

Chapter 4 - Westerkamp's Soundings: Biography as Breathing Room

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In 1991, Hildegard Westerkamp wrote and performed a work called Breathing Room 3 A Self Portrait, which I will use as a basis, along with other writings by her, to move through the significant events in her life to that point. Then I will continue to the present, referring also to interviews I have done with her since 1991.

I'm four years old and I am playing with my favourite cousin. We collaborate in being rascals. We race through little forests and large gardens, through offices and along corridors. We make noise and sell flowers and rags to the workers for a penny. We sing

Lumpen, Eisen, Knochen und Papier, Ausgeschlag ne Zähne sammeln wir...

Rags and bones, scrap metal, paper sheets, and we also gather pulled out teeth...
(HW: Breathing Room 3)

Hildegard Westerkamp was born April 8, 1946, in Osnabrück, Germany. In 1950, at the age of four, she was the youngest daughter in a family with much older siblings. Her mother's family owned a photographic paper factory. It was only later in her childhood that she became aware of the class differences that separated her from the workers who she greeted every morning. Her unawareness of class differences at this point in her childhood extended to music as well: she enjoyed singing the song of the ragman on the street. She remembers always being drawn to natural areas such as the "little forests" that she mentions here. Later, she would describe these as acoustically hi-fi places (Westerkamp 1988), where silence allows each thought to finish, and sounds have clarity. Her mother has always maintained a large garden, and gardening remains a source of inspiration and peace for Westerkamp to the present.

I am seven years old. I imagine myself to be Mozart's wife. Surely I would treat him so much better.... And I would make sure that everyone knew what a genius he was. Because I know it's the truth. I can hear it on that record that my parents gave me: Amadeus, Loved by God. (HW: Breathing Room 3)

Already, she was learning that classical music is what she should listen to, as appropriate to her class. But unlike the ragman's song, which she used to sing and move to, this was a record to listen to, quietly and without movement. Her Master's thesis underlines the importance of balancing sound input (listening) with sound output (music-making), and stillness with movement. She notes how her upbringing affected that balance:

In the course of my upbringing I had learned to remove myself from the musical/social situation by doing what everybody else did: by internalizing all musical impression, by judging and criticizing the execution of a piece, and by being physically inactive. In fact, the emphasis was on spiritual, emotional experience and the body was ignored and put into its seat in the concert hall. This experience I recognize now as a total split between body and mind, physical and psychic reality. It took me a long time to appreciate the lively, more informal nature of musical events of indigenous cultures, and to understand that the music is so alive because listeners participate actively by responding musically and physically and by being very expressive. Even the North American folk music context was unusual for me where people, although sitting in their seats, moved to the music and sang along. (Westerkamp 1988: 129) The balance between listening and music-making was already being lost when she was seven: she did not imagine herself as a creator of music a composer, like Mozart, but as his wife, appreciating another's music rather than making it. Christine Battersby, in her study of gender and genius, discusses the role of the composer's wife:

Over Christmas 1986 the BBC broadcast a radio series called Wives of the Composers. The assumption underlying these supposedly humorous [sic] talks was that the great composers had lives that mattered, and wives (and mistresses) who also mattered but only to the extent that they helped the great geniuses of music father their timeless progeny....The eccentricities of the male geniuses were excused; but not those of their partners. The latter were treated favorably only in so far as they fitted comfortably into a narrow range of sexual roles. (1989: 12) On the next page, Battersby notes her great interest in music, but how, because all of the books about composers were about men, "Being a composer ... was not a career that ever occurred to me" (1989: 13). Likewise for Westerkamp, at least at the age of seven.

At around this same time, or perhaps a few years later, Westerkamp had her first encounter with tape recording, as she mentioned to me during my first interview with her for my Master's thesis work:

Well, the very first time [that I did any recording] was really when my brother bought a reel-to-reel mono tape recorder in the fifties. And I didn't really do much with it, but I was absolutely fascinated by the fact that we could turn on the microphone, and hear us back. I would put the microphone on secretly, when we were playing games, with the family. (Westerkamp interview with McCartney, April 1993)

It was devastating for Westerkamp when another brother went down with his ship several years later.

