified these intervals as a general characteristic of Crumb’s early works, beginning with the *Five Pieces for Piano* from 1962. See Rouse, pp. 110–11.

11. All parenthesized page numbers in the main text refer to the corresponding published score of the piece being discussed. All Crumb titles are published by C.F. Peters Corporation, unless otherwise noted. Page references to Mahler scores are to the Kritische Gesamtausgabe, published under the auspices of the International Gustav Mahler Gesellschaft, Vienna. Throughout, it is assumed that the reader has access to the Mahler scores; those using different editions (such as the inexpensive Dover reprints) can assume that the rehearsal numbers cited will correspond. Those whose scores lack measure numbers will find a useful concordance relating rehearsal and measure numbers in Robert G. Hopkins, *Closure and Mahler’s Music: The Role of Secondary Parameters* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), pp. 183–91.

12. Crumb’s diagram precedes p. 1 of the score (New York: Mills Music, 1967). That Crumb is fascinated by the visual, “balletic” aspect of live performances is attested to in numerous interviews: “To me, to play a string quartet is to perform a kind of choreography. Even a quiet, as opposed to an emotional, pianist plays his instrument like a dancer. I love to see a performance rather than just hear a recording.” See Strickland, p. 169.

13. Gustav Mahler, *Das Lied von der Erde*, Kritische Gesamtausgabe, vol. 9 (Wien: Universal Edition, 1964), pp. 140–41. Crumb’s violin and clarinet in *Eleven Echoes* also recall the important solo parts for those instruments in the second *Nachtmusik* movement of Mahler’s Seventh, the movement with the famous mandolin and guitar parts. See Gustav Mahler, *Symphonie Nr. 7*, Kritische Gesamtausgabe, vol. 7, International Gustav Mahler Society, Vienna (Bote & Bock, 1960). The second *Nachtmusik* movement (Andante amoroso), opens with violin and B-flat clarinet solos, accompanied by harp and guitar (p. 155). The first violin also has important solo passages at rehearsal 177 (p. 156), rehearsals 183–88 (pp. 160–63), rehearsal 201 (p. 170, echoed by B-flat clarinet and English horn), from four bars before rehearsal 208 to four bars after 209 (pp. 174–75), and six bars before rehearsal 218. Clarinet is featured at rehearsals 185–87 (pp. 161–62), rehearsals 195–99 (pp. 167–69, first and second clarinets in A), rehearsals 207–08 (p. 174), rehearsal 211–12 (pp. 176–77), rehearsal 216–end (pp. 180–83; N.B. clarinet 1 is the leading melodic voice at the close of the movement).

14. The location of the Lorca phrase in the form of each piece is approximately mirrored. In *Night Music I*, we hear “y los arcos rotos donde sufre el tiempo” in Notturmo V, one movement *after* the central movement. In *Eleven Echoes of Autumn*, these words occur one movement *before* the central Eco 6. In the earlier work, the words are shouted at the soprano’s loudest dynamic level of the piece. In *Eleven Echoes*, the words are whispered above extremely soft alto flute and clarinet parts. In view of Crumb’s fascination with numerology, one wonders about the symbolic significance of the numbers 5 and 7 in this passage. The metronome marking for “Echi 5-7” is eighth note = 52 ($5+2=7$), and the pauses at the center of each notated “arch” are 5, 7, and 7 seconds, respectively. The Lorca quotation appears in the fifth movement of the seven-movement *Night Music I*. Moreover, Crumb’s 1963 piece is modeled on Bartók’s five-movement *Out of Doors* Suite and Mahler’s Seventh Symphony (in five movements).

15. Rouse, “Stylistic Metamorphosis,” p. 99.

16. Rouse, p. 100.

17. Program notes by the composer, reprinted in Gillespie, ed., *George Crumb: Profile*, p. 106. Rouse reports (p. 131, footnote 41) that Crumb told him in a private conversation in January, 1977, that “very little of the 1962 material appears in the final version.”

18. From the composer’s program notes, reprinted in Gillespie, ed., *George Crumb: Profile*, p. 106. The casida (also spelled “qasidah”) is a lyrical poetic genre of Moorish origin. I thank my colleague, Luis Jorge González, for his assistance with this and other aspects of the Spanish poetry.

