



Lola of the Red Oil by ZINA SARO-WIWA

Lola had grown a shade darker, becoming fit and lithe from capoeira practise and weekend swims at Itapua beach. Her Portuguese was much better now and flowed almost instinctively. As for her body language, this too had become more 'Brazilian'. It had relaxed into a lazy sexiness having been massaged with daily compliments and seduced by the samba-reggae rhythms which danced around her ecstatic body. The sensual Nigerian girl in over-size sunglasses reclined in her seat on a bus bound for a small village just outside Salvador City.

Lola was on her way to attend a full-blown Candomblé ceremony at a proper terreiro – a word she thought sounded like 'terror' but actually meant 'temple'. Her travel partner was a newly-acquired Dutch anthropologist friend who she found slightly annoying. The woman was obsessed with Lola's Yoruba heritage and insisted on questioning her about obscure ceremonies even though the girl had told her time and time again that she had never really lived in Nigeria and did not speak the language. Besides, her family were Pentecostal Christians and didn't go in for any form of 'pagan devilry'. These were people who deemed yoga classes 'unchristian'. But this wasn't good enough for the anthropologist, who found the Nigerian girl bizarre. Lola turned and faced the window. She marvelled at how sunny the speeding countryside looked, even with darkened lenses on. She also reasoned that she did in fact need to go to the ceremony with someone and that this strange-looking woman was better than nothing. Besides, the anthropologist knew the way as she had visited the place before. Maybe she'd give her the slip later. Mae Regina would also be there. It was her terreiro.

The two women took the bus to the very end of the line and disembarked. A surprising number of people got off there too. Most were poor, coffee-coloured Brazilians carrying heavy loads from the city. The terreiro was another 20-minute walk uphill to what looked like forest. The anthropologist led the way.

The sun's brightness was almost menacing, colourful birds squawked in the trees as the baking hot sand-filled road swallowed their feet whole at every step. The two women pressed on in silence, consumed by their own thoughts, having quickly run out of things to say to each other. From among the trees, the gleaming concierge watched the black woman and the white woman trudge by. Lola looked up at the sky, momentarily transfixed by a majestic red and black bird flying over their heads into the treetops up in front. Her worldview was altering. Her imagination having been caught in a new cosmological web. She had known about

Opposite **LEAH GORDON** (b.1959 where ???) *LANSE KOD (THE KNIFE-THROWERS)* HAITI.
Lamda print mounted on aluminium, b/w film. 40 x 40, ed.5 -30 x 30 ed.5, 1995

Candomblé and was vaguely aware of its presence throughout the city, but since her meetings with Mae Regina she could see it everywhere. For God's sake, she'd been taking her lunch everyday in a seafood restaurant called Restaurante Iemanjá – Iemanjá was the goddess of the sea. She was staying in a white hotel with red shutters called Casa Xango – Xango was a warrior deity whose colours were, indeed, red and white. Her favourite Brazilian songs were *Toda Menina Baiana* by Gilberto Gil and *Neide Candolina* by Caetano Veloso; songs about Bahian girls with orixas; songs Lola liked to think had been written about her. Yes, she had known it, but she hadn't known it.

Candomblé was a mystical religion whose practise of spirit possession was still shrouded in secrecy, but it did not remain in the temples of worship. The religion had exploded out onto the streets and into the psyches of millions of Bahians and Brazilians. Its iconography, its practises and its mythology out there for all to see and consume in the most profane ways. A very public enigma, the mysteries lurked everywhere, permeating the city. It was, perhaps, the reason Salvador felt so magical.

Lola was now sweating. The sun was brutally hot and the uphill climb in the sand a real struggle. But they were, according to the anthropologist, nearing the terreiro and a knot of excitement began to form in her stomach. Voodoo had always frightened her. She'd seen the movies set in Haiti. All zombies and human sacrifices. It looked terrifying and rather pointless. But in Bahia voodoo seemed beautiful. The orixas were depicted in vibrant colours and dazzling costumes and each one represented and exalted human personality traits like benevolence, belligerence, tolerance, vanity, intellectualism. If she had understood correctly, these deities were ancestors transformed into forces of nature. Consequently, forests, plants, rivers and the sea were revered. The religion also cherished women and even supported gay rights judging by all the bisexual orixas Lola had been told about! Even better, there was no such thing as hell. Candomblé seemed to have a more nuanced and sophisticated understanding of so-called 'evil' and Lola had always been sceptical of the idea of The Devil. This religious culture had, additionally, given black Bahians an identity and self-respect that was so necessary in a country like Brazil, a country that, despite all this celebration of African culture, fundamentally did not respect black people. Lola perceived this whenever she visited wealthier parts of Salvador where, if she dressed too simply, she would be mistaken for and treated like a servant, so few and far between were other black faces (and Salvador the most African city in Brazil). And although people on a street level thought of her as beautiful, it was obvious how undesirable the nation officially found black people, so rarely were they seen in fashion magazines, on TV, in government or even in shopping-malls and offices.

