

for soli, chorus, and orchestra Vocal score

Geoffrey Hudson

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A Passion for the Planet

(2019)

VOICES

Soprano and Baritone solos Mixed Chorus Children's Chorus (treble voices)

INSTRUMENTS

A Passion for the Planet is available in two scorings: a chamber version scored for 12-person ensemble (flute, oboe, clarinet, 2 horns, trombone, percussion, 2 violins, viola, cello, and bass), and a full orchestra version scored for 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, and strings.

DURATION

60 minutes

FIRST PERFORMANCE

Northampton, MA, June 15, 2019: Illuminati Vocal Arts Ensemble, Tony Thornton, conductor; Dashon Burton, baritone; Alisa Pearson, soprano; Hampshire Young People's Chorus (K.C. Conlan, director)

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A Passion for the Planet TEXT

I CHORUS: Everything We Need

"At this very moment, the Earth is above you, [the Earth is] below you, all around you, and even inside you. The Earth is everywhere... The water in our flesh, [the rock in] our bones, ... [we] all... are part of the Earth... We are [part of] the Earth and we... [carry] her within us."

(adapted from Thich Nhat Hanh's Loveletter to the Earth, p. 8)

"Everything we need to live a good life is here on this [planet]. Everything we need is here on Mother Earth... She gives us all... we need for life... She supports our feet as we walk... It gives us joy that she... care[s] for us as she has... [since] time [began]."

(Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving address)

Cry out with joy! Fill your heart with gladness! Bring forth a song of praise! Praise for the planet, gladness for its blessings, and joy in creation!

Alleluia!

II CHORUS: In the Briefest Moment of History

"One barrel of oil yields as much energy as twenty-five thousand hours of human manual labor—more than a decade of human labor per barrel." *(Bill McKibben, <u>Eaarth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet</u>, p. 27)*

"[From] 1850 [to] 1970, Americans increased their energy consumption 150-fold."

(David Orr, <u>Dangerous Years</u>, p. 58)

"The average American uses twenty-five barrels each year, which is like finding three hundred years of free labor [every year]."

(Bill McKibben, Eaarth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet, p. 27)

"And [so,] in the briefest moment of history, we came to believe that the miraculous and [the] extraordinary were merely normal." (David Orr, <u>Dangerous Years</u>, p. 3)

III CHORUS: The Three Gyres

"Fifteen-hundred miles west of Seattle, in the middle of the North Pacific, [lurks] a mass of plastic debris and chemical sludge... known as the North Pacific Gyre. It is estimated to be the size of the lower forty-eight states... [The exact size of] the garbage gyre is [not known]. [What is known is,] ...it is massive and growing." "Six miles above our heads, another gyre, a gyre of gases, circulates the Earth. This gyre is the result of our annual combustion of four cubic miles of primeval goo, four cubic miles of... coal [and] oil [and] natural gas... This atmospheric... gyre is changing the... Earth in an instant of geologic time and locking us into a future of extreme heat, drought, larger storms, [and] rising seas..."

"A third gyre of long-lived chemicals cycles through our blood... and is stored permanently in our fatty tissues... [These chemicals] are in our air, water, food, ...and... toys... [B]abies are born "pre-polluted." ...[T]he average body [now contains more than] two hundred [chemicals]... that are [thought] or known to cause cancer and cell mutations and to disrupt the endocrine system."

"...[T]he three gyres were once thought to be evidence of prosperity... But a large part of... our wealth is fraudulent. We are simply offloading the costs of pollution and environmental damage onto people living somewhere else or at some later time."

(adapted from David Orr's Dangerous Years, pp. 99-102)

IV BARITONE: A Gift

"I cannot say for certain whether my life is a gift or not, but even with its ups and downs it certainly feels like one. I cannot say for certain that the feeling of sea winds in my face [is a gift], or the view from a... ridgetop, ...or the delight of fireflies on a summer evening, ...or the smell of rain after a long hot drought... [I cannot say for certain whether these things are gifts or not,] but they give me pleasure and they feel like beneficence beyond any thoughts I can muster. I cannot say with cool scientific logic why such things should be passed on to my... grandchildren. ...I can only say that I am very thankful that [those who came] before us protected what they did or were [at least] unable to damage more than they did."

(adapted from David Orr's Dangerous Years, p. 134)

V CHORUS: We Are Driving in a Car

"We are driving in a car with bad brakes, in a fog and headed for a cliff. We know for sure now that the cliff is out there, we just don't know exactly where it is. Prudence would suggest that we start putting on the brakes."

(adapted from John Holdren, as quoted in Thomas Friedman's <u>Hot</u>, <u>Flat</u>, and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution—And How <u>It Can Renew America</u>, pp. 125-126)

VI SOPRANO & CHORUS: Why Should I Bear the Blame?

"But why should I bear the blame? Why should I be expected to rise above my times? Is it my doing that my times have been so shameful? Why should it be left to me... to lift myself... out of this pit of disgrace?" "I want to rage against the men who have created these times. I want to accuse them of spoiling my life in the way that a rat or a cockroach spoils food without even eating it, simply by walking over it and sniffing it and performing its bodily functions on it."

"It is childish, I know, to point fingers and blame others... I want to... redeem myself, but am full of confusion about how to do it..." (adapted from J.M. Coetzee's <u>Age of Iron</u> pp. 116-117)

VII CHORUS: The Ice Caps Are Melting

"The ice caps are melting; the glaciers are thinning; the oceans are rising; the wildfires are raging; the species are dying."

(adapted from Bill McKibben's <u>Eaarth: Making a Life on a Tough</u> <u>New Planet</u>, p. 45)

The way we are living cannot go on.

"Business as usual leads—directly [and] quickly...—to... catastrophe. [Business as usual] cannot go on, and what cannot go on, comes to an end." (adapted from Alex Steffen's "The Last Decade and You", https://thenearlynow.com/the-last-decade-and-you-489a5375fbe8)

Farmlands turn to desert, and families must flee.

"Too many people in a hot, poor, shrinking land... It's not hard to start a fight in a place like that. [It's not hard to start a fight in a crowded, hot, shrinking land.]"

(Alex Perry, as quoted in Bill McKibben's <u>Eaarth: Making a Life on a</u> <u>Tough New Planet</u>, p. 82)

Too hot. Too cold. Too wet. Too dry. Too much. Too little. Too late. Too soon.

"The sound of the rising tide—you cannot help hearing it..." (Thich Nhat Hanh, Loveletter to the Earth, p. 142)

VIII CHILDREN'S CHORUS, BARITONE, & CHORUS: The Question

"What have you done with what was given you, what have you done with the blue, beautiful world?" (Theo Dorgan, from "The Question")

"What have we done with the cold salt sea? Waters grow warmer and acid levels rise. And the plankton within, the plankton are dying; plankton on which all of life relies. What will fish eat? And what will we breathe when the plankton swarms are gone?"

(adapted from Joanna Macy & Chris Johnstone's <u>Active Hope: How</u> to Face the Mess We're In without Going Crazy, p. 24) "And I will break the pride of your power, and I will make your heavens like iron and your earth like bronze. And your strength shall be spent in vain, for your land will not yield its increase, and the trees of the land shall not yield their fruit."

(Leviticus XXVI: 19-20)

Dies irae, dies illa, Solvet saeclum in favilla (from the Requiem Mass) Day of wrath, that day the world will dissolve in ashes

IX CHORUS: Hope Is A Verb

Hope is a verb with its sleeves rolled up. Hope is patient. Hope is not passive. Hope is steady and competent and brave. Hope is a verb with its sleeves rolled up. Hope requires courage. Hope is practical. Hope is a discipline. Hope is not passive. Hope is patient. Hope requires skill. And hope is something we do. And with hope, we can create the gyres of positive change, and that change can redeem the earth."

(adapted from David Orr's Dangerous Years, p. 115)

X SOPRANO, BARITONE, CHILDREN'S CHORUS, & CHORUS: Nothing That Is Worth Doing

"Nothing that is worth doing can be achieved in our lifetime; therefore we must be saved by hope; [therefore we must be saved by love]. Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; therefore we are saved by love; [therefore we are saved by faith]; [therefore we shall be saved by hope]."

