

Earthsongwave Dawn Chorus
Revelation, Manifestation, Invitation



Illustration/collage by Doug Van Houten

Earthsongwave Dawn Chorus

by Wendy Robertson Fyfe

Revelation

I am striding-out completely and utterly in love with this magnificent, enchanted and enchanting world. My heart stretches wide open like never before, like it couldn't possibly stretch any wider without breaking. I'm fully present and belonging in the world. As I stride out in joy, breathing in and out deeply, I imagine everything is alive, aware, and animate as I speak out innocently "Hello" to stones, to spruce trees – seeing their root intermingling with soil path where I am treading, to blue sky with clouds stroking through, sniffing the soft moss. I'm listening to the gurgling flowing river as she moves downstream; imagining elves and fairies – unseen ones – speaking out to them, although I don't hear them. Seeing a rock sitting in the river quite near to the riverside, I leap onto him awhile, sitting knees up and arms around like an elf watching the world; listening in deep appreciation, wonder and praise.

I return as I arrived, striding back with love and life filling every single cell in my body. Surprisingly, I notice a feeling like my chest opening and a tingling, as if walking through some kind of invisible veil, and I wonder, "Oh how curious!" As I wander on, I hear a woman singing to my right in the trees, though I don't see her. I've never heard such an exquisitely pure sound and think how beautiful it is for a woman to come singing here, before realising there's no one else around! I'm curious enough to turn back to explore. Being November (in 1995) with bright autumn sunshine, the forest bed looks gold with a carpet of pine needles who have released themselves from the branches in their longing for earth. I hear the woman's exquisite voice again and look through the trees. Walking attentively, step-by-step amongst them, I see no woman there. I look to where I hear song, but still no woman. Maybe

God picks up the reed-flute world and blows.
Each note is a need coming through one of us,
a passion, a longing pain.

Remember the lips
where the wind-breath originated,
and let your note be clear....

Don't try to end it.

Be your note.

Rumi (13th Century)

there is a trickster with a tape recorder placed down on the ground by the trees? I search. No tape recorder! "Hmmm...curious".

I follow the song more closely and find myself facing a young Spruce. This tree is singing three different notes repeatedly, followed by a silence. My heart is singing, my mind is confused. I wonder if she is inviting me to sing in the silences. Delightedly, I accept her invitation and sing the same three notes in her silent pause. The She Tree responds with the same three notes, then adds another three and pauses again. I feel sparkling glee and dare to sing the same six notes in the silence. The She Tree responds, adding another three notes. This time with delight I recognise a 'riff'. In her inviting silence again, I sing out a nine-note riff. When I finish, the whole forest sings out in harmony, right the way up an embankment and all around. The whole forest sings out in an angelic harmony of these nine notes, and my life changes forever from that moment. The singing doesn't stop and I might have stayed there forever except that a couple of people, surprised by the singing forest, arrive to see what's happening and eventually I leave with them – continuing to hear the singing, though it gets quieter in the distance as we walk further away. From that moment I continue to live and follow the singing notes, the silences between, the song and some bigger truths about this miracle Earth. The

notes, and silences have led me to many places I would never have imagined. They have led me onto the path (or perhaps, songline) I was born to live, rather than the one laid out by a fragmented capitalist, patriarchal, racist, modern, medicated industrial culture that depends on us not following our true song or the birthright of such an enchanted world. If we did, it would crumble.

How did I arrive at such a place? Previously, I had been lecturing with The Open University in Scotland, having completed a post-graduate Master's degree tracking connections between the medical and legal professions

within the wider context of growth of modern industrial society through nineteenth and twentieth centuries. My research in Birmingham, England, had showed how women's bodies, wisdom, language were redefined as there was a shift of power into patriarchal and capitalist definitions and laws that could not have been possible without the previous witch hunts and burning. The research was from a culture-based feminist perspective which, I see now, was also fragmented. My experiences left me wondering this: *If what I thought was true as I grew was not true, then what is true and what is my truth in this life?* At that point, surrendering myself to imagination, I returned to live in Scotland. I began wandering in the mountains and Islands for a year, writing

stories and poetry of experiences and dreams, finding interweaving conversations between them as I began to learn more deeply about the wonder of Earth and my relationship with her directly.

