

MINGUS

THE BLACK SAINT AND THE SINNER LADY

FROM A POEM: "Touch my beloved's thought while her world's affluence crumbles at my feet."





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Dannie Richmond opens with a written repeated rhythmic bass drum to snare drum to sock cymbal figure that suggests two tempos along with its own tempo. These three tempos are alternately used throughout the entire composition along with accelerandos, retards, and rubatos. A slow ballad opens the second track that soon develops to the second alto theme after the piano interlude and solo. Then a double-time tempo of that same ballad tempo that arrives after the piano-entrance. The first and second piano solos on the third track, the third mode on the A side incidentally, is Mingus playing. Mingus played the two opening piano solos in the third track as example to Jaki Byard at his, Jaki's, request to show him or play it himself. At first Jaki seemed only impressed to use pyrotechnical piano arpeggios, scales, etc., consecutive thirds, and grouped fifths rather than to invent suitable melody within the context of the coming theme and thematic material already laid out for piano ad lib by the composer. However, Bob Thiele felt to include the two examples given by Mingus which served to also clear up the intended idea enough for Jaki Byard to give himself up wholly to the composer's development and help to prepare the listeners for the next idea intended by the composer—right on down to the moanful background



where Charles Mariano knew tears of sound were what was the intended thought in the background and what also was meant to come out of his alto sax solo. No words or example were needed to convey this idea to Charles Mariano. Only his love of living and knowing life and his understanding of the composer's desire to have one clear idea at least musically recorded here for record.

4 Back to the drum opening—12:8, 6:8, 9:8, 3:4—whatever musical stenographers may care to title what the composer heard in his head, is part of a very old idea that someday all good music will return from its assorted labels which inhibit it with fashions, styles, and certain celebrated rhythms of pounding exactness that lead this composer to believe that either the musician or the audience playing or liking such repeated debuts of so-called musical inventions must be nuts to need drums, bass, guitar, and piano to pound out the already too obvious time night after night 'til actually if sanity can't be sustained one begins to like it without twisting or even dancing, popping fingers, or at least working out one's frenzy in ye old brass bed mama.

Time, perfect or syncopated time, is when a faucet dribbles from a leaky washer. I'm more than sure an adolescent memory can remember how long the intervals

were between each collision of our short-lived drip and its crash into an untidy sink's overfilled coffee cup with murky grime of old cream still clinging to the edges or a tidy rust stained enamel sink that the owner of such has given up on the idea that that maintenance man is ever going to change the rhythm beat of his dripping faucet by just doing his job and changing that rotten old rubber washer before time runs out of time.

Musicians partly come into the circle of various blame which encompasses much more than leaky faucets, rotten washers, or critics. Wow! Critics! How did they get here? I know. It's Freudian. Faucets and old rotten washers. The innocent audiences that are sent in the direction of premature musicians—critics who want to play and some who play and study at music and can only encompass soul-wise and technically about someone else what they themselves can comprehend. They sing—good or bad you never know. They won't dare stand up with their bald heads or long hair and do so. Especially with their sexataries who usually keep them so busy elsewhere but in places where music is to be played and reviewed. Critics, they sing, dance, play the piano, bass, drums, saxes, and most of the oral instruments. I even know one who can hear. I mean he can actually hear the difference between a major triad

and A minor. He can also take old chords off old records recorded in 1902 by Jelly Roll Morton. After this accomplishment for many years now he also knows that **every** musician who improvises copies Louis Armstrong. And this man works while musicians who just play music are scuffling to pay rent or have their wives bury them in dirt with the few dollars insurance the American Federation of Musicians calls insurance. This kind of critic-musician man teaches people how to listen to music in new schools and he gets paid to play records to brainwash innocent little people who don't know that if you're going to like something that's beautiful no one can tell you how if it don't just happen. If it doesn't just happen, you're already brainwashed and instead of hiring someone to tell you what's beautiful for you, and you're past five years old, this means you need an analyst, not a public bathroom attendant with dirty faucets, who only knows what's beautiful to him because of his own inadequacies as to how and why he knows everything Jelly Roll Morton, Flush Gordon, Louis Armstrong, etcetera did and on down to whoever he says is modern. He can even read and score music. Yet this musician-critic fails to ever turn over any charts of his own to be played by musicians he's hired. But should one of these men whose music he reviews and labels