(adapted from Reinhold Niebuhr's <u>The Irony of American History</u>)

XI SOPRANO, BARITONE, CHILDREN'S CHORUS, CHORUS, & AUDIENCE: Holy Earth, Ancient Home

Holy earth, ancient home Mother of us all, You who grant us all we need for eternity. Holy earth, so vast and small.

Hear our prayer, hear our cry Hear our song of praise. Help us mend what has gone awry with the web of life. Help us learn your wiser ways.

Let us sing, all as one, In the great human choir, Blue-green world in a sea of stars that forever turns. Holy earth in this holy gyre. Holy earth, our one precious home. Amen. Sarah Metcalf and Geoffrey Hudson

for Alisa

who has been thinking about this much longer than I have

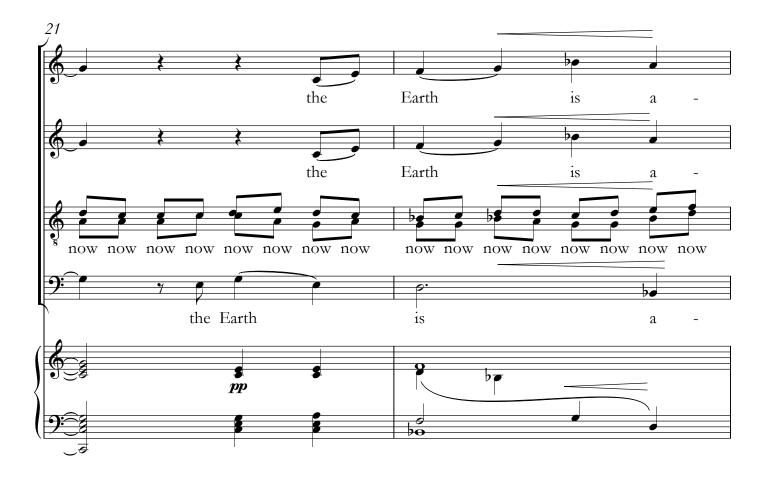
Revised edition, April 2022

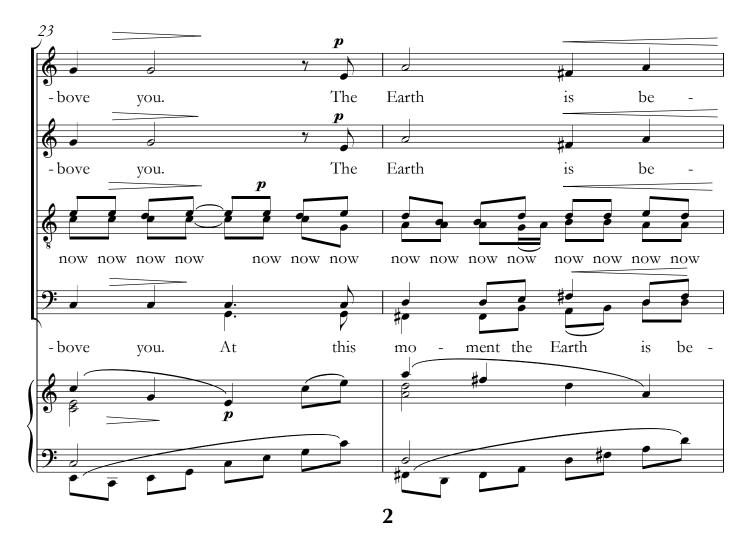
A Passion for the Planet

I - Everything We Need



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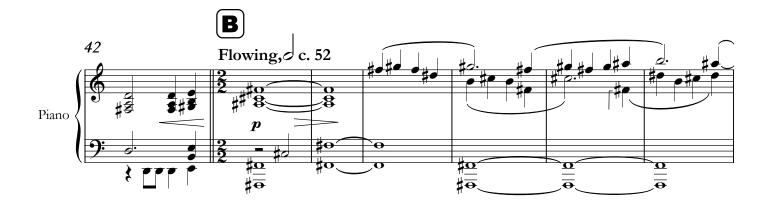


