Earth-Preserving Chant
for piano

by Kyle Gann
2010
Earth-Preserving Chant (2010)

The Gulf of Mexico oil spill was at its most destructive, and I had spent the morning reading about it, the day in June 2010 I received an e-mail from Emanuele Arciuli offering me a commission for a piano piece on an American indian theme. The idea of a chant, a prayer, to save the earth (or rather, to keep it habitable for humans, since the earth will someday go blithely on without us) leaped into my head. The song would have to be a model of ecology, of carefully husbanded resources, using as little material as possible. I chose not to use actual American Indian sources (as I often have), since this was for so specific a purpose, but I wrote in the rhythmic style I long ago developed from my love of Hopi and Pueblo music.

Duration: 11 minutes
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for Emanuele Arciuli

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Devout: as quietly as possible throughout, like a prayer, though still with a robust tone

Una corda throughout

Very even and without noticeable accents except where indicated

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