It went beyond the aesthetic. This apparent revulsion reflected the nation's concerns about appearing more like a modern, First World nation. Lola was beginning to understand why black and brown Brazilians were so obsessed with skin colour and hair texture. Black was not beautiful here. Fetishised, perhaps, but not desired in any real way. And yet the conscious and politically-driven exultation of Afro-Brazilian religion saw to it that Brazilians of all colours (even foreigners) joined in the traditions to a lesser or greater extent. They became enchanted by Candomblé. Entranced. Became 'African'. Such were the paradoxes of Brazil. It was why Lola loved the country – but also why she hated it.

Just as the heat was becoming unbearable the anthropologist led Lola off the unforgiving road. They turned down a tiny path that disappeared into the forest. Once under the protection of the branches the air was cool and quiet and Lola breathed freely again. After a short time they came to an archway constructed of beaten metal with African deities etched into it; the exterior of the terreiro. They had arrived.

Lola and the anthropologist entered what appeared to be a colourful African village and began to wander around. In this large compound were several small houses hidden and protected by the surrounding forest which blocked the sun and bathed the ground in a soft, caressing light, creating an otherworldly atmosphere. Each house had been painted a different colour. Some with murals depicting orixas, combs, axes and snakes. There were very few people in sight but the clang of pots and pans could be heard. Women issuing instructions and the shuffle of flip-flops dragging across a floor. Music; strange and morose-sounding. Not Brazilian at all. It became louder as Lola walked towards a dark red house surrounded by banana trees dappled with light. She followed the sound to the front of the building and soon found herself wishing that she might have remembered to bring her camera. An elderly black lady with frizzy hair and wild eyes leaned from a window. In the room behind her was an old record-player responsible for the scratchy 1930s bolero that haunted the compound. The woman was staring into space and swaying as if there was something on her back forcing her forwards and backwards. Lola stood right in front of the exhausted-looking woman who paid no attention to her. Perhaps she didn't see her. Moments later the anthropologist crept up behind Lola and whispered that the woman was in trance. She explained that the spirit would sometimes mount her for days at a time. She stared for a further minute or two before moving away, urging the Nigerian to follow. Lola trailed along absent-mindedly but could not stop staring back at the possessed old lady. She looked just like her Auntie Eburn.

This strange place was making Lola feel oddly at home. The smoke from the bonfire billowing out from behind one of the houses instantly transported her to her grandmother's compound where Lola would always sit much too close to the open stove, mesmerised by the embers. Her grandmother, Mama Ketu, would ask her to sit back a little before she prepared her favourite meal: ripe plantain fried in red palm oil. As she wandered further, it dawned on Lola that it was Bahia's apparent exultation of all things African – all things Yoruban – that had been calling her to this place all along. In fact, Bahia attracted many visitors from all over the world, some of whom ended up extending their stay or even settling there permanently. Whether they thought they were here for the sunshine, the beaches, the food, music or the sex – it was Candomblé at work. Lola was sure of this. Candomblé underwrote everything. It gave Bahia its singularity. Nowhere else on earth did this culture take root and flower so seductively. Not in Cuba, Haiti or New Orleans. Not even in Nigeria which, to Lola's mind, displayed only a fraction of the charm of Bahia's utterly charismatic carnival of Yoruba religion.

The anthropologist was speaking with a very good-looking American standing topless inside the door of the smallest of the houses painted white with ocean-blue shutters.

"Lola, this is Carrlloth," the anthropologist said in an exaggerated Castillian accent. "We met in the city a couple of months ago."

"Prazer eu te conhece" Lola greeted Carlos.