I am eleven years old and I get a high fever one day. That's the day my brother dies in the Atlantic. He was twenty two and I never said good-bye to him. I never walked with him through that hurricane and never found his grave and I don't know whether he was a genius. (HW: Breathing Room 3)

Although Westerkamp later dedicated a piece to her brother, she has never written a work specifically about his death. Still, after all these years, it is such a disturbing memory that she does not want to approach it directly in her work.

I am fifteen years old and I'm trying to find out who the hell I am. I am trying to separate myself from my parents and anyway how could they not have noticed what was happening to the Jews before and during the war? (HW: Breathing Room 3)

As part of the generation of Germans who were born just after the Second World War, Westerkamp lived with the grief and shame that younger Germans have inherited from events that happened before their birth, during the Nazi time. Another German born in 1946, who emigrated to North America, author Ursula Hegi, has written about the experiences of people such as herself and Westerkamp, who left Germany for a different place. Like Westerkamp, Hegi had questions:

v When did you find out about the Holocaust? Did your family speak about it? Your community? Did you dare to ask questions as a child? As an adult? How afraid were you of the answers? ... Do you encounter prejudice against Germans in America?1 ... Why did you leave Germany? Do you feel connected to America? How do you regard your German background now? Do you think there is a collective burden of shame? Is that different for those of us who were born after the war? What can we, as German-born Americans, do now? (1997: 22-23) Many of the people that she interviews in her book *Tearing the Silence* comment on the silence about the war, in families and in schools, in the culture at large, in the years directly after the war. They speak about how hard it was to ask out loud the questions that Westerkamp asks, how oblique the answers were.

From 1966 to 1968, after high school graduation, Westerkamp attended the Conservatory of Music in Freiburg, where she studied flute and piano.

I'm nineteen years old and I meet a man ... Three years later I emigrate, following the man... (HW: Breathing Room 3)

In 1965, on a family trip to Canada, Westerkamp met Norbert Ruebsaat. In 1968, she moved to Vancouver, where he lived and worked. From 1968 to 1972, she studied music at the University of British Columbia, receiving her Bachelor of Music degree in 1972. Here, she began to hear electroacoustic music, and in her final year took a studio course in electroacoustic techniques:

They were putting on electronic tape concerts in a dark auditorium, and that was really unusual for me, I had just not heard anything like it. I kept going to those and I was really very fascinated by it, but really didn't know what to do with it. After my fourth year, the department offered a six week studio course and Barry Truax, who was a graduate student at the time, ran it, and I took it. I really wanted to take it because I thought that if I understand how the equipment works, maybe I will understand better what I've heard in those Monday concerts. Somehow I got closer to this strange soundmaking that was happening. It was all really haphazard, perhaps unconscious, almost dreamlike. I kept thinking, this is interesting. (Westerkamp interview with McCartney, April 1993)

Westerkamp quickly made use of her new knowledge in an ambitious venture, in 1972:

Then before I knew it, I was producing, under the [federal government] grants at the time, the soundtrack for a full-length, multi-media performance, with my six weeks experience in the studio. I used other composers' music and just changed it around completely unconscious of copyright. I started out with some Vivaldi which was very appropriate for the play, and I processed it, and used the *Auschwitz Concerto* by Penderecki. I used them as sound materials, and we produced this multi-media play a kind of post-nuclear scenario written by my friend Brian Shein. Norbert Ruebsaat produced it, with several friends involved. I fell into this thing, and it was completely fascinating. (Westerkamp interview with McCartney, April 1993)

Westerkamp does not include this early multimedia experiment in her list of compositional works, because of her extensive use of other composers' music.

v I am twenty five years old and I meet a man who is a little bit like Mozart and a little bit like Richard Wagner. My ears open in a way they've not been opened since I was four years old. I am devoted to my work with him. A year later he fires me. His wife... Oh, never mind. (HW: Breathing Room 3)

During her time at UBC, Westerkamp went to a lecture presented by composer R. Murray Schafer, where she was immediately impressed by his approach to listening and music. She became a researcher for the World Soundscape Project (WSP), which brought her into association with other composers such as Barry Truax, Howard Broomfield and Peter Huse.