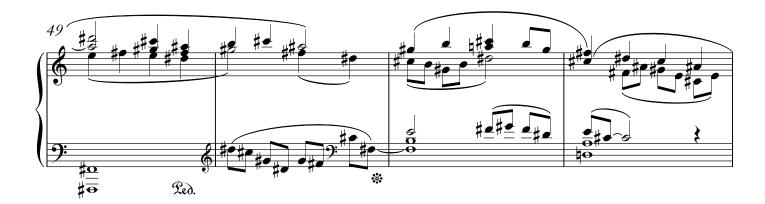




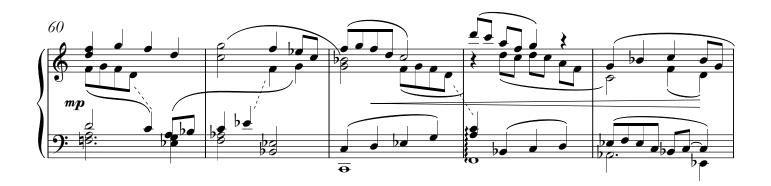






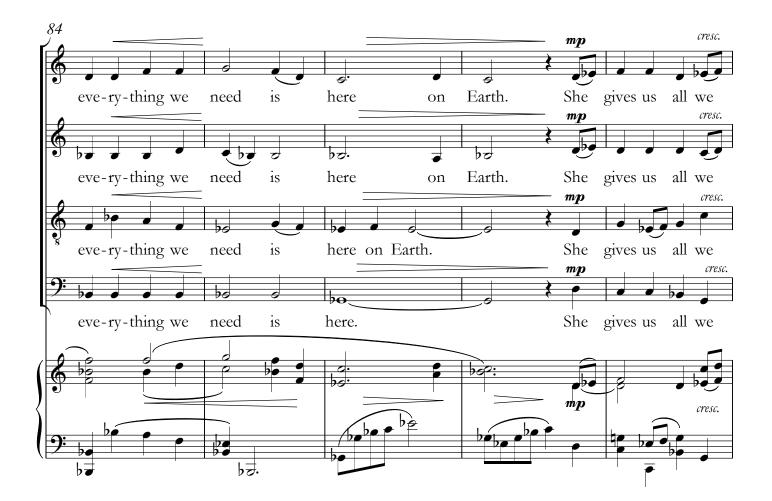




















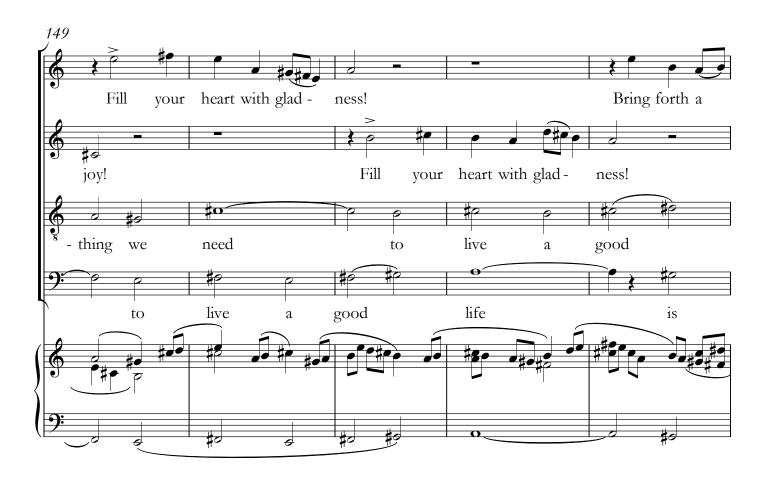


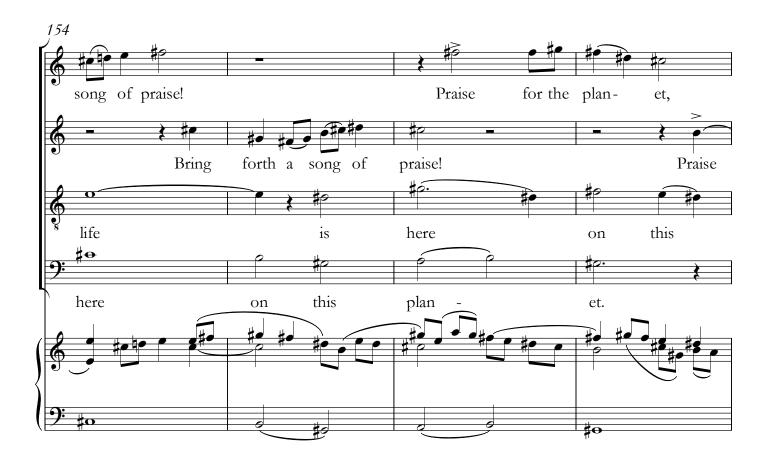










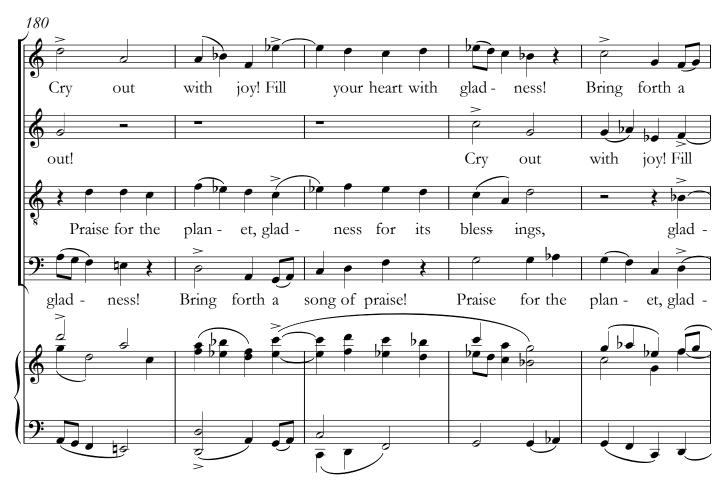






















II - In the Briefest Moment of History

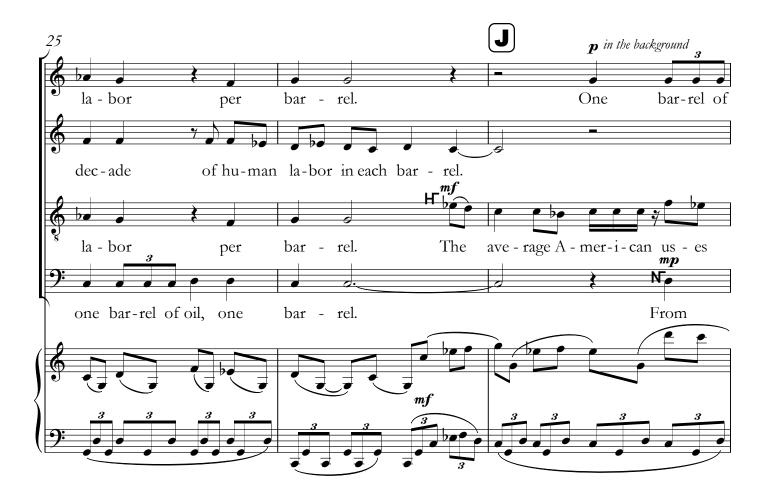


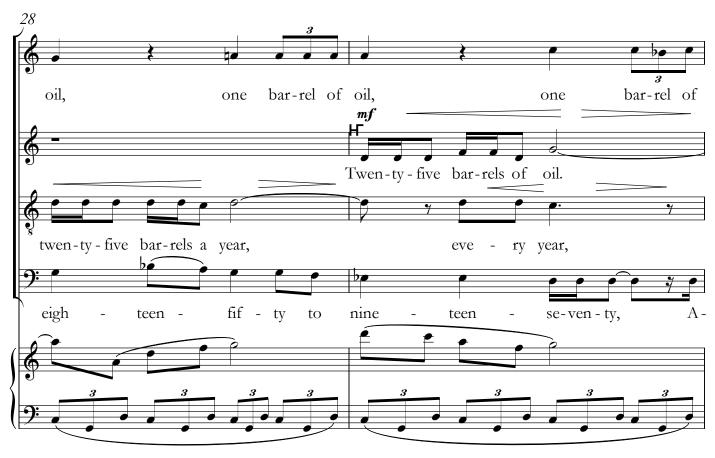
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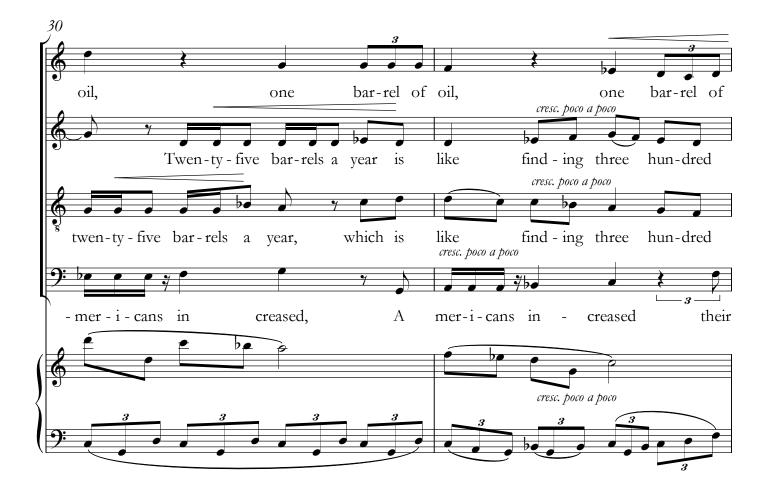