"How you doin'?" Pleased to meet you too!" replied Carlos. "Man, it feels good to speak English," he sighed. The man was beautiful; long, lean and tanned with smooth skin. His head was shaved. Lola liked shaved heads.

"Carrlloth is an Iyawo" the anthropologist announced proudly. "He is in the process of being initiated into candomblé."

"Why?" Lola exclaimed more forcefully than she had intended, her eyes dancing suggestively. Carlos explained that although he was Cuban American, he had always felt called to Brazil and Candomblé. Since childhood he'd dreamed about people dressed in white, dancing in circles. Being Cuban and from Miami Carlos had been exposed to Santeria – the Cuban version of Candomblé – but had never got involved. As his eyes smouldered lazily and his hand gestured dramatically, Lola became aware that Carlos was undeniably gay. She sighed.

"...there was something hard and mercenary within the Santeria tradition that I just didn't appreciate," Carlos continued. "Then I met a beautiful Brazilian living in Miami and he introduced me to his Mae de Santo and the rest is history. Bahia is the home of Africa in Brazil so it was the logical place to come and get the initiation done."

"Lola's from Nigeria," interjected the anthropologist eagerly.

The American visibly brightened. "Hey, are you a Yorooba?"

"No" said Lola, not wanting to go down that road again.

"So what do you have to do to become initiated?" The anthropologist seemed unsettled as Carlos began explaining the process and the sun faded as guests began to stream into the temple at the centre of the compound. He was going to be a son of Oxumare (an orixa that had something to do with rainbows and snakes, Lola shuddered, recalling her conversations with Mae Regina). Initiations could take months and Carlos had just finished his twenty-one day confinement period in a runko or hut. During this time he'd had his head shaved and was learning how to care for his own Orixá. This included learning what his Orixá liked and disliked, which songs and dances 'called' him and other spirits down to the temple and how to arrange his altar and daily offerings. Initiation was, apparently, a symbolic rebirth into an 'improved' existence which was costing him thousands of dollars in flights, accommodation, the priest and the sacrifice of chickens and other animals. Expensive, boring and a little scary, thought Lola. And to what end? As if to respond, the batuque drums began their otherworldly clattering in the near distance. It was time for her to go. As she bid Carlos farewell she wondered whether the spirits would ever call on her too. Lola and the anthropologist walked towards the growing crowd and the light inside the temple...



Drums

"Bach and Beethoven are composers. Rachmaninov is not a composer at all. Rachmaninov is a spirit" Mikael Pletnev.

Voodoo music lectures are by: Karl Lutchmayer (prof Trinity Coll of Mu, London) international concert pianist and lecturer known for his 'conversational concert' series at the Warehouse in Waterloo.

Voodoo: SOUND ON SOUND

- Miles Davis: *Bitches Brew*
- Todd Rundgren: *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*
- Bill Evans: *Witchcraft*
- Oscar Peterson: *Witchcraft*
- Stevie Wonder: *Superstition*
- John Taverner: *The Beautiful Names*
- Ritchie Havens: *Back To My Roots*
- Francis Albert Sinatra: *Witchcraft*
- David Lewiston: *Ketjak rites*
- Igor Stravinsky: *The Rite of Spring (New York Philharmonic Orchestra)*
- Henry Mancini/Bobby Darin: *Moon River*
- Todd Rundgren: *Initiation*
- Screamin' Jay Hawkins: *I Put A Spell On You*
- Karlheinz Stockhausen: *Klang*
- Sergei Rachmaninov: *Piano Concerto #3 (Mikael Pletnev)*
- Credence Clearwater Revival: *Bad Moon Rising*
- Darius Milhaud: *Le Creation Du Monde*
- Mahavishnu Orchestra: *The Inner Mounting Flame*
- Mose Allison: *Seventh Son*
- President elect Barack Obama: *2004 Democratic Nomination Speech*
- Omara Portuondo: *Maria Negra*
- Glenn Miller: *In The Mood*
- Original Soundtrack: *Black Orpheus*
- Leonard Bernstein: *Bachiana Brasileira #5*
- The Psychedelic Furs: *Love My Way*
- Miles Davis: *Feio*
- Peter Green & Fleetwood Mac: *The Green Manalishi*
- Moondog: *Bird's Lament*
- Glenn Miller Orchestra: *In The Mood*
- Alexander Scriabin: *Fantasia Sonata in C# minor*
- Muddy Waters: *Hoochie-Coochie Man*