Westerkamp alludes briefly to a difficulty within their relationship. As a research associate,

she worked closely with Schafer, developing a friendship as well as a research relationship that became a source of unease in Schafer's personal life. Schafer's response was to fire Westerkamp, and to help her to find other work as researcher/coordinator of the Noise Abatement Project at SPEC (Society Promoting Environmental Conservation). Schafer's decision protected his marriage at the expense of Westerkamp's position as research associate with the World Soundscape Project, a job that was meaningful and important to her. While it did not significantly impact the progression of her career, and she and Schafer continue to be colleagues at more of a distance it does indicate that her gender made the mentoring relationship more complicated, and less satisfying, than it could have been otherwise.

Working with the World Soundscape Project gave Westerkamp experience in several areas that became important to her later compositional work. To be around Schafer's ears and his encouragement of her own ways of hearing and listening, gave her some confidence in her own aural perception. The research done by the World Soundscape Project included extensive field recording with excellent audio equipment: this gave Westerkamp the opportunity to develop field recording techniques, as well as the chance to interview people in the field regarding soundscape issues. In addition, the WSP had access to a well- equipped sound studio:

I learned by osmosis to work with equipment. I never took another course after that six weeks' course [with Truax at UBC]. With the World Soundscape project I simply watched my colleagues, and spent a lot of time in the studio. At that time, the studio belonged to the World Soundscape project, and nobody else worked in it. We could work in there twenty four hours a day. So I would just be in that studio for hours, sometimes doing nothing but listening, or editing a bit, and gradually, by 1975, I became interested in processing sounds a bit more. I had heard what others had done, I had seen how they edited. (Westerkamp interview with McCartney, April 1993) Her time with the World Soundscape Project gave Westerkamp what other electroacoustic composers (McCartney 1994) have told me is ideal: unlimited studio time in an environment without a rigid rule structure, working with other composers but also with time alone to discover personal compositional preferences.

Whisper Study

In conversation with me in 1993, Westerkamp described her work on *Whisper Study*, her first composition:

As I was working more and more in the studio, I was in conversation with Barry Truax. I would watch him, and eventually I learned some of the classic tape techniques: tape delays, feedback, equalizing, and filtering. I began to do my first piece, which was *Whisper Study*. It was such an important and honest experience for me to do this piece. I had the sense that I was thoroughly getting into something that was me. I wasn't cutting any corners. I had chosen to use very quiet material, whispering material, which forced me to be very careful in the studio with how I was technically reproducing the sounds without too much noise. I wanted it to be a quiet piece, and that approach forced me to be very, very careful. I couldn't fool myself. I wanted to work with silence, I was thinking a lot about silence, and I wanted the technology to be not audible. I really wasn't that conscious of what I thought about technology. I was just amazed at what it did. I came up with a piece that satisfied me completely. I just thought that is the best process I've ever experienced. And I've done it completely on my own. I had never composed a piece, but it felt like this is it. I finished it, and then I played it to people, and people were responding very positively. Already with the soundscape context I felt that I had found something very important, because I was fascinated by the environmental sounds, and the meanings connected with them. But now there was another level of excitement, producing and doing something. Putting out. (Westerkamp interview with McCartney, May 1993) *Whisper Study* (1975) is a studio tape composition for very quiet sounds. Almost all of the sounds in the piece are derived from Westerkamp's voice whispering the sentence "When there is no sound, hearing is most alert" and the word "silence." At the end of the composition, is a poem, "When There Is No Sound," written by Norbert Ruebsaat in direct response to Westerkamp's composition of the original version of the piece.

It is interesting that *Whisper Study* is based so much on the sound of Westerkamp's (physical) voice. The sonic environment that she begins with as a composer is the environment of her voice, of the sounds that she produces from her own body. In her Master's thesis, she indicated that the privacy she found in the studio allowed her (creative) voice to emerge:

The studio environment has provided me with a "niche" where I could find my own creative voice without interference from the surrounding social, cultural context ... Since it has always been hard for me not to give external voices more power than my own inner voice, this was an important stage for me. (Westerkamp 1988: 133 4).

