

ELEGY FOR THE WHALE

What I have tried to achieve in this short piece is a sense of the sea, a sense of sadness, of sudden bursts of intense strength and of irretrievable loss.

Were I a master orchestrator such as Maurice Ravel I'm sure I would have created a more evocative series of sounds. However, I have tried my very best, partly because of my deep affection for Harvey Phillips who asked me to write this piece, and partly because of my profound concern for the fate of all living creatures.

I have read a great deal about whales and dolphins and have never found a single reason to have an emotion towards them besides love. The grotesque ego of mankind has brought us all to this dreadful and heartless crisis. Man complacently and ruthlessly believes that Nature is beneath his contempt and that he, only one of thousands of glorious living species, not only dominates all the others but has some derangedly divine right to do so.

He will learn, perhaps too late, that life on this small planet is maintained by an enormously complex and miraculous symbiosis in which every living creature is interlocked and, however distantly, dependent on every other creature.

The whale, a glorious expression of creation, but for only one member of its species, is a good, harmless, magnificent affirmation of the miracle of life.

I profoundly pray that those of us among the greatest predators on Earth who believe in this miracle shall be able to make the destroyers of the whale cease their wholesale butchery before it is too late.

-Alec Wilder