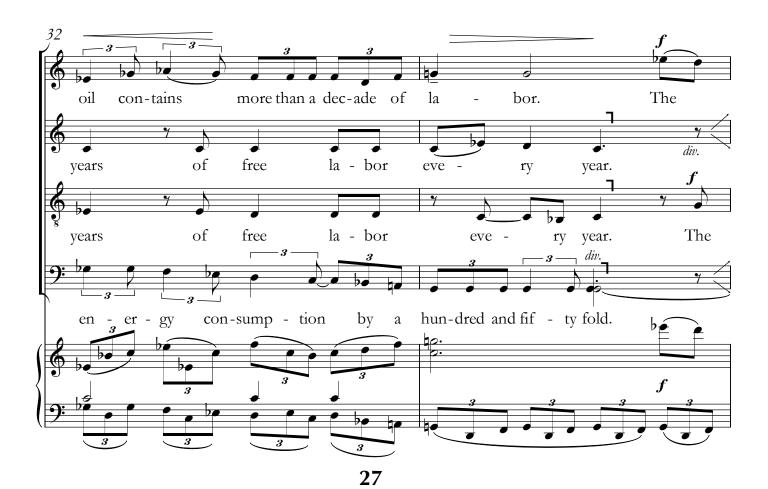










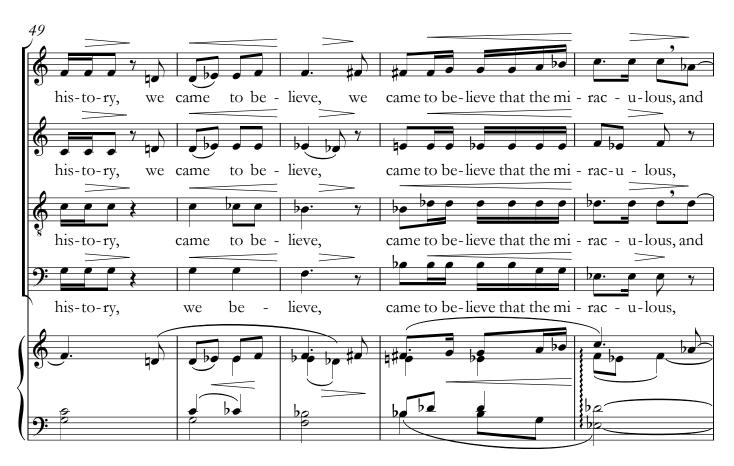












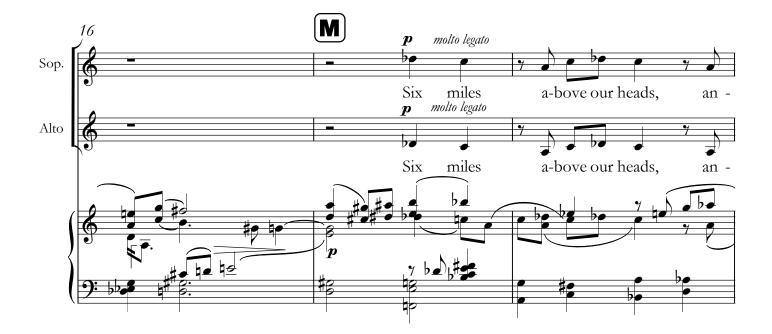


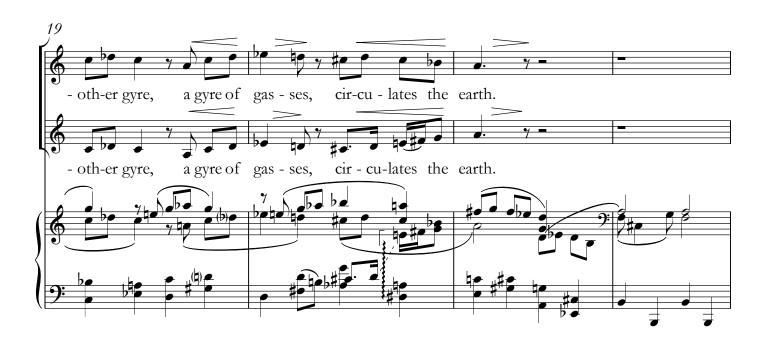
III - The Three Gyres

Text: David Orr











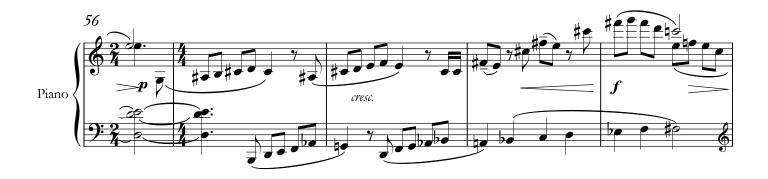












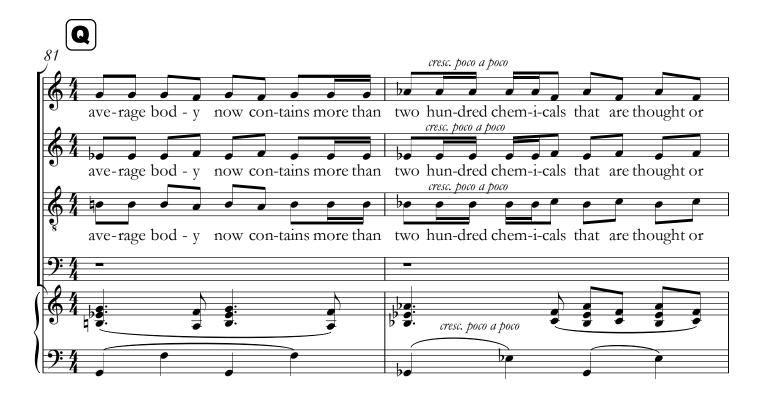


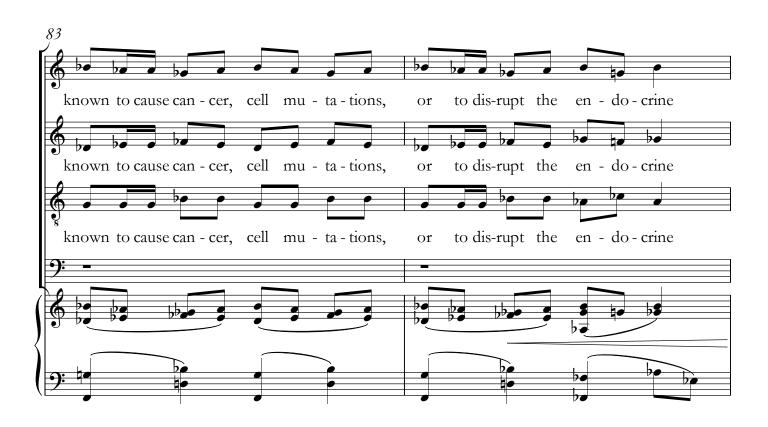












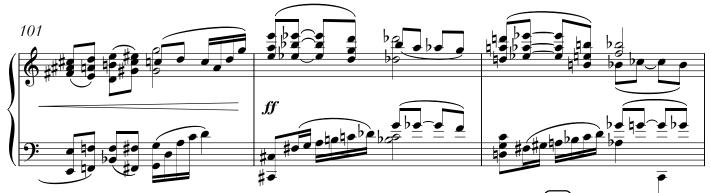




















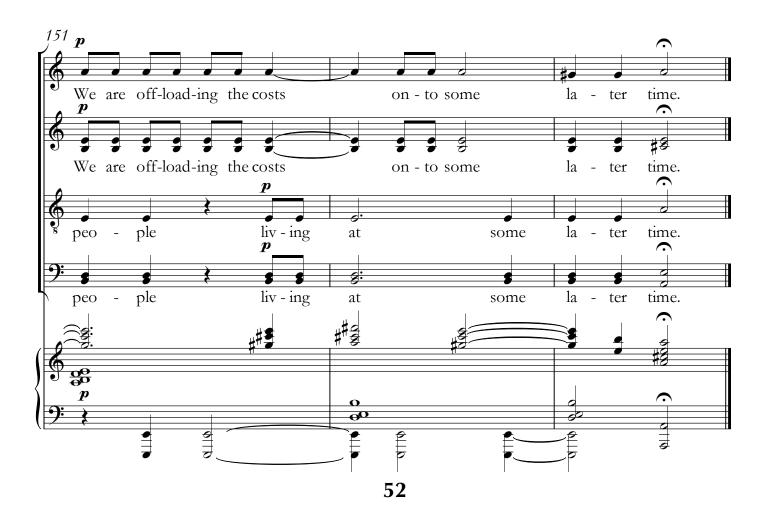








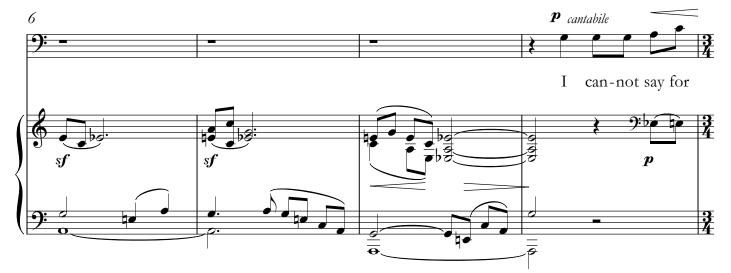


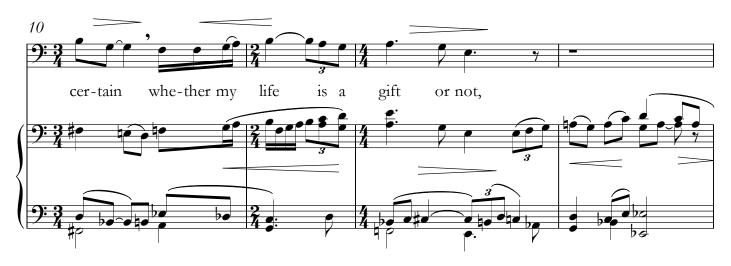