- The Black Cats: *Black Cat Blues*
- Bobby Darin: *Mack The Knife*
- Juicy Lucy: *Who Do You Love ?*
- Sonny Boy Williamson: *Got My Mojo Working*
- Gabor Szabo: *Witchcraft*
- Dr John: *Walk On Gilded Splinters*
- James Moody: *That Old Black Magic*
- James Brown: *King Heroin*
- Stevie Wonder: *Creepin'*
- Stokely Carmichael: *Black Power speech 1966*
- Sofia Loren: *Mambo Bacan*
- Francis Albert Sinatra: *You Do Something To Me*
- Diamanda Galas: *I Put A Spell On You*
- The Mojos: *Everything's alright*
- Dusty Springfield: *Son of a Preacher Man*

THE ROYAL COURT MUSICIANS OF JOUJOUKA

Somewhere in the black mountain hills above Tangier the master musicians of the Royal Court of Joujouka still guard their flocks, their instruments, their bladders of kif and their sebsis. Using cane flutes, raitas (horns) and drums, they serenade their pre-Muslim goat god in order to 'alter consciousness'

SCREAMIN' JAY HAWKINS *I Put a Spell on You, 1956*

The song's performer and composer, Hawkins, (rn: Jalacy Hawkins) was a boxer and professional piano player who died in Feb, 2000, rumoured to have at least 50 children. If you think you are one of them, go to www.jayskids.com.

KARLHEINZ STOCKHAUSEN

(b.1928, Modrath, Cologne – d.2007, Kürten, North Rhine-Westphalia)

"The first sketches in 1958 were made in the air during a six week long tour of America, where I daily flew great distances, experiencing above the clouds the slowest times of change and the widest spaces. A large orchestra of eighty is divided into four groups. Voices and instruments appear in an homogeneous sound mixture. The phonetically conceived text was composed throughout according to purely musical criteria. Only here and there do names of children, women, friends appear. The piece tells no story. Every moment can exist for itself".

Karlheinz Stockhausen, notes for *Gruppen* (premiered in the Rhine Hall

of the Cologne-Deutz Fairgrounds, 9 May, 1955) and *Carré* for four orchestras and four choirs, (premiered in the *Festalle Planten un Blomen*, Hamburg, 28 October 1960). (Deutsche Gramophonen – Stereo 104 989)

BALINESE GAMELAN MUSIC

The Ketjak – Ramayana Monkey Chant

David Lewiston, photo by David Lewiston (Nonesuch Explorer Series)

The Balinese Trance Dance known as Ketjak is a re-enactment of the battle described in the Ramayana epic in which the monkey hordes came to the aid of Prince Rama in his fight with the evil King Ravana – complete with a chorus imitating monkeys, as they chant the syllable tjak. The movements, exorcistic in origin, drive out evil as by an incantation. The cries, the crowding, the lifting hands, the devouring of single figures, the broken lines of melody bewildering to butas (demons), all enhance the tempestuous effect.

*we are grateful to David Lewiston and Ruby Orstein.

DARIUS MILHAUD

(b.1892 Aix-en-Provence, France - d.1974 Geneva, Switzerland)

La Creation Du Monde performed by Fernend Oubradous and Les Concerts de Chambre (Decca/Felsted, L89002 1955)

Milhaud's masterwork is a balletic overture played as a street parade. The music, simultaneously tender and world-weary, seems to convey an elemental spiritual/ritual message. In the repeated episodes a blues ostinato provides the basis for New Orleans-style woodwind, brass and string quintet. The Creation in terms of negro mythology. The world is born due to the incantations of the Gods. With sets by Léger, again, fugue is employed for its intensity and its multi-rhythmic and contrapuntal possibilities. Inspired by the timbral subtlety of Leo Reisman's Hotel Brunswick orchestra, Milhaud himself called the Creation, "a jazz ballet de sentiment classique. This authentic music had its roots in the Negro soul. The vestigial traces of Africa, no doubt", (Darius Milhaud, 1923) One of Milhaud's temporary students was Burt Bacharach (TT)

MAHAVISHNU ORCHESTRA

The Inner Mounting Flame 1971

(Columbia/Legacy 65523)

The infernal energy of John McLaughlin's earth-shaking Mahavishnu seems as bewitchingly 'possessed' as voodoo rites themselves – an antidote to the prevalent 'prog/jazz-rock' idioms of 1972, this is literally music 'of the spirits'. Containing no funk as we know it, no easy four-

square loop, it relies more on Balinese-like structures and an off-centre dissonance similar to that found in Copland or Hindemith. With liner note by the guru Sri Chinmoy the seminal and groundbreaking *Inner Mounting Flame* and its standout track, *Meeting of the Spirits* was followed by the slightly more stylised and less artistically successful *Birds of Fire*. (TT)

MOJO FILTER

my magic charm is working...