I undertook a Psychosynthesis Psychotherapy training and created *The Walk*, a project on the coastal paths in East Lothian (filmed by BBC Scotland) as ways of exploring how to bring such work to humans. Then Bill Plotkin's book *Soulcraft* 'fell off' a book shelf in 2011 and I read it ravenously. The songs here were so stirring that, like The She Tree song, I had to follow this tune and begin apprenticing with Bill Plotkin and the Animas Valley Institute in Colorado thereby deepening further into soul, soul initiation, and living into my 'mythopoetic identity'.*

On the Animas journey I begin hearing and joining



Photo by Wendy Robertson Fyfe

with many songs of other people, of 'more-than-human' beings and many lands around the Earth: desert song notes of California; flute song of canyons and mountains of Utah and Colorado; bagpipe songs of the Scottish Highlands; song notes from the Isle of Iona; forest song of NSW Australia. I meet other people who are also singing and hearing songs from trees and the land, together with 'not-quite-sure-where-from' songs beyond the usual gorgeous birds, winds, grasses, seas.

I am found by, follow and sing many songs.

Vision

It is October 2017, and I am staying with a friend having returned to Durango, Colorado, one of my favourite places. On my first night I hear the song of a single coyote, a song I have missed so deeply that joy and grief fill my body and tears flow through the night. Before dawn the next morning, the Muse whispers "a wave of human song around the Earth at dawn", starting in the East before sunrise and travelling around the Earth: songs of 'yes', wonder, praise, gratitude to the whole Earth Community; a 'yes' to hearing all voices and for humans to join the dawn chorus to create a human soundwave around Earth.

I wonder what the human song is right now – the song of humanity in the Cosmic Opera? To be with Earth and to 'Wildsing' is to feel for what notes want to emerge in the moment and listen for any invitations or responses.

What if my experience with the forest is part of an awakening – an invitation to an arousal we are participating in; one that anyone can join as a birthright, anywhere? What if we allow such experiences to lead and inform our way? What ways might we choose, what policies might we make, what education might we teach, what kinds of places and where/how might we live?

So it was that this event became conceived and enacted into the world with the invitation to listen for and follow our unique notes to see where they might lead. How might such an Earthsong be cultivated further? Here is one poetic thread of possible cultivation:

Earthsong

Wendy Robertson Fyfe (Whispers)

**I awaken in silence
listening to the single crystal sound
of a blackbird in the dark
before the dawn.
A slow whisper
rising from the branches
of the seemingly endless night,
into joyous perfection
touching my heart strings.**

**I hear the call of a new day being born,
of renewal's morn,
and surrender to it's bidding.**

Manifesting

How can one not surrender to such an elixir? The event itself became clear as the website emerged. The current form includes singing that is open to everyone who wants to participate. It is a 'Feed the Earth', self-organised event, though there are contacts for information, interviews and offerings. It consists of songs and music being offered to the Earth's Dawn in ways not heard before, notes that arise in Wildsong. There are also ancestral songs to truly lean into for offerings of gratitude, praise, longing, love, and celebration;

a 'Yes' for/to the Earth and her Community.

Wildsong is a song that can be offered anywhere: indoors, outdoors (preferably!); a favourite place on your own; with your family, friends, a group, a school; with pets, wild places with wild beings; any land or boat. This song imagines that everything is animate; pays attention and slows us down. Sometimes just a slight tilt of our head or moving too quickly can make a difference to hearing or missing a song. Finally, the song itself is animate:

Word

Wendy Robertson Fyfe (Whispers)

**an intentional thing
enfleshed and breathing
leaving the body
alive and carried into an animate world.**

Both the website and Facebook page were poised to evolve from a whisper to crescendo on the 1st April, 2018 and to grow thereafter.

Earthsongwave Dawn Chorus was launched on website and Facebook in January 2018. I had no idea where the event would go, whether it would sound an accord with fellow humans, or where it would land. I let it go, blowing a kiss into Earth's ozone and planting a seed in her earth. Over the next few months people from around the Earth signed in and logged on to offer their own contributions. People created preparatory meetings in their locality with more personal offerings to share. I was astonished how the event spread with people taking part from New Zealand, Australia, Japan, China, India, Tanzania, South Africa, Israel, Romania, Czech Republic, Greece, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Italy, Germany, France, Switzerland,

Spain, Portugal, Scotland, England, Wales, Northern Ireland, Ireland, Canada, USA, Guatemala, Cost Rica, and Brazil!