19. The guitar obbligato occurs as the singer recites Lorca’s metaphorical comparison of jets of water to sharp-edged swords: “Estanques, aljibes y fuentes levantaban al aire sus espadas. ¡Ay, qué furia de amor, qué hiriente filo!” (“Pools, cisterns, fountains raised their swords to the wind. What a fury of love, what a wounding edge!”). This striking imagery links the passage to the end of “La Guitarra,” where the sword image occurs as well (see above).

20. See pp. 17 and 114 of Mahler's score (*op. cit.*). The concepts of persona and phenomenal "voices" in music were first presented in Edward T. Cone's *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974). The implications of Cone's idea are explored with brilliant imagination by Carolyn Abbate in *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991). Abbate analyzes Wagnerian opera, Mahler's Second Symphony, and other works from this perspective. The notion of "voices" operating on various levels in music opens a promising avenue for future research on Crumb's music.

21. Richard Bass's Table I identifies the dedicatees for each piece from both volumes of *Makrokosmos*; see Bass, "Pitch Structure in George Crumb's *Makrokosmos*, Volumes I and II" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 1987), pp. 5–8. One minor correction should be noted: the seventh piece of Volume II is inscribed to L.K. (Lewis Kaplin), not L.C. (Lewis Caplin) as Bass has misspelled it. Crumb's persona as the "phantom gondolier" is also suggested by two photographs in Gillespie, ed., *George Crumb: Profile*. On p. 22, the composer is shown playing mandolin, with the facetious caption "The Phantom Gondolier," and on p. 25, Crumb is playing banjo (the Appalachian metamorphosis of the mandolin?) in a humorous 1971 family snapshot.

22. My analysis of the "Casida" is indebted to Rouse, who points out other symmetries and dualities in the movement, pp. 136–39. The term "music wheels" is borrowed from Rouse, p. 137.

23. I am reminded here of several other allusions. The penultimate line of Lorca's *Casida*, "quiero llenar mi corazón de musgo" ("I want to stuff my heart with moss"), forcefully represents the watery death at the bottom of the well. This vivid image calls to mind the brief text for the third Madrigal from Book I (1965): "Los muertos llevan alas de musgo" ("The dead wear mossy wings"). Surely the most famous precursor is Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin*, whose poet also will drown after the final song, "Des Baches Wiegenlied." This is the second Schubertian reference in *Songs, Drones and Refrains*. As Crumb's program notes indicate, the relentless *moto perpetuo* of the third song, "Canción de Jinete, 1860" (Song of the Rider, 1860), is anticipated in Schubert's "Erlkönig;" see Gillespie, ed., *George Crumb: Profile*, p. 106. Both songs present the terrifying picture of a horse racing through the night with a dead rider. A final strand in this web is the fragment of the same Lorca poem set as the final Madrigal in Book II (1965): "Caballito negro. ¿Dónde llevas tu jinete muerto? Caballito frío. ¡Qué perfume de flor de cuchillo!" ("Little black horse. Where are you taking your dead rider? Little cold horse. What a scent of knife-blossom!").

24. The citations below are from the Kritische Gesamtausgabe (vols. 6 and 7) published under the auspices of the International Gustav Mahler Society of Vienna: *Symphonie Nr. 6* (C.F. Kahnt, 1963) and *Symphonie Nr. 7* (Bote & Bock, 1960). In the Sixth, Mahler employs *Herdenglocken* in the first movement at rehearsal numbers 21–22 (pp. 35–37) and rehearsals 24–25 (pp. 39–40). In the Finale, the cowbells are joined by a similar effect, the "distant" pealing of very low bell sounds, to be played "softly and unmetrically" ("leise und unregelmässig geschlagen"), p. 149. The relevant passages are found between rehearsal numbers 104–05 (p. 152), from rehearsals 121 to two bars after 122 (pp. 182–84), and from rehearsals 145–46 (pp. 226–27). In the Seventh Symphony, *Herdenglocken* (in *weiter Entfernung*) appear in the second movement (the first *Nachtmusik* movement), between rehearsals 84 and 85 (pp. 92–93). As in the Sixth (see footnote 25 below), Mahler's footnote is precise, calling for a "discreet and intermittent" sound, "to be played in realistic imitation of the clanking bells of a grazing herd" ("diskret und intermittierend, in realistischer Nachahmung des Glockengebimmels einer weidenden Herde zu spielen"), p. 92. The scoring of the *Herdenglocken* passage in *Nachtmusik* is much thinner than in the Sixth, anticipating Crumb's solo tuned cowbells. In the Rondo-Finale, the *Herdenglocken* are combined with the low, chiming bell sounds Mahler had also added in the Finale of the Sixth. The low bell sounds appear first, from rehearsals 268–69. During the closing pages of the Seventh (rehearsal 293 to the end, pp. 253–57), both types of bell sounds are heard above the orchestral tutti, and they are played at a loud dynamic level for the first time. Crumb specifies that the three tuned cowbells be "the genuine large cowbells, imported from Austria," p. 2. Thus, the evocative aural impact of the cowbells will be reinforced visually.