come up with some little thing he truly believes is one of his own musical forms, well at least he had not heard it done in his thirty-five years in certain segregated elements of music that the critic is partly responsible for upholding the cursed name, Dirty Faucet will say in his favorite brainwashing voice, "My boy, I notice you call this music extended form when you use only one chord. Why, Jelly Roll Morton did that in 1902," and brings in the following week the music that is similar in some respects. Yet this same kind of critic ten years later, when this extended form you used in a few tunes, or what is known in other music as pedal point, ten or more years later has too long been a fad by others who too may never have heard Jelly Roll Morton, and maybe not even this composer. Yet this same critic boasts the guys in print like it's his team professionally that uses this pedal point form so it's okay and he's never mentioning Jelly Roll did it in 1902 and Mingus in 1957, that is to his knowledge, at a village club. It was 1959. He missed these forms in the composers' workshop in 1954. He also missed the extended form in 1940, 41, and 42 at a Central Avenue club in Los Angeles with Buddy Collette, Spaulding Givens, Britt Woodman, John Anderson, Oscar Bradley, and Lucky Thompson. He

also missed the extended forms when I was five years old when I laid my cello down with my sisters Vivian and Grace to figure out on piano why my sister's violin clashed with my cello on certain notes. I always played my own music with one bass note or no note in the bass clef and moved melodic structure to try and fit what melody or melodies I heard in my brain. I never liked just chords. Miles Davis once came to my house in California with Lucky Thompson showing his idea of contrapuntal music which Gil Evans did most for him on records, credited to Gerry Mulligan. That was Miles' idea. Miles even named the instrumentation to Lucky and myself French Horn, Tuba, etc. remember? This was in the mid-forties before he met Evans or Mulligan or even this bassist's extended form. That same day Miles' concept was the same as it was ten years later at Newport: "Damn, Mingus! How you going to play music with just one bass note so long?" His second remark was, "Why do you put D flat, E flat, G flat, and A flat all in a C seventh chord?" I still just look at Miles when he jokes like that because Miles was flattening along with the seventh, the ninth, tenth, twelfth,

also missed the extended forms when I was five years old when I laid my cello down with my sisters Vivian and Grace to figure out on piano why my sister's violin clashed with my cello on certain notes. I always played my own music with one bass note or no note in the bass clef and moved melodic structure to try and fit what melody or melodies I heard in my brain. I never liked just chords. Miles Davis once came to my house in California with Lucky Thompson showing his idea of contrapuntal music which Gil Evans did most for him on records, credited to Gerry Mulligan. That was Miles' idea. Miles even named the instrumentation to Lucky and myself French Horn, Tuba, etc. remember? This was in the mid-forties before he met Evans or Mulligan or even this bassist's extended form. That same day Miles' concept was the same as it was ten years later at Newport: "Damn, Mingus! How you going to play music with just one bass note so long?" His second remark was, "Why do you put D flat, E flat, G flat, and A flat all in a C seventh chord?" I still just look at Miles when he jokes like that because Miles was flattening along with the seventh, the ninth, tenth, twelfth,

and thirteenth in Bird's days. And I am also aware that it is a compliment to Jelly Roll if not to me that he, Coltrane, and Roach with their bands got away from those bedamnable fourth cycles and chords on every two beats. Perhaps when it is understood to them and Jelly Roll that pedal point keys have an easily usable minimum of three key signatures for improvisation, "spontaneous composition" instead of the one tonic key pedal point scale now being used, music will make another turn in this century so that people will know how serious spontaneous composition "improvisation" really is and not just how loud and long it swings or how we swing and sway.

Perhaps it may sound conceited to point out on my own liner notes what I know I have contributed. This would not be a necessity if critics who do not own a direct financial interest in me and a few others would point out fairly the direction of every musician at the point of his musical debut like they do to or for those in whom they do have direct or indirect professional interest as to the furthering of bank accounts. Or sometimes they have odd little reasons not to like certain composers because they know who of the improvisationalists, composers know them and can

really see right into their ugly little minds wanting the nerve to blow their horns or write their music.

