



The Black Angel

*music, myth,
and memory*

Featuring two monumental pieces for string quartet – Schubert's *Death and the Maiden* and Crumb's *Black Angels*



May 1, 2026 at 7:30pm
Iowa City Masonic Building
312 College St, Iowa City, IA 52240



Tricia Park, violin
Samantha Bennett, violin
Celia Hatton, viola
Kenny Lee, cello

We are delighted to welcome you to the sixteenth season of MusicIC,
Iowa City's own chamber music and literature festival!

This year's festival, *The Black Angel: Music, Myth, and Memory*, presents music that explores mortality, transformation, and the unknowable. At the heart of this season are two landmark works for string quartet: Franz Schubert's *Death and the Maiden* and *Black Angels* by George Crumb.

Though separated by more than a century, these pieces communicate across time. By turns urgent, tender, and transcendent, Schubert's quartet, written in 1824, draws on his earlier song of the same name, transforming a simple, chilling exchange between a figure of Death and a young woman into a vast, emotionally charged landscape. Crumb's *Black Angels*, composed in 1970 at the height of the Vietnam War, responds to a fractured modern world with music that is at once ritualistic and otherworldly. Subtitled "Thirteen Images from the Dark Land," the piece incorporates amplified instruments, extended techniques, spoken text, and symbolic numerology to create a soundscape of haunting intensity. At its core is a direct quotation of Schubert's quartet, a ghostly echo that bridges centuries, linking Romantic meditations on death with a contemporary vision shaped by conflict and rupture.

Together, these works form a powerful dialogue across time: one rooted in lyricism and human vulnerability, the other saturated with abstraction and ritual, yet both grappling with the same enduring questions of impermanence, memory, and redemption. Poignant in their timeliness, both reflect the turbulence of our current moment while offering hope for a transformative future.

This year's festival also draws inspiration from Iowa City's own Black Angel statue, a local landmark steeped in myth and storytelling. Its presence offers a powerful, place-based lens through which to experience this music, reminding us that stories of darkness and transcendence are not only universal, but also deeply tied to the landscapes we inhabit.

Thank you for being part of this moment with us. Whether you've been with us for years or are discovering MusicIC for the first time, we're so glad you're here. Here's to a festival full of music, meaning, and community.

Warmly,
Tricia Park, Artistic Director

The Black Angel:
Music, Myth, and Memory

Friday, May 1, 2026, 7:30 p.m.
The Masonic Building

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)
String Quartet No. 14 in D minor, D. 810 *Death and the Maiden* (1824)

- I. Allegro
- II. Andante con moto
- III. Scherzo: Allegro molto – Trio
- IV. Presto

– SHORT INTERMISSION –

George Crumb (1929–2022)
Black Angels for Electric String Quartet: Thirteen Images from the Dark Land (1970)
(Played without pause; movements are grouped into three large arcs)

- I. Departure*
 - 1. *Threnody I: Night of the Electric Insects*
 - 2. *Sounds of Bones and Flutes*
 - 3. *Lost Bells*
 - 4. *Devil-music*
 - 5. *Danse Macabre*
- II. Absence*
 - 6. *Pavana Lachrymae*
 - 7. *Threnody II: Black Angels!*
 - 8. *Sarabanda de la Muerte Oscura*
 - 9. *Lost Bells (Echo)*
- III. Return*
 - 10. *God-music*
 - 11. *Ancient Voices*
 - 12. *Ancient Voices (Echo)*
 - 13. *Threnody III: Night of the Electric Insects*

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

String Quartet No. 14 in D minor, D. 810 “Death and the Maiden” (1824)

Der Tod und das Mädchen

German source: Matthias Claudius
(1740-1815)

DAS MÄDCHEN

Vorüber, ach, vorüber!

Geh, wilder Knochenmann!

Ich bin noch jung, geh, Lieber!

Und rühre mich nicht an.

DER TOD

Gib deine Hand, du schön und zart Gebilde!

Bin Freund und komme nicht zu strafen.

Sei gutes Muts! Ich bin nicht wild,

Sollst sanft in meinen Armen schlafen!

Death and the Maiden

English translation © Richard Wigmore

THE MAIDEN

Pass by, ah, pass by!

Away, cruel Death!

I am still young; leave me, dear one

and do not touch me.

DEATH

Give me your hand, you lovely, tender creature.

I am your friend, and come not to chastise.

Be of good courage. I am not cruel;

you shall sleep softly in my arms.

Translations by Richard Wigmore first published by
Gollancz and reprinted in the Hyperion Schubert Song Edition

Composed in 1824 during a period of profound personal crisis, Franz Schubert's String Quartet No. 14 in D minor, D. 810, "Death and the Maiden," is one of the most intense and unified expressions in the chamber music repertoire. The work takes its title from Schubert's 1817 song, "Der Tod und das Mädchen", in which Death gently consoles a frightened young woman, a theme that becomes the emotional core of the quartet's second movement. Across the opening Allegro, Schubert establishes a landscape of urgency and volatility, propelled by driving rhythms and stark contrasts, while the Andante con moto transforms the song's grave, processional theme into a set of variations that move between stillness, agitation, and fragile lyricism. The music suggests not only confrontation with mortality, but an attempt to understand and even aestheticize it. The quartet's latter half intensifies this psychological trajectory. A fiercely rhythmic Scherzo channels restless, almost demonic energy, briefly interrupted by a more songful Trio that offers only momentary respite. The final Presto, a tarantella, hurtles forward with relentless momentum, blurring the line between dance and desperation.