25. "Die Herdenglocken müssen sehr diskret behandelt werden—in realistischer Nachahmung von bald vereinigt, bald vereinzelt aus der Ferne herüberklingenden (höheren und tieferen) Glöckchen einer weidenden Herde.— Es wird jedoch ausdrücklich bemerkt, dass diese technische Bemerkung keine programmatische Ausdeutung zulässt" [my translation], score, p. 35.

26. Two excerpts are pertinent, from Strickland's interview with Crumb. "Composers inherit an acoustic that during their formative years molds their ear. . . . I have always thought the echoing sense of my music is distilled really from the sense of hearing I developed there [an Appalachian river valley]. . . . it's haunting, you know. Say on a quiet summer evening, sounds from the other side of the river waft over, you see, because there are hills on both sides. You can sometimes hear sounds from the mouths of the river. It's a special characteristic," p. 163. With respect to the programmatic aspect of music, Crumb claims "what I'm really concerned with is music in itself and through itself. This sort of external apparatus may have a relation to the music, but I'm traditional in the sense that despite all this I think of the music as fulfilling itself. It should be completely expressive on the record player, when you see nothing," p. 169. This seems a surprising admission from a composer whose works almost consistently employ quasi-programmatic elements. It may be understood as Crumb's answer to critics who have implied that his works lack coherence and structural integrity if considered apart from the evocative titles, sound effects, notation, and so on.

27. Some readers may have trouble accepting my claim that Crumb's instrumentation, among other things, is truly inspired by Mahler. Recalling that Crumb has acknowledged the opening of "Casida del Herido" as a conscious homage to Mahler, it seems remarkable that the passage is a veritable "celebration" of a single interval, the minor third. If even this most basic of musical objects, a single interval, is sufficient to evoke memories of Mahler, then why not other transplanted fragments, especially when they are highlighted in context?

28. Crumb's remarkable intensification of Mahler's minor third resembles the kinds of compositional "misreadings" described in Joseph N. Straus's recent book, *Remaking the Past: Musical Modernism and the Influence of the Tonal Tradition* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London: Harvard University Press, 1990). Among the techniques defined by Straus is "motivicization: the motivic content of the earlier work is radically intensified" (p. 17). Thus, Crumb appropriates the motivic minor third from Mahler's Adagietto, radically extending its duration as an isolated interval; he thereby elevates its motivic status to an extraordinary degree.

29. To my knowledge, Paul Bekker was the first to point out the affinity of the Adagietto movement and "Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen," in his classic study, *Gustav Mahlers Sinfonien* (Berlin, 1921; reprint ed., Tutzing, 1969), p. 193. The original key of the song was F major, the same tonality as the Adagietto, although the song is perhaps more widely known in the E-flat major version. The world-weary resignation expressed by Rückert's poem is not unlike the attitude of the suicidal poet in Lorca's "Casida del Herido Por el Agua."

30. Gillespie, ed., *George Crumb: Profile*, pp. 106-07.

31. Crumb identifies the Haydn source in his program notes, *ibid.* His title for the Epilogue music, "Farewell-music as Berceuse (in stilo Mahleriano)," points to *Das Lied* (particularly the final movement, "Der Abschied") as the Mahlerian source. Incidentally, I use the term "parody" in the sense that it has been applied to 16th-century music. As Michael Tilmouth has defined it, "the essential feature of parody technique is that not merely a single part is appropriated to form a cantus firmus in the derived work, but the whole substance of the source—its themes, rhythms, chords and chord progressions—is absorbed into the new piece and subjected to free variation in such a way that a fusion of old and new elements is achieved," s.v., "Parody," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music*, ed., Stanley Sadie, 1980.