I feel no need to explain any further the music herewith other than to say throw all other records of mine away except maybe one other. I intend to record it all over again on this label the way it was intended to sound. This is the first time the company I have recorded with set out to help me give you, my audience, a clear picture of my musical ideas without that studio rush feeling. Impulse went to great expense and patience to give me complete freedom, along with engineer Bob Simpson, for balance and editing.

The three reeds, baritone—Jerome Richardson, tenor—Richard Hafer, and alto—Charles Mariano, were placed in what I called a V balance with the tenor sax at the V's bottom and the baritone and alto closer to the mike. My reason was that I wanted the tenor sax further from the mike, softer of course, if one is inclined to believe that presence need be obvious. The notes written for tenor were considered in the voiced reed section's overall effect as an illusion of sound—overtones coming through between the baritone and alto that are non-directional so as to give the sound of more than two obvious saxes play-

ing but with possibility of being perhaps four or five. In reverse, if my tenor sax were as close to the mike as my alto and baritone there would be three saxes obviously playing when sometimes I wanted the illusion of more than three. There are at least three perfect overtones that normal ears hear. I was more concerned that the overtones be heard, that one loud tenor note blending with alto and baritone closing out its overtones.

Don Butterfield opens on contrabass trombone with pedal point blast. The contrabass trombone to my knowledge is as rare to find as is a player such as Don. He has refused to play the instrument when requested by rock and roll promoters as a gimmick of odd sound that might start a fad and promote the sales of a million or so records. Don, aside from pedal point notes of both contrabass trombone and tuba, is written in counterlead and center tones on tuba to spread my voicings and help form the illusion of spreaded brass or full ensemble. Don plays two tubas at once with one mouthpiece. Yet it's difficult to catch him doing this. It's easy when he takes off a night though to realize that last night there were two tubas and tonight there is just one.

Dick Hafer's eloquence is found on lead voice behind the alto's opening statement, and solo's, but mainly if you

listen to the group as a whole, in the overall fullness rounding out the entire groups sound through his careful playing lines of overtones. His solo features will be heard on my second album for Impulse.

At this moment I'd like to pause for station identification. Station SOUL and LOVE. Charles Mariano lead alto and alto solos. Jerome Richardson lead baritone, flute, soprano, and baritone solos coming to you through some of these same above stated frequencies plus moral support to yours truly. When critics who couldn't hear my Town Hall music tried to get rid of me forever, Jerome was there to say, "Come on, Mingus. You know we know those cats don't know what they're saying. Don't read it. Let's show them with our Vanguard band."

Then there's Butter, Quentin Jackson. Thanks, Mr. B., for preaching and playing my music, our music, the way I've always heard it in my mind's ear. Also for helping to show that modern music is not owned by adolescents who can't or won't play plunger or bend a brass instrument to sound other than what it sounded like in parade bands. And let me not forget that you introduced me to adult musical life. From now on I do what I always wanted—work with men "mature people" only, of all ages, regardless of what the kids think.



Rolf Ericson. Your knowledge of all the eras in trumpet music meant so much. And I saw you play on cut, bleeding lips night after night trying to help the group's sound. I saw your smiles grow, Richard Williams and Rolf Ericson, as the nights of playing cleared up the confusion of people playing music of a man who can't speak and communicate with his mouth. I feel in musical love too when I hear your sympathetic understanding of my musical chores on this record. I hope America will accept you, Rolf, in fair musical employment and you, Richard, for the virtuoso that you are and sustain you as well financially.

Jaki, I hope you get the band you want and get stuck for a bass player and I can show up and cooperate with you on your music the way you did on mine. All is well, however. That's what's good about stereo. You can turn the channels up that make it and off if they don't. Especially if it's intentionally not what was meant to come off musically on the track.