IV - A Gift

Text: David Orr





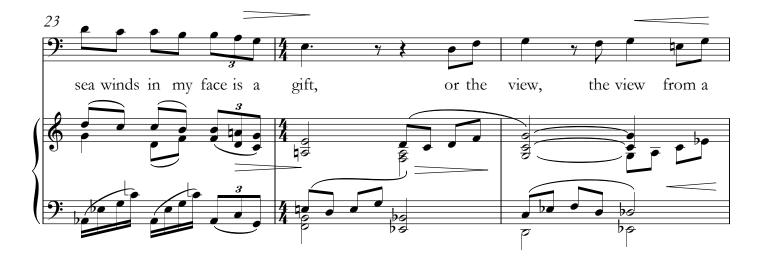


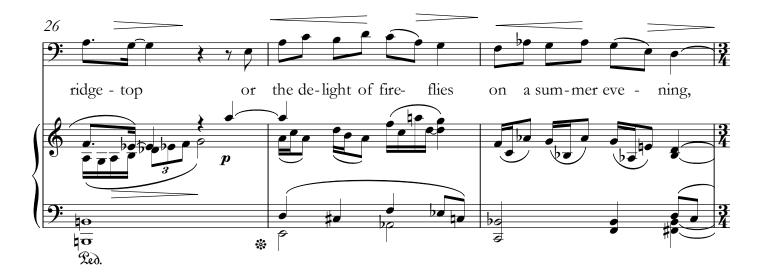
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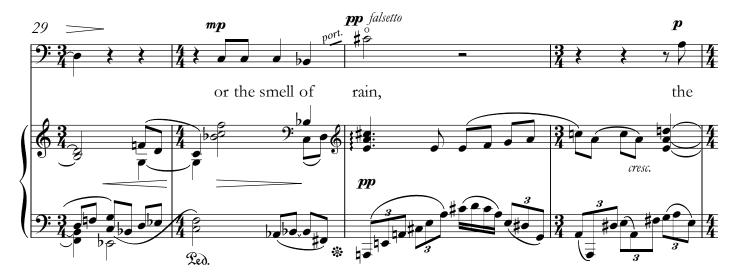


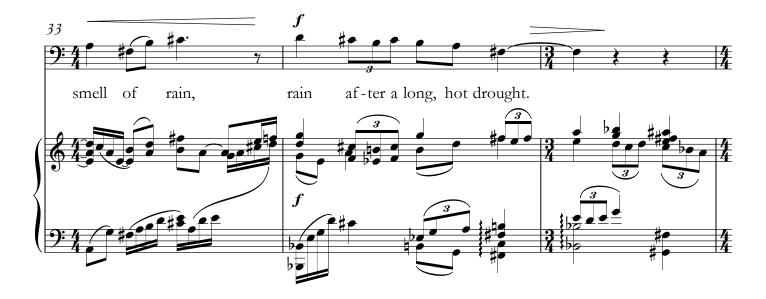


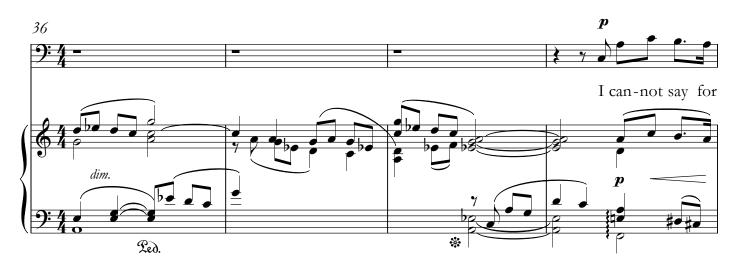


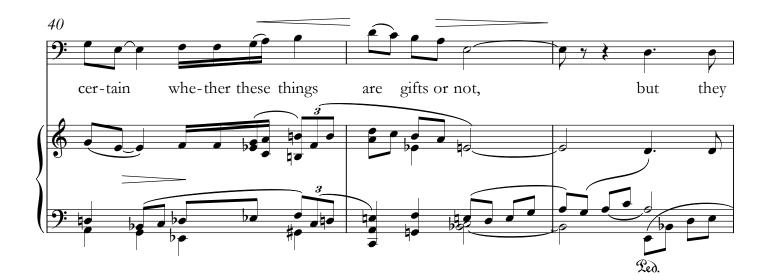










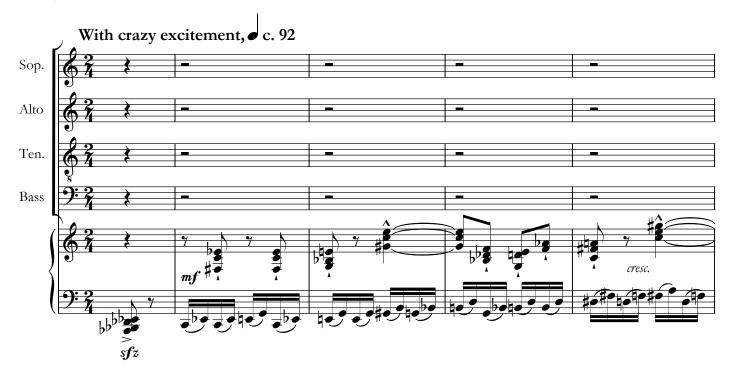






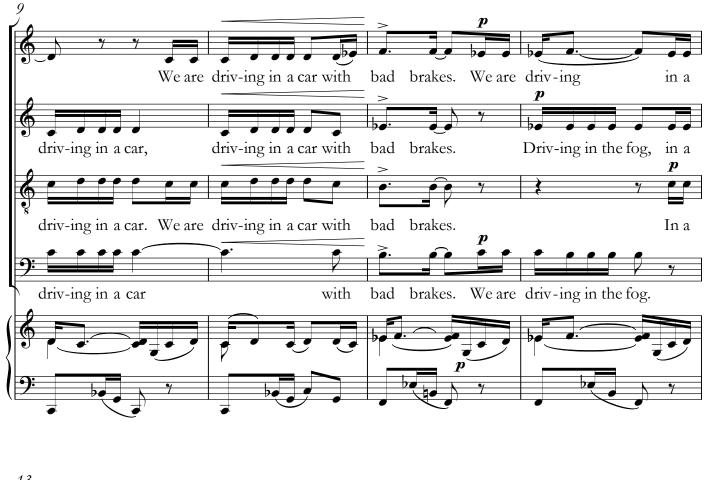
V - We Are Driving in a Car

Text: John Holdren





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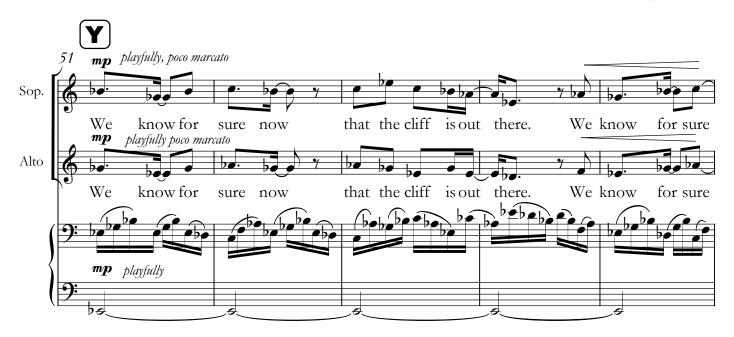


