**FANTASIE FOR HORNS II (1979)**

for French Horn and 4 (or 2)-channel audio

By Hildegard Westerkamp

*Fantasie for Horns II* was composed in two stages: the soundreack was completed first, in 1978, and was conceived as a composition in its own right (*Fantasie for Horns I,* which received honourable mention at the 1979 International Competition of Electroacoustic Music in Bourges, France). After the completion of the soundtrack, it seemed natural to add a live horn part. Besides being environmental in its choice of sounds, the soundtrack could now become the acoustic environment for the horn—an instrument which, in turn, has had a long history as a sound signal in many parts of the world.

The sound sources for the soundtrack are Canadian trainhorns, foghorns from both the Pacific and Atlantic coasts of Canada, factory and boathorns from Vancouver and surroundings—horns that Canadians heard in daily life at the time this composition was created. Since the 1980s however, with the gradual automation of lighthouses, many of the foghorns heard in this piece have disappeared from the coastal Canadian soundscapes. Additional sound sources are an alphorn and a creek. Most of the material was taken from the *World Soundscape Project's* environmental recordings collection at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, B.C., some of it was recorded by the composer.

Listening to the various horns in the collection was fascinating because of the way their sounds were shaped and modulated by the surrounding landscape. Some horns would echo only once, others many times, their sounds slowly fading into the distance. One foghorn had an echo that was an octave lower than the actual sound, another was an octave higher. A trainhorn's echo was half a tone lower as the train approached, but the same pitch as it passed. Each horn acquires its unique sound from the landscape it inhabits. This strong interaction between these sounds and their environment gave the inspiration to work with this material. Horn sounds are interesting for another reason—they rise above any ambience, even that of large cities. They are soundmarks that give a place its character and give us, often subliminally, a "sense of place."

The soundtrack of the piece was composed at the Sonic Research Studio at Simon Fraser University.