I also heard of people who participated throughout the year, responding directly to Earth and not just to the 'Event' itself. Responses and experiences from the wave of song around the Earth were posted on Facebook, and some through the website and my personal email. This is a beginning of an **Earthsongwave** around the world. I am still astonished at how and where the event travelled so quickly and continues to do so.

Some of the songs and stories can be heard and seen on the Facebook group. Here are a few:

"greeting the dawn on April 1st...i imagined i would sing and instead i found myself silently weeping, soft tears washing my sleepy face in the brief space between dreaming and awake...the wind had more to say and i knew i had to listen...could not yet join in on that fathomless conversation. she blew hard, a cold exhale, an invisible strength moving forsythia to wave her golden wands, great oak's dark leafless limbs - animate and dancing, old cedar caught in a grand repetition of deep bows...all bending to her wild way. A singular black of crow arcs against this immense grey sky and i take my cue. what flew from my astonished mouth was neither song nor bird yet began as something so faint at first it was hardly a sound -- breathy, compassion-laden -- a sound so old (yet remembered) rising in me to meet the faintish wisp of rosy dawn undercloud...birdsong, windsong, bough orchestra, quickened heart, underlit pink...the slipstream to the other world is always just outside my door, each morning as she turns, wakes and begins anew."

(Dr Hilary Leighton, Victoria, BC, Canada)

"Going out to join with Moon full and high..first bird trusts their song to the night, as must we...Finding a place to be as sky blushes and many tunes are flung from

the bare branches of our woods...a harmony is on our breathe, moving through us.. It sighs from our lips, a gift for the day being born around and within us...And as clouds flare red above Mountain, I pray to the 'wholiness' I am sensing as my animal inside calls in delight at this creation.. .our cries and songs are weaving us into a tapestry of sound and silence, back to the beginnings and onwards to thresholds we can't know...Three times we cry, ecstatic as Sun mounts the horizon and three times an Other calls back from our valley, spring green and nesting a universe of dewdrops kissed and blessed by light." (Bell Selkie, Gelli Aur, Cymru)

In Australia, Carin Elsin offered her song name via video, and many others shared their experiences. Others offered poetry and songs who arrived as they opened their mouths and breathed notes into the dawn morning. A number of people travelled to places important to them, where relationships have already been aroused.

Earthsongs Research

Alongside **Earthsongwave Dawn Chorus** I began researching **Earthsongs** with a call-out for human experiences and gratitude for responses. This research is in early stages and I continue to invite and receive stories. I am looking at the specific places, the 'lead-in' to songs (i.e. what is happening in the human's life at the time); whether song is consciously invited or surprises; the experience itself (in the present tense, so evoking something in the writer again as they write); and the impact/effect over time.

So far, I've heard of 'ordinary' daily songs such as wind, river, mountain and tree as expressions of Earth. I've heard a whole variety of human love songs (usually romance between two human individuals rather than with 'The Beloved'). I've heard songs of lament and laughter, and 'Other' songs similar to my experience with The She Tree. Some songs are heard

'outside', and some inwardly whilst on the land. Others come in dreams and some are 'Calling songs' that lead us into deeper Mysteries and adventures. Some carry a 'more-than-human' consciousness or intelligence with an awareness of humans from that position. Some are from Ancestral nature-based communities who continued and continue to listen deeply for Earthsongs, for example, Aboriginal 'Songlines', where songs are brought in with conception to be sung to a particular walk of land and for that specific land to be re-woven into being.

From some of the resources collected it seems that the Cosmos itself is singing. Most of the songs I have heard tend to be feminine, but there are masculine song stories and myths, such as The Great Silkie of Sule Skerry (a Celtic tale) where the singing of the song ensures the continuity of this mythic seal being.

One thing is for sure: people remember their experiences of Earthsongs that have seemed to guide them and informed a deeper awareness of their birthright place in Earth. Conversely, in our denying culture it can be so easy to forget; to be numbed out by t.v, alcohol, prescription drugs, work, shopping. Sometimes, the deeper we are in relationship with ourselves the more Earthsongs can make a difference. Sometimes we need to allow ourselves to be led or wander instinctually towards creating relationships with specific beings and places.