Origin: In the early 20th century the word *Mojo* meant voodoo or magical power, specifically one which gave the mojo's male possessor a sexual power over the opposite sex. More recently, this has been extended to mean power or influence of any kind. The term was widely used in the US black communities at that time. In 1926, Newbell Niles Puckett published this definition in his *Folk Beliefs of the Southern Negro*: "The term *mojo* is often used by the Mississippi Negroes to mean 'charms, amulets, or tricks', as 'to work mojo' on a person or 'to carry a mojo'."

McKinley Morganfield, a.k.a. Muddy Waters, would have heard the word *mojo* as he was growing up in Mississippi. His blues classic *Got my Mojo Working*, 1957, was the song that introduced the term to the wider world: *Got my mojo working, but it just won't work on you. Got my mojo working, but it just won't work on you. I wanna love you so bad till I don't know what to do. I'm going down to Louisiana to get me a mojo band. I'm going down to Louisiana to get me a mojo band. I'm gonna have all you women right here at my command.*

"If you dislike my songs so much, why do you continue to perform them?" was the best Cole Porter could manage via telegram in referring to the effortless swing of Sinatra's *You Do Something To Me*. Witchery was a favourite theme, as Francis Albert saw off Rodgers and Hart's *Bewitched*, Arlen and Mercer's *That Ol' Black Magic* and *Witchcraft* (Cy Coleman/Carolyn Leigh) without a swig. "Down and down I go, all around I go. In a spin, loving the spin that I'm in. Under that ol' black magic called love."

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COLE PORTER

You Do Something to Me

*"Let me live 'neath your spell,
do do the voodoo that you do so well"*

DR. JOHN

Walk On Gilded Splinters

*"Je suis le grand zombie
My yellow belt of choisen
Ain't afraid of no tomcat,
Fill my brains with poison*

Alexander Scriabin used Rachmaninovian gestures and plenty of arpeggiated rumbato within the accepted dissonance of the modern era and Debussy's floating worlds to arrive at the true Avant-garde in the shape of Diaghalev, Fokine, Nijinsky and of course Stravinsky's, authentic 'music of the spirits'.

Ruth Laredo plays Scriabin's *Fantasy Sonata in C# minor Op19* on the Baldwin SD-10 concert grand.

JOHN CAGE

(b.1912, Los Angeles, California, – d.1992, New York City)

"Cage favours abandoning all control and turning the whole composition over to chance. All of his efforts are directed towards the difficult process of getting rid of his own tastes, imagination, memory and ideas". Calvin Tomkins, *The Heretical Courtship in Modern Art*, The New Yorker, 1962.

