

The View From Heaven

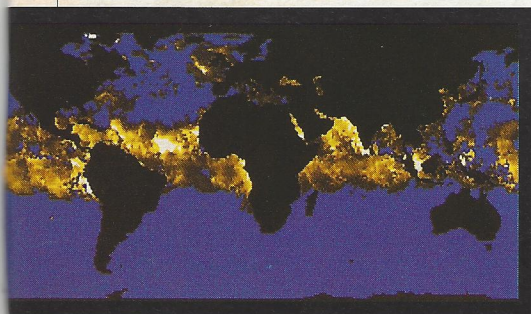
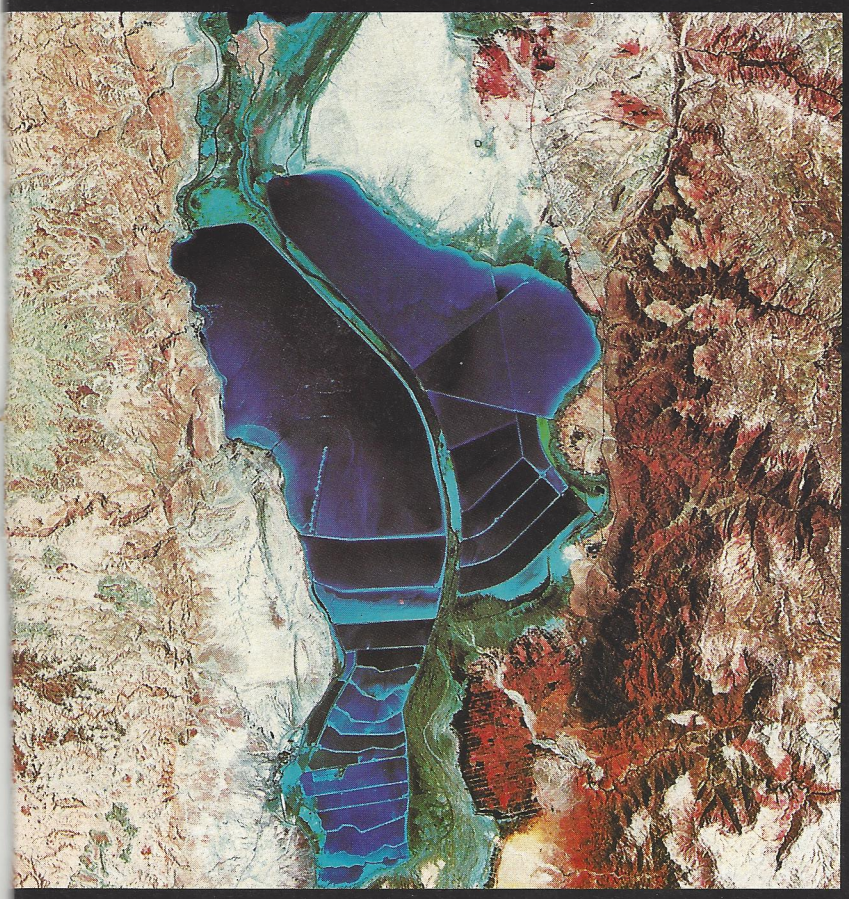
It's been suggested that God hears the Earth's cacophony as music—exquisite and profound as a work by Mozart. In an extraordinary new book of satellite photographs, "Embracing Earth: New Views of Our Changing Planet" (176 pages. Chronicle Books. \$39.95), editors Payson R. Stevens and Kevin W. Kelley show that what God sees when he peers at the

planet are the forms of abstract expressionism. Many of the photographs have been enhanced by detectors sensitive to wavelengths representing particular temperatures and vegetation to give them unnatural, but spectacular, color. The book celebrates Earth but warns us that beneath the beauty of the pictures are the danger signs of a planet in ecological distress.



Evaporation flats used in salt and mineral production give the Dead Sea (left) its strange geometry.

Looking down on Mount Ararat (below), an extinct volcano in Turkey, the sensors distinguish between the ice cap (blue) and the cloud cover (white). The red slashes are brush-fire scars.



Over an area of 4.4 million square miles, sensors depict the Gulf Stream on its swirling path across the Atlantic (opposite page).

A superimposed image (above) shows the ozone-depleting swath of smoke from the 1991 volcanic eruption in the Philippines.

In 1985 Hurricane Elena (right), hundreds of miles across, ripped across the Gulf of Mexico.