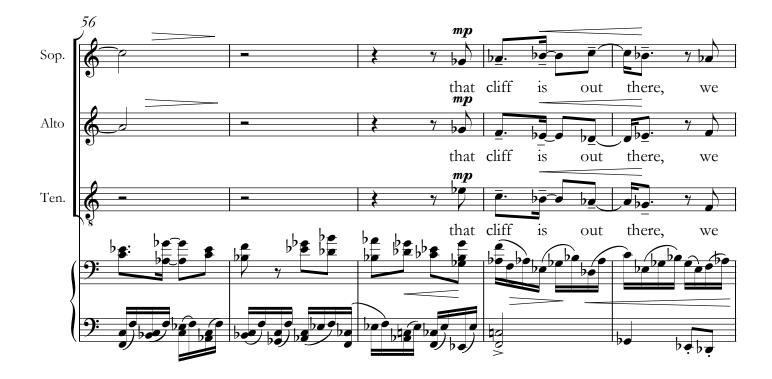


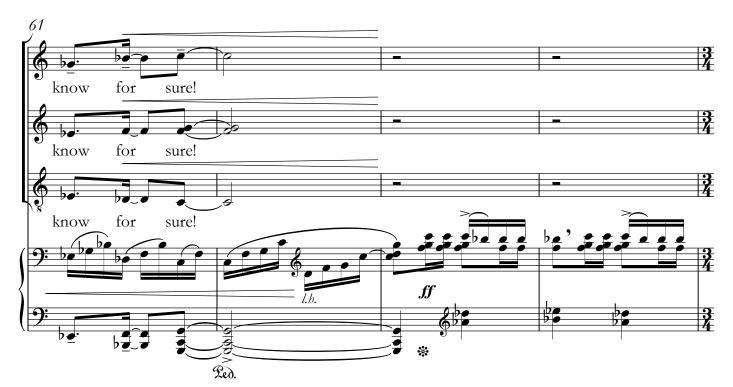










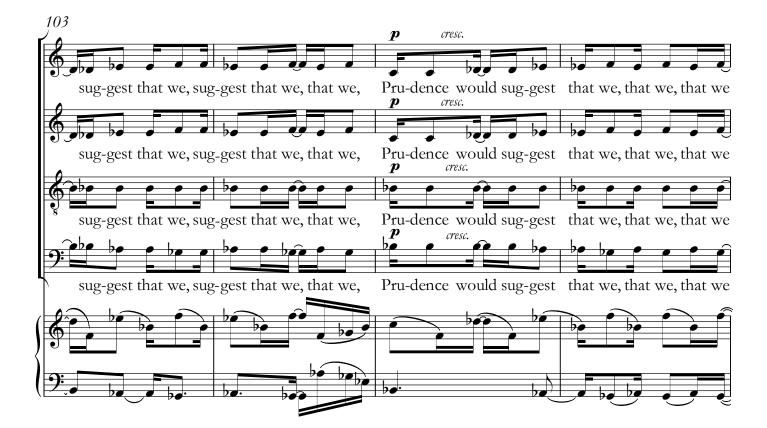


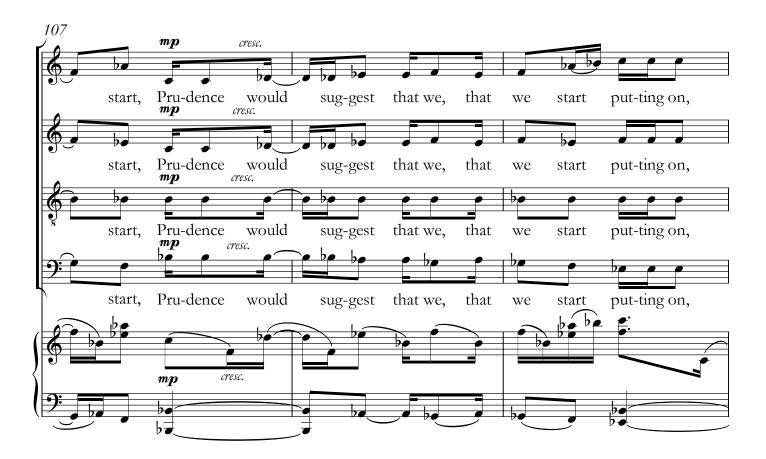




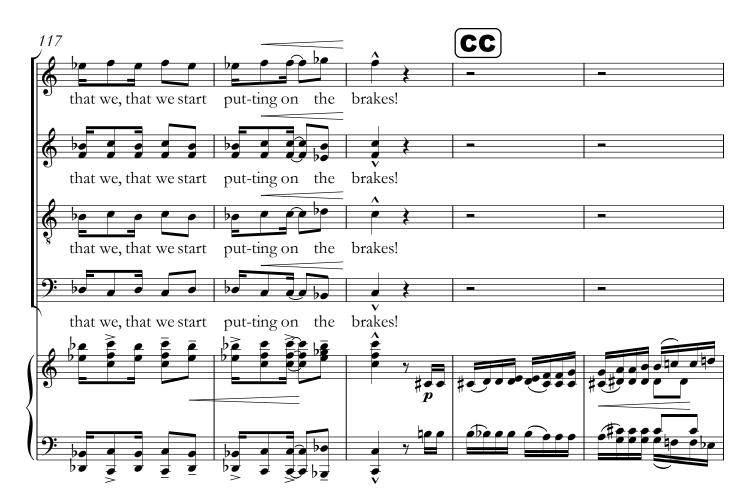
















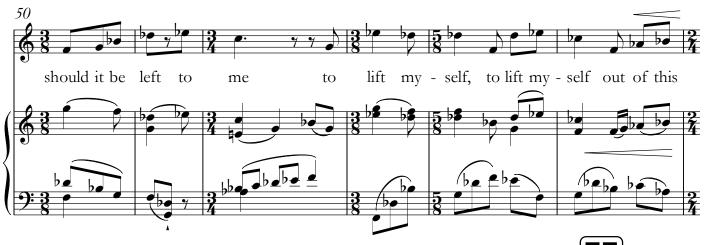


VI - Why Should I Bear the Blame?

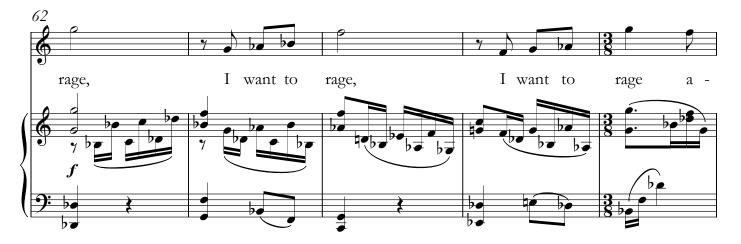


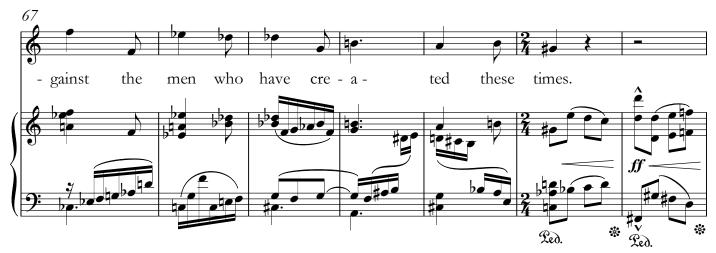














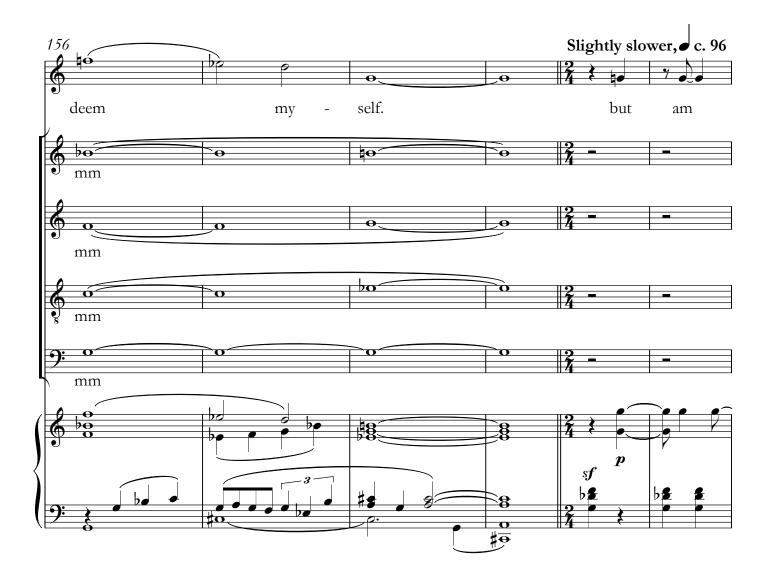
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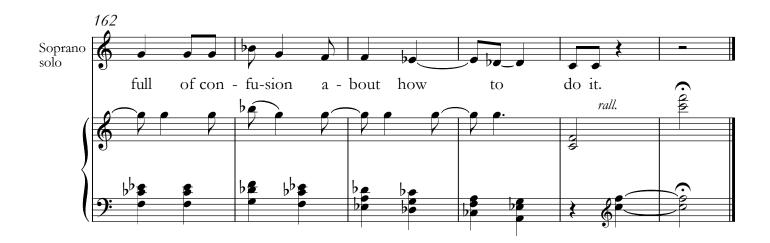
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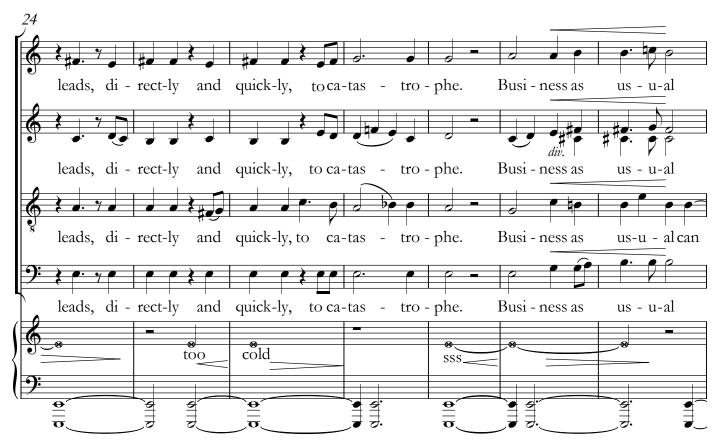
VII - The Ice Caps Are Melting