When she spoke to me in 1993, Westerkamp pointed out that she did not want the techniques that she used in the studio to interfere with the clarity of this voice:

I've always felt that if I can obscure the technique with which I speak, and make what I speak audible, that's really what I'm after. (Westerkamp interview with McCartney, April 1993)

It may also be significant that this is a study of whispers. When I corresponded with the

composers in my Master's thesis research, many of them were fascinated with the similar themes that emerged in each interview. Ann Southam commented on this, then added that it seemed as though everyone were whispering. At the beginning of a chapter on the creative process in Westerkamp's Master's thesis, she comments that as people are socialized, they often lose opportunities for self-expression.

I am not the only one who has lost her confidence in and connection to her ear and voice in the process of growing up in Western society. This loss may take different forms and may happen to a greater or lesser degree depending on each individual's socio-cultural background, and it can be observed all too often in children as they grow up into teenagers and young adults. It is perhaps more of an issue for women, most of whom have been taught from early on to adapt themselves to a given situation, to listen, to accept, and who have not been encouraged to speak up, to feel confident with their voice, especially if it differs from that of the status quo. (Westerkamp 1988: 94)

A whisper can be thought of as the quietest audible stirrings of the voice, a leap of faith from silence to sounding for one who was taught to listen but not to speak up.

Soundwalking

Westerkamp notes that her association with Vancouver Cooperative Radio (CFRO; Co-op Radio) was important to the development of her compositional style. As I discussed earlier at the beginning of Chapter Three, Westerkamp considers radio production and composition to be related in the need for care in form and content, and in the aim of creating an audio piece that will engage listeners. Her initial contact with Co-op Radio was from 1974-76, through the sound and technical production of *Meet the Law*, a legal soap opera serial written and produced by Norbert Ruebsaat. In 1976, she also was co-producer of *Heard from a Distance*, a weekly two-hour cultural program. From 1978-1982, she was co-host of *Performance*, a weekly two-hour program of local concerts. The Co-op Radio program that had the most direct influence on her creative work is *Soundwalking*, a weekly one-hour program about the acoustic environment.

The radio show was based on ideas about soundwalking that Westerkamp had developed while working with the World Soundscape Project. Westerkamp's "Soundwalking" article in *Sound Heritage* (1974), part of a special issue by members of the World Soundscape Project, was written at a crucial juncture in Westerkamp's life, between the time that she worked as a researcher for the World Soundscape Project, and her production of the *Soundwalking* show at Co-op Radio, during a period in which she was beginning to compose electroacoustic music (she describes *Whisper Study* as her first piece, and it is dated 1975). This was an important time for her as a composer, broadcaster, and sound ecologist.

In this article, she describes soundwalking and suggests how to approach it. She discusses the history of soundwalking, and its purposes, from orientation, to dialogue, and composition. She also includes an example of a soundwalk: one in Queen Elizabeth Park in Vancouver. She includes a map of the park, and makes comments about sounds heard in different areas. This is an article that I have referred to repeatedly since that time, as I developed my own approach to soundwalking, and to soundscape composition. When I asked Westerkamp to do a soundwalk with me in 1997, the location that I chose was Queen Elizabeth Park, as in the article.

A soundwalk is any excursion whose main purpose is listening to the environment. (Westerkamp 1974: 18).

The intention of soundwalking is listening. Soundwalks can take place in the mall, at the doctor's office, down a neighbourhood street or at the bus stop. The focus on listening can make this a meditative activity, sometimes shared in silence with others.

A soundwalk can be ... done alone or with a friend (in the latter case the listening experience is more intense and can be a lot of fun when one person wears a blindfold and is led by the other one through several different and interesting acoustic environments). It can also be done in small groups ... The first soundwalk can be done anywhere, at any time, and as often as desired. For the sake of intensity it may be wise to limit the walk initially to a small area ... In each case it depends on how long it takes to remove the initial hearing barriers, how deep the involvement is and how much fascination can be found in such an exploration. (Westerkamp 1974: 18-19)

When Westerkamp wrote the "Soundwalking" article in 1974, however, she had not yet thought about recording and broadcasting soundwalks. That stage came later, when she began to think about bringing the soundscape to the radio listener.