Guitarist, Jay Berliner, presently with Harry Belafonte. Classical guitar was originally heard and written as in this composition but played by piano at the Vanguard. I wrote the guitar solo; Bob Hammer wrote the one bar modulation going into and the two bars leading out of the guitar solo on the B side from a Spanish piece I'd written some time

before. However, Bob Hammer will be fully represented on my next album for Impulse due to the fact that he is one of the few musical people besides Roland Kirk who came to New York City knowing my music that he'd heard on records. In fact, this will probably be the last record session I will ever arrange. I will always voice my own compositions and orchestrate. But even at that I would not give up the arranging scene had I not met Bob. Although I still don't think the three or four bars modulation he wrote were that expensive, especially since it was already orchestrated by me. Next time, Bob, we talk price up front.

Now my man Dannie Richmond. Without Dannie, who gave me his complete open mind seven years ago, to work with as clay—I didn't play drums so I taught Dannie bass. Dannie is me with his own sense of will. Instead of hands strumming or bowing he uses his feet, hands, skin, metal, and wood. When I met Dannie several young drummers had just about burned me out time-wise, and they were sound deaf and tone deaf. Also they did not know, as Elvin Jones and I discussed many years ago, that you don't play the beat where it is. You draw a picture away from the beat right up to its core with different notes of different

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sounds of the drum instruments so continuously that the core is always there for an open mind. While you make it live now and then you go inside the beat, dead center, and split the core to the sides and shatter the illusion so there is no shakiness ever. If one tries to stay inside dead center or directly on top of the beat or on the bottom the beat is too rigid on the outside where it is heard. The stiffness should only be felt inside the imaginary center of the exact tempo's core. The top, the bottom, the sides, the back are where my favorite drummers, Dannie and Elvin, play, though differently. They tease the mind by not telling you exactly what everyone knows—where one, two, three, and four are. For ensemble work before I met Dannie, Elvin fit my taste. He still does but it's Dannie who's with me and I'm lucky he has stayed with me. There isn't time to teach a lifetime of music to kids who don't know a drum is an instrument, not a donkey for freeloader, horn-happy soloists to ride tempo on because it's easier to listen to drums beat out tempo, wrong or right, than to think for yourself the tempo a musician like Dannie or Elvin suggests to you, yet not too obviously.

There is Bob Thiele. Thanks, man, for coming to my Town Hall open recording session, hearing the music, liking

it, and hiring my band to record for your company when the critics scared the pants off the people for whom I wrote the music.

Last and least is me. Mingus. I wrote the music for dancing and listening. It is true music with much and many of my meanings. It is my living epitaph from birth til the day I first heard of Bird and Diz. Now it is me again. This music is only one little wave of styles and waves of little ideas my mind has encompassed through living in a society that calls itself sane, as long as you're not behind iron bars where there at least one can't be half as crazy as in most of the ventures our leaders take upon themselves to do and think for us, even to the day we should be blown up to preserve their idea of how life should be. Crazy? They'd never get out of the observation ward at Bellevue. I did. So, listen how. Play this record.

As far as reviewing the music on the record, I'll leave that up to someone who is very close to me personally—Doctor Pollock.

Charles Mingus
March 13, 1963

When Mr. Mingus first asked me to write a review of the music he composed for this record, I was astonished and told him so. I said I thought I was competent enough as a psychologist but that my interest in music was only average and without any technical background. Mr. Mingus laughed and said he didn't care, that if I heard his music I'd understand. This is the uniqueness of this man: he jolts with the unexpected and the new. He has something to say and he will use every resource to interpret his messages. After all, why not have a psychologist try to interpret the projections of a composer musician? Psychologists interpret behavior and/or ideas communicated by words and behavior—why not apply this skill to music? It's certainly a refreshing approach that Mr. Mingus suggests.

As Nat Hentoff has stated, "Mingus is ingenuous," ever growing, looking for change and ways to communicate his life experiences, his awareness and feelings of himself and life. His early and late life sufferings as a person and as a black man were surely enough to cause sour bitterness, hate, distortions and withdrawal. Yet, Mr. Mingus never has given up. From every experience such as a conviction for assault or as an inmate of a Bellevue locked ward, Mr. Mingus has learned something and has stated it

will not happen again to him. He is painfully aware of his feelings and he wants desperately to heal them. He also is cognizant of a power dominated and segregated society's impact upon the underdog, the underprivileged and the minority. Inarticulate in words, he is gifted in musical expression which he constantly uses to articulate what he perceives, knows and feels.