Might we cultivate our relationship with our own song and the songs of the Earth, and if so, how? I wonder if we can do so by inviting enchantment and imagination into our daily lives, assuming that everything is animate whilst approaching the world with innocence and curiosity. We can invite the possibility that we are being aroused by Earth and Earth is aroused by us, to cultivate our relationship with the wildness of our dreams. In so doing, we

might surrender to Earth's wisdom rather than the current dominant domestic, rational, 'safe', controlled, analysed and interpreted world – to let what wants to come through us and shape us, arise.

Reflections and Questions at this late early point

In this article I am suggesting that Earth and Earth Community has awareness and intelligence, and is in reciprocal, intimate relationship. This is not a new insight: poets like Rilke, mystics like John Muir and others have always known this. Earth-based human cultures have always known and yet continue to be subjected to horrendous suffering because of it. Their grief songs are never fully heard, honoured or reciprocated by the dominant culture. The same is true with the extinction of so many songsters in the Earth Community and Earth herself as we know her.

Following the song of The She Tree, I also find myself coming full circle with my original thread of research into the formation of medical and legal professions in the 1980's; tracking the destruction of 'The Feminine' – now as 'The Sacred Feminine'. I live more from my mythopoetic identity. I know the Imaginal realm is true and precise. I know that when we humans join the Earthsong, it makes a difference to humans and the more-than-human community in the most delightful ways. Given these songs are happening in places around the world at various times I have a sense of an Opera or Symphony – a kind of Cosmic holographic reciprocity with growing conscious participation.

This article began with a singing tree, and a song that set me on a different path. That particular revelation came from my engagement with an animate world from a place of curiosity, innocence, dreaming, imagination, poetry, and wandering on the land. It came from beauty-making and soul weaving – first a move more deeply into the therapy world as a way of bringing humans into

healing and meaning; then falling into the Animas world of nature-based human development, and self-healing within a much bigger conversation that enables even deeper dialogue (inner and outer) diving into soul, living more fully from soul where even a song itself is alive and living into the world – being heard even in this ravenous flatland culture.

I then moved to the Coyote night and dawn conceiving **Earthsongwave Dawn Chorus**, where revelation and The Muse forged the event itself. Another tune running through this article is an invitation from/to The Sacred Feminine who has been deeply repressed, and for the conscious development of wider nature-based human cultures in service to and for Earth/Earth Community – ones that revere each person's journey to revelation in a culture fed by them. Can you imagine such a world?

How can we take the work of cultivating and arousing Earthsong forward? Here are some suggestions:

1. Did Earth and 'more-than-humans' teach our Ancestors singing so long ago that we've mainly forgotten what we learned from the mountains, trees, canyons and rivers. What if our Stone Age Ancestors heard Earthsongs and followed them by creating Standing Stones in a way we have forgotten today? How might we live and project our songs far into the future for those to come? Indeed, what if everything depends on it?
2. Is Earth always singing, we've forgotten how to listen, and some of us are just beginning to hear her again now? Laurens van der Post notes the Bushmen in the Kalahari Desert hearing stars sing and notes his loss of hearing them (Wagoner).
3. Is there a mutual arousal happening as we are hearing, a resonance between humans and Earth?

4. Is Earth singing more loudly so we can hear her above our current noise?
5. Is singing a response from Earth to invite us to take notice, participate differently? If so, how magnificent, responding to such human destruction with song and invitation, reminding us who we are!
6. What if working on the level of imagination and re-enchantment of humans with Earth makes a difference, for example, healing right now in terms of climate change, mass extinctions, wars, relationship breakdown, illness, depression and so forth?
7. What if all creatures and Earth Community have a song/sound expression or expressions? And what about humans and 'humanity'? What if on 1 April yearly we explored this question of humanity's song consciously?
8. What if Earth is dying from a lack of singing our song, or finding ourselves surprised by what our true song sounds like? Bill Plotkin (**Soulcraft**) speaks of soul in terms of our unique eco-niche, perhaps our note in the Cosmic Symphony. The nature-based journey to soul and soul initiation is a way of living into our unique note into healthy adulthood; what if the Earth is dying from a lack of soul initiated adults?

The invitation in **Earthsongwave Dawn Chorus** works in a number of ways, including just to sing; to feel fully and breathe deep from and into the animate Cosmic note that each of us is born to sing. Maybe singing wildly is one of the most radical acts we can offer at this time of the great turning in human consciousness. William Stafford's poem **The Way it Is** begins "There is a thread you follow" and ends "Don't let go of the thread". I warmly and passionately invite you to follow the thread of song of your soul and not to let go! More than ever the Earth needs *your* note in the Earth's dreaming. Your singing may make all the difference.