The *Soundwalking* show at Co-op Radio gave Westerkamp a forum to further explore some of her ideas about sound ecology.

My own involvement with Co-op Radio gave me the opportunity to consider radio as an artistically expressive medium and to address issues of environment and acoustic ecology. I was attempting to make radio a place of environmental listening by broadcasting the soundscapes that listeners experienced in their daily lives ... My own first attempt to create radio that listens was called *Soundwalking* ... Produced in 1978 and 1979, *Soundwalking* took Co-op Radio listeners into the soundscape of Vancouver and surroundings ... I went to a shopping mall, park, zoo, factory, residential area located

under a flightpath and the streets of Vancouver. (Westerkamp 1994: 88-89) Westerkamp notes that the radio show gave her experience in field recording in a wide variety of different sound environments, as well as experience in communicating with the radio listener from the recording location.

I really learned field recording through Co-op radio, where I did a program called Soundwalking. I took a portable tape recorder all over Vancouver and surroundings, and recorded the environment and commented on tape on the sounds that I heard, or on the other aspects of the environment that a radio listener can't know about. (Westerkamp interview with McCartney, April 1994).

These soundwalks are somewhat different from the type that she documents in the "Soundwalking" article, because of their aim of reaching the radio listener. When Westerkamp leads a group soundwalk, she asks the members of the group to remain silent in order to listen more attentively. In the Soundwalking shows, there are long periods of time where Westerkamp remains silent. But she also includes commentary on different aspects of the environment, in order to maintain contact with the radio audience.

Sort of like a sports announcer, I was the link between the audience and the radio station. But it was much more slow-motion than being a sports announcer, it was more contemplative, meditative, depending on which environment I was in. (Westerkamp interview with McCartney, April 1993)

Westerkamp remembers that she gained technical competence through producing many shows, not only about working with the equipment, but also about interacting with environmental sounds, and talking with people, developing a dialogue.

So I learned a lot by just doing this recording. What would my microphone pick up if I do this, and how do you play with environment and voice at the same time, live, while you're out there? How do you deal with people who approach you? So I developed a fairly passive style of recording. Very different from the radio journalist. I would just stand someplace and record. Then people who were familiar with that environment would approach me, I would not approach them. And as a result I got some very interesting conversation, some very interesting talk. (Westerkamp interview with McCartney, April 1993)

At least part of the reason that Westerkamp develops a non-intrusive style of recording is that she is very aware of her position as a relative newcomer to Canada, not quite part of the culture. Renato Rosaldo (1988: 85) describes immigrants to North America as bobbing and weaving between assimilation to the new culture, and allegiance to their original one, creating for themselves a border zone which resembles both yet is part of neither. The immigrant's identity necessarily includes a sense of displacement, one in which there is rarely any permanent return to the place of birth, and therefore there is a need to become part of the chosen culture. At the same time, the immigrant's formation in the home culture necessitates comparisons between the cultures in order to understand how to fit. So the immigrant swings between the two poles of home and chosen culture, bringing together aspects of both in their experience.

As she learns about the Canadian soundscape with an immigrant's displaced ears, Westerkamp is at once inside this new soundscape and outside it, able to hear with a fresh perspective. But perhaps more importantly, her identity as an immigrant leads Westerkamp to the use of the microphone as a tool of access, and the development of a dialogic approach to field recording and production that would become a significant part of her compositional style, bridging cultures in sound.

As a fairly recent immigrant, Westerkamp uses the microphone, with the justification of a radio show, to go into situations that she may not otherwise have entered, allowing her to learn about the new culture by listening.

I found the tape recorder at that time a way of accessing this landscape, and the culture. I was still an immigrant, I had just been here maybe five or six years, and even though I felt pretty much at home, still a lot of aspects were strange, and somehow I think the tape recorder gave me the courage to go into environments that I otherwise wouldn't have gone into. The microphone led me in, and it had a justification. I had this radio station to broadcast it over, and it really was a tool of access, in a way. Because I'm not necessarily a person who ventures easily into new environments. Even though I immigrated, I like to go places with other people, who know the place. But the tape recorder allowed me to do it alone. So I would go into the deepest forests, in fact, with this tape recorder, and not worry about anything. (Westerkamp interview with McCartney, April 1993)

The Soundwalking show is at once a tool of access for her to learn about the Canadian soundscape and engage in dialogue about it with people, as well as a venue to express what she hears, and again to engage in dialogue by playing it back to a wider radio audience.