Text: Bill McKibben

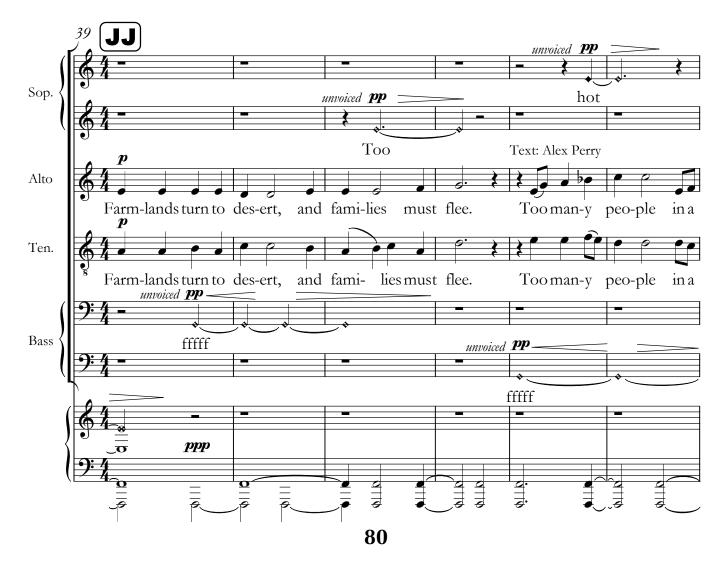


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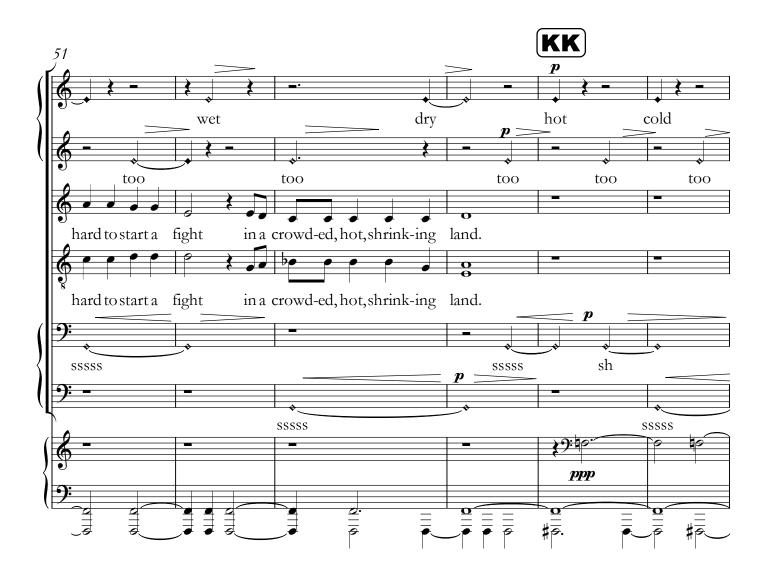














Explanatory note about the alto parts, mm. 63-88:

Each sound event is performed by only one person. There are 79 sound events in the upper alto part. These events should be divided (as equally as possible) among the different singers in the section. Similarly, the 73 sound events in the lower alto part should be divided among the singers in that section. The sound events are numbered in the score.

Try to perform each sound event somewhere within the measure in which it is notated. To the extent that it is possible, try to preserve the order of events presented in the score (i.e., the events within the frame of a single measure should unfold from left to right). The exact placement of each sound event is not important. Avoid having the sound events coincide with the beat and avoid creating any sense of regular pulse in the sound events.

All sounds are unvoiced, though "shadow" vowels are indicated for some sounds. The consonants should be performed forcefully. The sounds are all derived from the word "catastrophe."

- k' a quick burst of sound that is not sustained, the shadow vowel is a schwa
- t' a quick burst of sound that is not sustained; the shadow vowel is a schwa
- k't' two quick bursts of sound that are not sustained; elide the two sounds as closely as possible; the shadow vowels are both schwas
- k'ta two quick bursts of sound that are not sustained; elide the two sounds as closely as possible, the first
- shadow vowel is a schwa, the second is "a", as in "cat"
- sss hiss, performers should vary the length and articulation
- tr' a quick burst of sound that is not sustained; use a flipped 'r', the shadow vowel is a schwa
- fee vowel is "ee" as in "fee", performers should vary the length and articulation
- k'k' a quick burst of sound which is not sustained; elide the two sounds as closely as possible, both shadow vowels are schwas
- ta a quick burst of sound that is not sustained; the shadow vowel is "a", as in "cat"
- In the upper alto part in m. 82, the final sound event is the word 'catastrophe'; it should be spit out as rapidly as possible