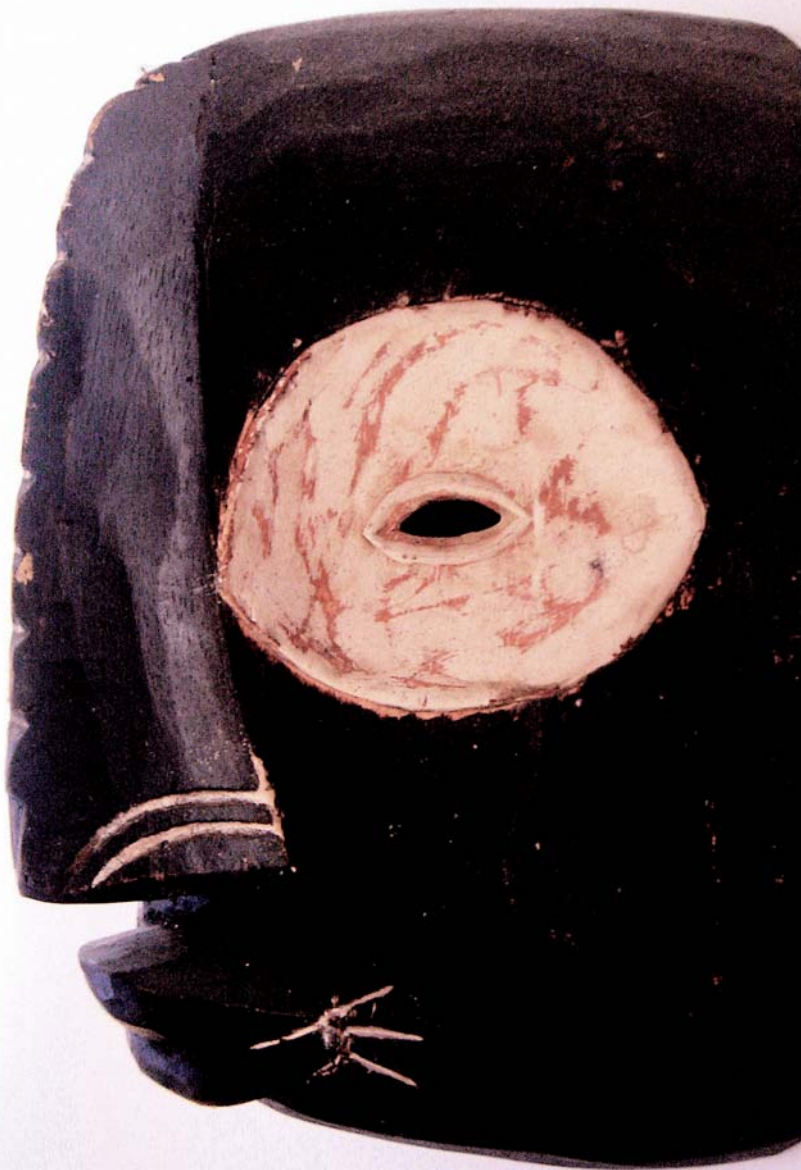
"There is no real freedom in John Cage's approach", Earle Brown, composer.

"They try anything in California, and Cage is like that!" Aaron Copland, composer, *The Bride and the Bachelors*, Calvin Tomkins, (W&N) 1962 US.

"I became devoted to Greig. I imagined devoting myself to performances of his works alone, they did not seem to be too difficult and I loved them". John Cage.

SCRIABIN | RUTH LAREDO
 Désir | Caress dansée | Étude in C-Sharp Minor | Sonatas Nos.1,2,8





MOONDOG

(b.1918 Marysville, Kansas – d. 1999, Munster, Germany)

The most photographed 'street person' in the history of New York City, he was the object of pilgrimage for hippies, composers, entertainers and writers. If you walked by the corner of 54th Street and Sixth Avenue in New York City in the summer of 1967, the chances are you would have caught sight of the most famous of all of the city's eccentrics. Dressed in a Viking costume: headdress with horns, elaborate cape, spear, he was articulate and friendly, happy to discuss the Vietnam war, local art scene, the grand designs of history. He would try to sell passers-by couplets from a mammoth work-in-progress called *Thor the Nordoom*. He was blind from a childhood accident, but refused to consider his condition as a handicap. Perhaps most surprising of all was that this eerie and unusual figure was a classical composer in the tonal western tradition who followed all the rules of counterpoint and harmony and notated his music in braille. His songs were recorded by Janis Joplin and Julie Andrews. The madrigal, *All Is Loneliness*, seems to be a forerunner of Donna Summer's *I Feel Love*. This man was Moondog. Robert Scott: *The Viking of 6th Avenue*, preface by Phillip Glass, (Process Books US, 2008)

RECOMMENDED LISTENING

Lament: Moondog

Improvisations at a Jazz Concert, (Brunswick) 1953.

Tell It Again (Capital US) 1957 with Julie Andrews.

Moondog Symphony: 1959, featuring the composer's dog who habitually howled at the moon.

Moondog: (CBS Masterworks) 1969.

Orchestral pieces from the early 1940s.

The Overtone Tree: Late work composed after he moved to Germany in the mid 1975.

Selected Works (Music Heritage Society) MH 3803, 1978

Opposite MASK (Ghanain, origin unknown) originally from Picasso's collection at his studio at La Californie, nr Cannes, France