Becoming a Mother

I am thirty one years old and I and [Norbert Ruebsaat] give birth to our daughter. He becomes a father. I become a mother. He becomes a writer and I become a composer. Never mind the Mozarts and the Wagners and their wives. (HW: Breathing Room 3)

Westerkamp's relationship with her daughter, Sonja, has had a significant effect on her music and thinking. Through living with Sonja since her birth in 1977, Westerkamp has come to reflect on the remarkably varied soundmaking efforts of young children, and how these often become restricted in adults. She believes that adults can learn much from children's immediacy and focus.

A child playing i.e. while carving a small part of special time out of ordinary time always strives to completion of the process. Talk, song, and movement are an integral part of this process, whether a child plays alone or with other children. The child lives inside the play/ritual, is always a participant. There is no separation between listening and soundmaking. Listening, dancing, singing, speaking are simple tools for whatever feelings need to be expressed. (Westerkamp 1988: 80)

In a 1993 interview, Jos Smolders asks whether parenting and other activities affected Westerkamp's way of working as a composer: "Gayle Young mentioned that as a woman, she has learned to work with her music in between ten other activities (like doing the dishes, feeding the children). What is your experience?"

After my daughter was born, I became very aware of my time limitations. I realised that I had very little time to devote to myself or my work and learnt to take advantage of the little bit that I had. That's when I realised I was a composer and became more serious about my compositional work. But, as opposed to some of my women composer colleagues, I was never good at composing between ten other activities. I had to make sure to have longer stretches of time in which I could close my studio door and just work. This was possible because my husband and I tried as much as possible to share the responsibilities of child-care evenly. (Westerkamp as quoted in Smolders 1993, unpaginated).

While Westerkamp was aware of her time limitations, at a time when she was establishing herself as a composer, her shared parenting responsibilities with her husband allowed her stretches of undisturbed work time in the studio. Sonja's presence was also an inspiration to Westerkamp's musical work.

Her voice has accompanied my life for many years now and has brought me in touch with an openness of perception, uninhibited expressiveness and physical presence that I had long forgotten (HW: Moments of Laughter, 1988: score notes).

Sonja herself started using a tape recorder at an early age. Westerkamp recorded sounds made by Sonja from the time that she was born. From the age of four on, Sonja made her own recordings of stories and songs. These recordings became sources for the tape part of Moments of Laughter, 1988, which explores the dialogue between an adult woman (female vocalist) and a child from birth to the acquisition of language. This piece will be the focus of analysis in a later chapter. I will leave further musings about parenthood and composing until that point.

Becoming a Composer

In 1979, Westerkamp received her first international award, Honourable mention in the International Competition for Electroacoustic Music in Bourges, for *Fantasie for Horns I*. This piece was composed in 1978, using sound sources of various horns found in the environment: Canadian trainhorns, foghorns from both Atlantic and Pacific Canadian coasts, factory and boathorns from Vancouver and surroundings, as well as an alphorn (just a smidgen of Europe in the Canadian soundscape) and the sounds of a creek. Most of these recordings were taken from the World Soundscape Project archive, and some were recorded by Westerkamp.

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. (HW: Inside the Soundscape I, liner notes)

Westerkamp was fascinated by how the musical properties of these sounds the harmonic relationships between the horn and its echo reflect the placement of the horn within the landscape, and the motion of the sound through it. She was also interested in the social importance of horns.

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." (HW: Inside the Soundscape I, liner notes). Also in 1979, Westerkamp created *Fantasie for Horns II*, which includes a live French Horn part and was premiered by James MacDonald. These two pieces were recorded and produced as the first of a cassette series by Westerkamp and Ruebsaat, entitled *Inside the Soundscape*.