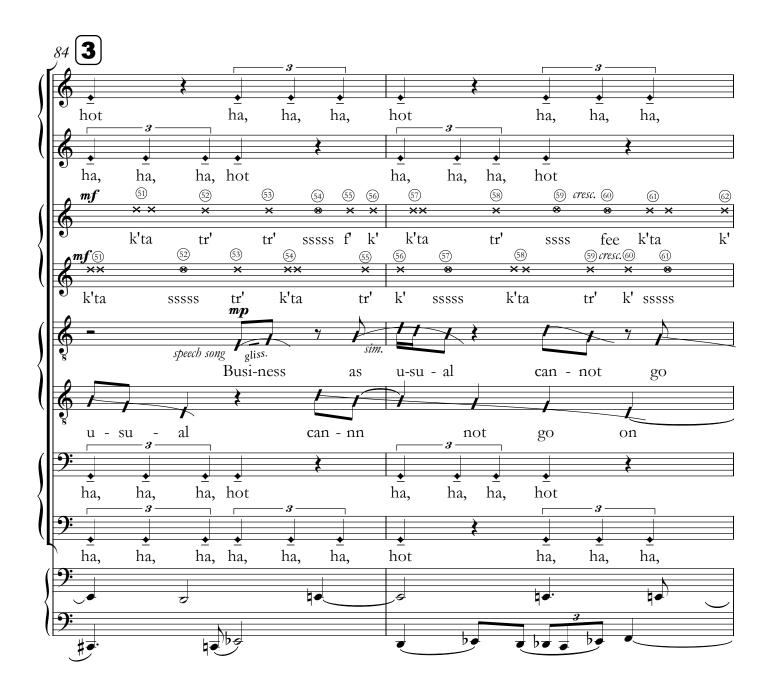














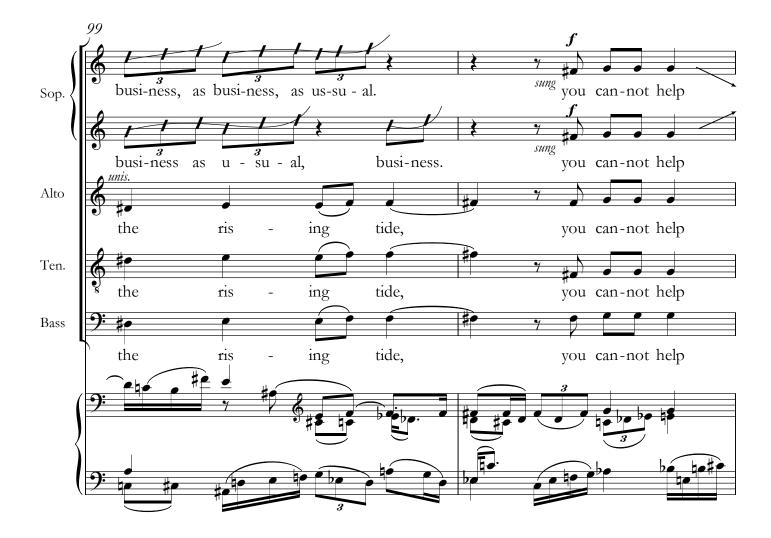






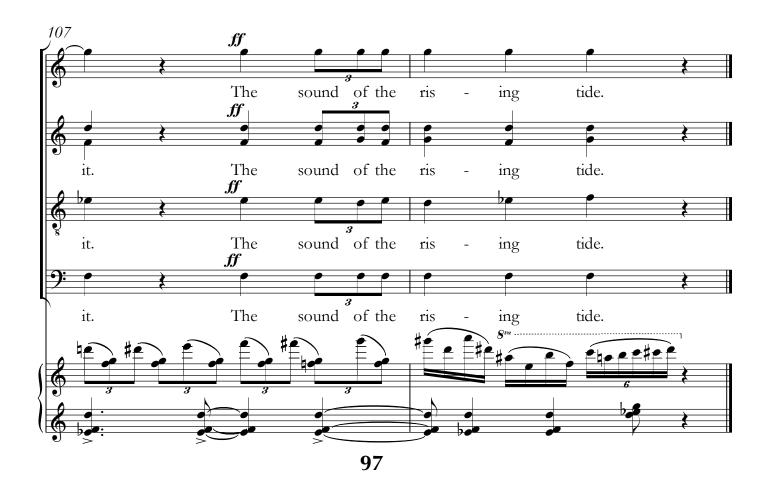










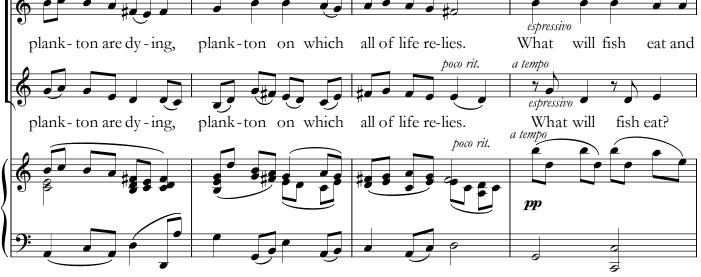


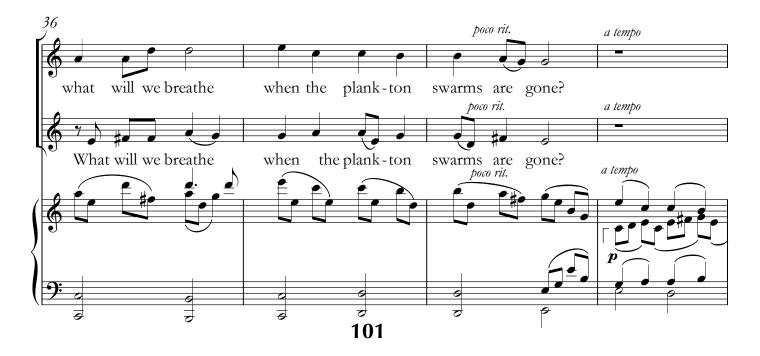












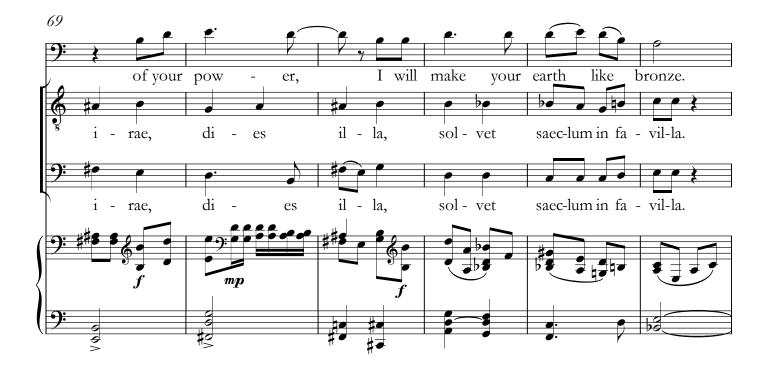






















Text: David Orr

IX - Hope Is A Verb



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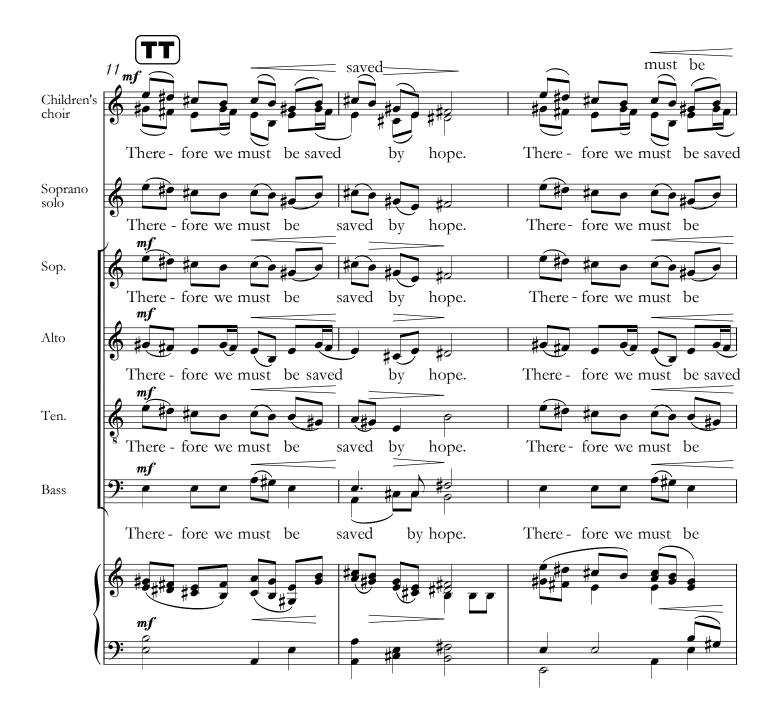
X - Nothing That Is Worth Doing

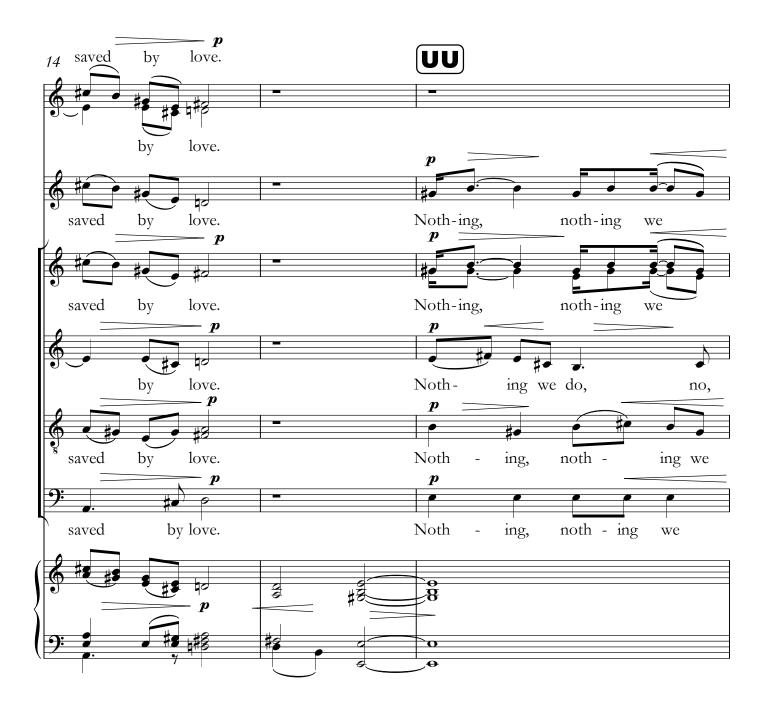
Text: Reinhold Niebuhr



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XI - Holy Earth, Ancient Home

Text: Sarah Metcalf & Geoffrey Hudson



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