

# elegy for the earth



**THE JENESAIS CHOIR** conducted by **MITOS ANDAYA HART**  
music composed by **ADAM SILVERMAN** to lyrics by **SUSAN GUBERNAT**



# Elegy for the Earth (2022)

composed by **ADAM SILVERMAN**

lyrics by **SUSAN GUBERNAT**

1	I.	Migration of Millions	3:57
2	II.	The Koch Foundation	2:55
3	III.	Whale Song	1:35
4	IV.	Bee Death	1:47
5	V.	Fire Water/Fracking	1:32
6	VI.	The New Doldrums	4:05
7	VII.	Anthropocene	2:21
8	VIII.	Of Fossil Fuels	3:21
9	IX.	World On Fire	2:50

Total: 24:26

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## SONG TEXTS

### I. Migration of Millions

I put my child on my back,  
began to walk.

I tied my child to my side  
began to swim.

Gave everything to him,  
this man I'd never met —  
coyote, coyote.  
And haven't reached  
the safe place yet.

*And when there's nowhere to go?  
Nowhere to turn?  
No maps to follow  
as the earth burns.*

The crops are as dead  
as my mother and father.

My neighbor says don't bother,  
they'll kill you soon.  
We run from wars  
bringing men  
to our doors.  
They rape our daughters,  
steal our sons.

*And when there's nowhere to go?  
Nowhere to turn?  
No maps to follow  
as the earth burns.*

What are borders?  
What are sea lanes?

What are countries  
when the whole world is lost?

*And when there's nowhere to go?  
Nowhere to turn?  
No maps to follow  
as the earth burns.*

### II. The Koch Foundation

On Alberta tar sands  
the sound of shots fired  
dances the birds off  
Koch's burning lands

Koch's name at the center  
Lincoln Center  
The center of hell  
His very own circle

Did you say dress circle?  
Right this way.  
Take your seats  
At the David H. Koch  
Auditorium

Right this way,  
Take your seats  
For Koch's oily  
Filthy  
Swan Lake.



### III. Whale Song

70 gray whales wash ashore  
Great bellies empty  
Along the California coast

70 gray whales wash ashore  
Unable to feed  
Along the California coast

Seventy: not a magic number  
When a million  
Species will go missing

Too soon, the death  
Of creatures living now  
The death of

70 gray whales  
That washed ashore  
Along the California coast

### IV. Bee Death

Monsanto, Monsanto  
like the world's  
evil beekeeper  
blowing  
toxic smoke  
into the hives:

bees lose their way  
back to the combs  
back to the queen

and the queen dies alone

### V. Fire Water/Fracking

The kitchen spigot  
pours fire  
into the little girl's hand

*Owww*

How can she understand  
Methane



## VI. The New Doldrums

Once they feared  
the “horse latitudes,”  
the wide Sargasso Sea,  
as the terrible places,  
terrible places:

stallions thrown overboard  
and slaves (O God!)  
African slaves,  
to lighten the load

commerce, commerce  
always the tale of  
money, and those  
who make it,  
and fail the world

Now ships quake  
now fish ache  
where gyres swell

and the garbage heap  
of what we throw  
away collects:

floating islands  
of plastic waste  
immortal  
rising in seas  
swamping beaches  
eternally. But it's

commerce, commerce  
always the tale of  
money, and those  
who make it,  
destroying the world.

## VII. Anthropocene

Time to love the animal — fish  
or bird — one that doesn't love back  
precisely,  
doesn't make eye contact

or nudge our toes, hump our shins  
and beg, beg to be fondled  
slavishly  
in the manner of the tamed.

Time to bestow blessings like  
Saint Francis statues in front gardens  
concretely  
as so many species fade out,

while birds morph back into dinosaurs.  
We the fireball, we the destroyer  
irrevocably.  
Our thumbprints fossilized,

our tools rendered down to fern and vine,  
our numbers, words made magma  
eternally  
buried deep in the earth's core.



## VIII. Of Fossil Fuels

Children, there are monsters buried  
deep in the earth

Leave them there

*Tyrannosaurus Rex*  
*Triceratops*  
*Velociraptor*  
*Stegosaurus*  
*Brontosaurus*  
*Dimetrodon*  
*Diplodocus*  
*Iguanodon*  
*Pteranodon*  
*Protoceratops, Dilophosaurus*  
*Spinosaurus*  
*Brachiosaurus*  
*Ankylosaurus*

Children, monsters turning  
into blackest ooze

Leave it there

Do not drill  
for this fuel

deep in the earth deeper deeper deeper

Leave it there

Or you will lose all the songs of the earth  
songs of the earth

all of the earth

## IX. World On Fire

From space, the earth  
has shed its skirt  
green, blue

From space, the earth  
now swept by fire  
burnt, nude

O marble eye  
O caul of smoke  
O mouth of flame

From earth the stars  
have doused their light  
dust now

From earth the moon  
has taken flight  
somehow

To earth the sun  
has drawn so near  
fields have burned  
lakes have dried  
forests disappear

O marble eye  
O caul of smoke  
O mouth of flame



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