In 1980, Westerkamp was commissioned by the Western Front Gallery to create *Cordillera*, a composed acoustic environment (gallery installation) for four-channel tape on the poetry of Norbert Ruebsaat. This formed part of the Music from the New Wilderness Festival, in February of that year. It was Westerkamp's first piece about wilderness.

Cordillera is about landscape, about wilderness, about the human presence and voice in places that are still considered by many to be barren and silent. It attempts to bring back to the city listener the sense of space, time and acoustic identity we experience when we manage to tear ourselves from the noise that clutters most of our daily lives. (HW: Inside the Soundscape 3, Cordillera liner notes)

The recordings in the piece are sounds from the Western Canadian mountain wilderness which first inspired the poems, placing this human language about landscape in sonic interaction with that acoustic environment.

The following year, 1981, Westerkamp released several compositions that were extensions of the compositional process she had developed for the Soundwalking show at Co-op Radio. Under the Flightpath is a sound document recorded by Westerkamp about life near the airport, including commentary from people who live under the flightpath. Commissioned by the Hornby collection, CBC Radio, it was first broadcast in January 1981. Westerkamp classifies compositions as sound documents when they seem as much a documentary about a certain issue as music: Under the Flightpath explores the issue of airport noise through the voices of local inhabitants. It uses musical techniques such as counterpoint of certain phrases, and rhythmic repetition, and also focuses on spoken commentary from people living under the flightpath.

A Walk Through the City was also commissioned by CBC, this time for the new music show "Two New Hours." This is a composition for two-channel tape, with a poem read by Norbert Ruebsaat. It is an urban environment, as the title suggests a very specific location Vancouver's Skid Row area, which is just a few city blocks. In the liner notes, Westerkamp writes about the flow in this piece between reality and imagination.

Traffic, carhorns, brakes, sirens, construction noise, pinball machines, the throb of trains, human voices, a poem, are its "musical instruments." These sounds are used partly as they occur in reality and partly as sound objects altered in the studio. Thus a continuous flux is created between real and imaginary soundscapes, between recognizable and transformed places, between reality and composition. The piece makes audible a phenomenon we all experience, but of which we are rarely conscious: the fact that the modern city soundscape is formed from our constant perceptual shifting of focus between the acoustically real and the acoustically imaginary. (HW: Inside the Soundscape 2, liner notes).

This rhythmic shifting between reality (recorded sounds)² and imagination (processed sounds) is another feature of Westerkamp's developing compositional style. While many electroacoustic composers (especially soundscape composers) include some interaction between recorded and processed sounds, I know of none who feature this interaction as prominently and consistently as Westerkamp. When pieces involve this shift between imagination and reality, Westerkamp classifies them as compositions rather than as sound documents.

Two other compositions in 1981 were premiered in November at the Women in Focus Gallery in Vancouver: Streetmusic, for any portable instrument and two-channel tape; and Windmusic, for any wind instrument and two-channel tape. The following year, Streetmusic was also produced as a sound document about Vancouver's street musicians, commissioned by Co-op Radio.

Streetmusic occurs on three levels. There is the music itself, which the musicians produce and passers-by listen to; there is the interaction and the chit-chat, the verbal exchange between the performers and the street audience; and there is the street itself, with its noises and intrusions, its randomness and ambience creating a context for, and, occasionally, a musical counterpoint to, the acoustic event being played out. Streetmusic explores the flow and exchange between these three levels of sound.... (HW: Inside the Soundscape 2, liner notes)

In Westerkamp's Soundwalking shows from 1978 and 1979, the human voice that is heard most often is that of Westerkamp herself, providing commentary on aspects of the environment that listeners would not be aware of. In sound documents like Under the Flightpath and Streetmusic, Westerkamp's voice is heard less frequently, in conversation with people living and working in the environment that she is recording, whose voices are heard more often, and more audibly, than hers. Unlike in a standard radio documentary, where a voice-over monologue leads the listener through an experience or event, here the inhabitants of the place lead the listener in a number of different directions.

Cool Drool was composed in 1983. This piece, for spoken voice and two-channel tape, was the first piece that Westerkamp performed live, herself. The premier was at Vancouver East Cultural Centre in February 1984. I was fortunate enough to hear another performance of this same piece, in April 1998, at the same location.