Shall we find out? Dawn on 1st April? Create a human Earthsongwave around

the Earth? Sing a 'Yes'?

Who knows, maybe we, as humanity, will feel a veil and wander through once more; our hearts breaking wide open with a passion and a longing pain; letting our notes be clear; remembering where they came from and not trying to end them.

Sing on ~

Postscript

Earthsongwave continues to grow in 2019 with this year's event which occurred on 1 April. Visits to the website spread from Singapore, Philippines, Thailand, China, India, Indonesia, Tanzania, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Poland, Greece, Malta, Jersey, Mexico, and Argentina.

The Facebook page also continues with growing interest. In the end, folk also find their own way and offerings for the morning and perhaps, every morning. There were two popular guest blogposts on the website: 'Mother Tongue, Wailing with the Whales' by Amanda Fiorino and 'Call and Response in the Symphony-of-Life' by John Lynch. There will be further guest blogs. Here are just a few experiences of this year's event:

"I sang at dawn this morning on the east side of the island, just below the abbey and as the sun rose, a flock of gulls joined in, followed by a double formation of some small black birds morphing across the sky, geese chanting in the field, and wind and sea whipping with conviction. I listened into the solidarity of us all, and everyone around the world taking part." Kristopher, Isle of Iona, Scotland.

"We gathered for our Earthsongwave Dawn Chorus 2019 to listen and wildsing to and with the other-than-human community on Mt Ainslie, Canberra. In the still, crisp, sweet sharpness of the early morning air we walked the labyrinth that

lives here, made of sticks and stones, then sat under a nearby tree. It takes time to shift from 'ordinary' reality and surrender into deep whole hearted sensory listening and allowing our wildsongs to emerge. There is such a deepening appreciation of diversity, connection and relationship with the whole of our inner and outer natural world awaiting us if we do. Thank you to the two soul sisters who felt and honoured this earth honouring call with me and to all those around the world in different time zones for the wildsongs that are yet to come”.

Morgan, Australia.

Whilst co-guiding **Embracing Wholeness** organised by 'Actions for Change' in The Carpathian Mountains, Romania this April, I offer a Wild Singing Earthsong Dawn circle in the mornings. We meet together, listening first to Earth Community expressions, here where the sky's longing for Earth is met as mist kisses the forest and falling water from the Bride's Veil waterfall flows past, whilst sunbeams arrive with their fleeting notes. Then, we feel into our Earth body roots and sound the notes needing to rise through each of us. At times one of us enters the circle's centre to voice the uniqueness wanting to emerge – perhaps a song to The Beloved. As Jenni York from Western Australia notes: *“Wild singing is a love song to the world. Humans join their voices with the songs of the waters, the birds, the winds, the rocks, the trees - in gratitude and praise for the gift of life on Earth. It is a profound experience of participation in the cosmic chorus - a song which, quoting N.J.Berrill, is ‘the joy from one's soul to Anima Mundi, the soul of the world. It enlivens all who practise it.”*

Sing on some more~

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Doug Van Houten: ***Earthsongwave Dawn Chorus Collage***, illustration used with kind permission

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Website: www.earthsongwave.com and [Earthsongwave Facebook](#).

The photographs in this piece are by Wendy Roberstson Fyfe. Singing rock face is at North Heads, Sydney. The dawn photograph is the first Earthsongwave Dawn Chorus in 2018 at Whitesands, Nr Dunbar, East Lothian.

**'Mythopoetic identity' is a term coined by Bill Plotkin and Geneen Marie Haugen over 10 years ago as a way of understanding the human soul. By 'soul,' they mean a person's (or anything's) unique ecological niche. But there is no way with ordinary language to precisely describe a niche because each niche corresponds to the full set of relationships a thing has to everything else. The way our human consciousness embraces an understanding of soul is in terms of metaphor, which is to say, mythopoetically. So, 'mythopoetic identity' refers to the way we come to understand our unique ecological niche and express it to others — namely, by way of image, symbol, metaphor, dream, poetry, myth, or archetype. Mythopoetic identity can never be described in terms of a job or social role.*



Photo by Wendy Robertson Fyfe