32. My detailed analysis is presented in "Les Adieux: George Crumb's Parody Technique in *Night of the Four Moons*," paper read at the joint meeting of the Society for Music Theory and the American Musicological Society, Montréal, Québec, November, 1993.

33. Crumb's program notes, Gillespie, ed., *George Crumb: Profile*, p. 107. The timings given are from the 1974 recording supervised by the composer (Columbia M 32739). The timings given for Mahler's *Das Lied* are those from Bruno Walter's May 1952 recording (re-released on CD by Decca Record Company, 1984; catalog no. 414 194-2). Walter was Mahler's protégé; he conducted the world premiere of *Das Lied* in Munich on November 11, 1911, six months after Mahler's death.

34. Crumb was not to return to the poetry of Lorca until 1986, when he set seven of Lorca's children's poems as *Federico's Little Songs for Children*. Scored for soprano, flute (doubling on piccolo, alto flute, and bass flute), and harp, these charming settings are quite different in spirit from the darker Lorca settings discussed here. As such, *Federico's Little Songs* seems to be a comic complement to rather than a continuation of Crumb's mainly tragic, earlier Lorca songs. As I have tried to show, the Lorca settings of the 60s and 70s are in many respects an extended song cycle.

35. The sleighbells are, of course, the most easily recognizable timbral reminder of Mahler's Fourth Symphony. Robert Bailey has suggested that the Fourth Symphony was in fact the structural model for Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*, and it is interesting that Crumb here directly juxtaposes references to both works. See Bailey, "Das Lied von der Erde: Tonal Language and Formal Design," paper read before the American Musicological Society, October 1978. I am grateful to Professor Bailey for providing a copy of this paper.

36. Crumb's program notes, Gillespie, ed., *George Crumb: Profile*, p. 108.

37. "Das himmlische Leben" ("Life in Heaven") is Mahler's title; the fanciful original title in Arnim and Brentano's anthology is "Der Himmel hängt voll Geigen" ("The heavens hang full of violins"). In retitling this poem, Mahler highlights its dialectical relationship with one of his orchestral *Wunderhorn* songs, "Das irdische Leben" (Life on Earth), another title supplied by Mahler (the original is "Verspätung," "Lateness"). Mahler's Third and Fourth Symphonies are more closely related than any other pair of his symphonies. In fact, "Das himmlische Leben," composed first, was originally planned as a movement of the Third, and the first three movements of the Fourth are based on motivic ideas in this song. Finally, it is worth noting again (cf. fn. 35 above) that Mahler's Fourth is the model for *Das Lied von der Erde*.

38. Heinrich Schenker, *Das Meisterwerk in der Music*, vol. 2 (München, Wien, Berlin: Drei Masken Verlag, 1926; reprint ed., Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1974), pp. 107–57. For an example of the latter approach, see V. Kofi Agawu's *Playing With Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classic Music* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991). Agawu includes Schenker-like graphs of passages from the works he analyzes, but he supplements the graphs with a sensitive interpretation (and extension) of Leonard Ratner's well-known concept of "topic" in Classical music.

39. Interview with Edward Strickland, p. 166.

The title of this article quotes an Italianate phrase inscribed above the Epilogue that closes *Night of the Four Moons*. As the article went to press, George Crumb pointed out to me that his indication in the published score, "in stilo Mahleriano," should have read "in stile Mahleriano" ("in the style of Mahler"). Though the word "stilo" is grammatically incorrect, I decided to retain my original title for two reasons. First, those familiar with Crumb's score will recognize my quotation of this quasi-Italian phrase. Second, while Crumb intended only to refer to Mahler's style, in my view, his accidental substitution of "stilo" for "stile" is a fortuitous error. "Stilo" can mean "pen" or "stylus" and, in the context of this article, the image of Crumb taking up Mahler's pen seems particularly apt.

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