Written shortly after Schubert became aware of his own serious illness, the quartet reflects a composer grappling with the proximity of death while pushing the expressive limits of the string quartet form. Rather than offering resolution, "Death and the Maiden" leaves the listener suspended between terror and transcendence, its power rooted in the tension between lyrical beauty and inexorable fate.

George Crumb (1929-2022)

Black Angels, for electric string quartet (1970)

Composed at the height of the Vietnam War, George Crumb's *Black Angels* is a searing response to a world in crisis, channeling collective anxiety into a highly ritualized and theatrical soundscape. Scored for amplified (electric) string quartet, the work radically expands the sonic possibilities of the ensemble through bowed crystal glasses, percussive effects, whispered and shouted speech, and extreme timbral contrasts. Crumb organizes the piece into thirteen "images" that trace a symbolic journey of departure, absence, and return, often interpreted as a descent into and emergence from a kind of spiritual or moral abyss. Numerical symbolism (especially the numbers 7 and 13), distorted quotations (including fragments of Schubert's "Death and the Maiden" melody), and stark juxtapositions between beauty and violence give the work a haunting, almost hallucinatory intensity.

Rather than unfolding as a traditional narrative, *Black Angels* operates as a sequence of charged sonic rituals, where performers become both musicians and participants in a larger invocation. Insects swarm in electric tremolos, ancient voices echo through fragile harmonics, and "devil-music" erupts in grotesque parody, creating a landscape that feels at once otherworldly and urgently contemporary. Yet within its darkness, moments of eerie stillness and resonance suggest the possibility of transformation or redemption. Crumb described the work as a "parable on our troubled contemporary world," and its power lies in how it confronts the listener with sound as both expression and experience – an immersive meditation on violence, memory, and the fragile hope of return.

SPONSORS AND SPECIAL THANKS

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COVER: Design by Mara Cole
Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature



THE ARTISTS

SAMANTHA BENNETT, violin



Hailed by the *Chicago Tribune* as a violinist “full of subtlety and poise,” Samantha Bennett is an active and versatile performer appearing with orchestras across the United States. She is a violinist with The Dallas Symphony and Dallas Opera, having previously served as Principal Second Violin of the Sarasota Orchestra for six seasons. She has also been a member of the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra and The Florida Orchestra and performs frequently with the Minnesota Orchestra and Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Alongside her husband, percussionist George Nickson, Bennett is the founder and Co-Artistic Director of ensembleNEWSRQ (enSRQ), a contemporary music collective based in Sarasota, Florida. Through innovative programming and thoughtfully curated concerts, she leads performances of new and challenging repertoire and has presented numerous premieres by leading composers. Born in Ames, Iowa, Bennett earned Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees from the New England Conservatory, where she studied with Donald Weilerstein and Malcolm Lowe.

CELIA HATTON, viola



Celia Hatton, NYC-based violist, has performed across Asia, Australia, Europe, South America, and the US. Her playing can be heard on several Grammy-winning works, including as Principal Violist on Experiential Orchestra’s album *The Prison* and Jessie Montgomery’s *Rounds*. She is a member of A Far Cry, Principal Viola of Sphinx Virtuosi, and Co-Principal of Chamber Orchestra of New York. Hatton has performed with ECCO, The Knights, the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. An Adjunct Professor at Adelphi University, she has given masterclasses at Colburn Music Academy, New York University, and Vanderbilt University. Hatton holds a Bachelor’s Degree from New England Conservatory, where she studied with Kim Kashkashian, and a Master’s Degree from Manhattan School of Music with Karen Dreyfus.

KENNY LEE, cello



Kenny Lee is an active conductor, cellist, and chamber musician, praised for his “lyricism, drive, tenderness, and passion” (*The Times Argus*). He is Assistant Professor and Director of Orchestral Studies at the University of Iowa, where he conducts the symphony orchestra and teaches graduate conducting students. Recent engagements include the Czech Chamber Philharmonic Pardubice, Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, and Civic Orchestra of Chicago. He is a frequent guest conductor, clinician, and advocate for new music, with recordings on Naxos and Klavier Records.

As a chamber musician, Lee has collaborated with artists from the Berlin Philharmonic and members of the Juilliard, Cleveland, Borromeo Quartets. He and his wife, Jamie Clark, co-founded the Flatirons Chamber Music Festival. Raised in Oregon, he was trained at Eastman and the New England Conservatory. His principal teachers include Laurence Lesser, Paul Katz, Steven Sloane, and Carl St. Clair. Outside of music, he is an avid tennis player.

TRICIA PARK, violin and Artistic Director



Praised by critics for her “astounding virtuosic gifts” (*Boston Herald*), “achingly pure sound” (*The Toronto Star*), and “impressive technical and interpretive control” (*The New York Times*) Tricia Park is MusicIC’s co-founding Artistic Director and enjoys a diverse career as a violinist, educator, and writer. Since her debut at age thirteen, Tricia has performed on five continents and received the prestigious Avery Fisher Career and Fulbright Grants. She has served on faculty at the University of Chicago, the University of Iowa, and has worked for Graywolf Press. She has taught masterclasses at the Peabody Institute of Music, Oberlin Conservatory of Music, and Interlochen Summer Arts Academy, among others. A Juilliard graduate with an MFA from SAIC, Tricia is currently pursuing her PhD at the University of Illinois Chicago and is Associate Director of Cleaver Magazine Workshops. She concertizes and maintains a private studio of violin students and writing clients. Tricia is working on her first book and is represented by Aevitas Creative Management. Learn more about Tricia at triciapark.com

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