To me this particular composition contains Mr. Mingus' personal and also a social message. He feels intensively. He tries to tell people he is in great pain and anguish because he loves. He cannot accept that he is alone, all by himself; he wants to love and be loved. His music is a call for acceptance, respect, love, understanding, fellowship, freedom—a plea to change the evil in man and to end hatred. The titles of this composition suggest the plight of the black man and a plea to the white man to be aware. He seems to state that the black man is not alone but all mankind must unite in revolution against any society that restricts freedom and human rights.

In all three tracks of Side I there are recurrent themes of loneliness, separateness and tearful depression. One feels deeply for the tears of Mr. Mingus that fall for himself and man. There can be no question that he is the Black Saint who suffers for his sins and those of mankind as he reflects

his deeply religious philosophy. His music tells of his deep yearning for love, peace and freedom. A new note has crept into his music. Where once there was a great anger now one can hear hope. As with much of his past music, Mr. Mingus cries of misunderstanding of self and people. Throughout he presents a brooding, moaning intensity about prejudice, hate and persecution.

In the first track of Side I there is heard a solo voice expressed by the alto saxophone—a voice calling to others and saying “I am alone, please, please join me!” The deep mourning and tears of loneliness are echoed and re-echoed by the instruments in Mr. Mingus’ attempt to express his feelings about separation from and among the discordant people of the world. The suffering is terrible to hear.

In track B, the music starts with a tender theme. It is a duet dance song in which many emotions of relatedness are expressed—warmth, tenderness, passion. The music then changes into a mood of what I would call mounting restless agitation and anguish as if there is tremendous conflict between love and hate. This is climaxed by the piercing cries of the trombone and answering saxophones as if saying the “I” of personal identity must be achieved and accepted.

Track C begins with the happiest of themes. Here Mr. Mingus himself plays a classical piano reverie backed by a lyrical flute and cymbals. It is sweet and soft and has a lightness rarely seen in Mr. Mingus' music. But once again the music shifts into a tonal despair and brooding anguish. The theme suggested by the title is the peace and happiness of the free person contrasted with the pain and tears of the black man. Mr. Mingus uses many forms of technique and instrumentation to reflect his meaning. He told me his use of the Spanish guitar was meant to mirror the period of the Spanish Inquisition and El Greco's mood of oppressive poverty and death.

Side II develops all these themes in a very carefully worked out musical composition in concert style, repeating and integrating harmony and disharmony, peace and disquiet, and love and hate. The ending seems unfinished but one is left with a feeling of hope and even a promise of future joy.

Mr. Mingus thinks this is his best record. It may very well be his best to date for his present stage of development as other records were in the past. It must be emphasized

that Mr. Mingus is not yet complete. He is still in a process of change and personal development. Hopefully the integration in society will keep pace with his. One must continue to expect more surprises from him.

Edmund Pollock, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist

(Original liner notes from *The Black Saint and the Sinner Lady*, AS-35)

1. Track A—Solo Dancer 6:20

Stop! Look! And Listen, Sinner Jim Whitney!

2. Track B—Duet Solo Dancers 6:25

Hearts' Beat and Shades in Physical Embraces

3. Track C—Group Dancers 7:00

(Soul Fusion) Freewoman and Oh, This Freedom's Slave Cries

4. Mode D—Trio and Group Dancers 17:52

Stop! Look! And Sing Songs of Revolutions!

Mode E—Single Solos and Group Dance

Saint and Sinner Join in Merriment on Battle Front

Mode F—Group and Solo Dance

Of Love, Pain, and Passioned Revolt, then Farewell,
My Beloved, 'til It's Freedom Day

All songs written by Charles Mingus (Jazz Workshop Inc. [BMI])

Personnel

Rolf Ericson, Richard Williams trumpets

Quentin Jackson trombone

Don Butterfield tuba

Jerome Richardson soprano, baritone
saxophones and flute

Dick Hafer tenor saxophone and flute

Charlie Mariano alto saxophone

Jaki Byard piano

Jay Berliner guitar

Charles Mingus bass and piano

Dannie Richmond drums

Original Sessions Produced by Bob Thiele

Reissue produced by Michael Cuscuna

Recorded in New York on January 20, 1963

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