I am a composer. I recycle sound. I recycle sound that is ignored. Sound that passes unheard. That is not listened to... I pick up the pieces that have not been heard... I am an ecologist of sound... I take the sounds in because they enter relentlessly. I grab them, work with them, let them out again so that you can hear them.... (HW: Cool Drool score).

Wearing a blank white mask, Westerkamp listens to Muzak, the sound that as consumers we are not supposed to listen to. The performance is part song, part dance, partly a

presentation of research that Westerkamp has done about Muzak and how people react to it, and the strains of Muzak from different urban environments weave throughout the entire piece. It is a subversive performance: where Muzak divorces music from its social context, Cool Drool uses Muzak to connect music back to a social reality. Later in the 1980s, further analysis of the social phenomenon of Muzak formed an important focus of Westerkamp's Master's thesis research.

In 1984 and 1985, Westerkamp composed her first film soundtracks and music: This Borrowed Land (National Film Board, director Bonnie Kreps) and One Woman Waiting (director Josephine Massarella) in 1984; Still Sane (Women in Focus) and Ranch (Steven Denure and Chris Lowry, directors) in 1985.

Into the Wilderness

In December-January of 1984-85, 15 artists from 4 cultures camped together in the so-called Zone of Silence in north central Mexico to explore the desert environment through their respective disciplines and make art. (HW: liner notes, Into the Soundscape #3, 1986) Westerkamp and Norbert Ruebsaat, accompanied by their daughter Sonja, were part of the group. The Zone of Silence is an interesting environment, not only because it is a desert with unusual landscape formations, plant and animal life, but also because the earth's magnetic field seems to act strangely in this area: Westerkamp reports that in some parts of the Zone, tape recorders simply don't work (liner notes, Into the Soundscape #3, 1986). While the area had at that point been studied by scientists and shamans, urban-based artists had never worked there.

We camped in the Zone, in an Apache ruin, and did art events, performance, photography, recording, sound-making, story-telling, sculpture, poetry. Zone of Silence Story is an account of some of these adventures. It's made from environmental sounds, poems, stories, music, conversation, plant sounds, rock noise and cricket song. (HW: liner notes, Into the Soundscape #3, 1986) One of the pieces in the Zone of Silence Story, "Sonic Meditations and Star Language," uses the sound of a cricket which sang one night directly into Westerkamp's microphone. This same recording was to become the basis of another piece, Cricket Voice, which will be the focus of analysis later in the dissertation. Like Cordillera, the Zone of Silence Story is an exploration of the sounds of wilderness from the perspective of urban dwellers. Westerkamp and Ruebsaat placed these both on the same tape in the Inside the Soundscape series. Zone of Silence Story was originally produced as an acoustic environment for a gallery installation at the Museum of Quebec in Quebec City, December 1985 to January 1986.

Both Cordillera and Zone of Silence Story are concerned with the fragility of wilderness. The fragility (quietness) of many of its sounds, and the fragility (sparseness) of its possible language. It contains large patches of silence that must also be heard. The two pieces try to bring some of that silence, and some of the particular kind of listening it requires, back to the urban dweller. (HW: liner notes, Into the Soundscape #3)

The aim to make others aware of the fragility of wilderness is an ecological aim, a thread that emerges repeatedly in Westerkamp's work and is also evident in her ongoing work in the acoustic ecology movement. Her use of the phrase "patches of silence" expands my perception of silence as something related to time (as in John Cage's 4'33") to something also related to space: places that are more or less silent, patches or oases that could be mapped.

Also in 1985, Westerkamp produced Voices for the Wilderness, a sound document of the first Stein Festival. It documented the dynamic of four hundred people who hiked to the timberline of the Stein watershed, near Vancouver, to draw attention to the logging threat on this region.

The Stein Valley is the last unlogged, unmined, undammed wilderness watershed within a day's reach of Vancouver, B. C. It flows into the Fraser River at Lytton, B. C. after traversing a range of ecosystems from high alpine to coastal forest to interior dry belt. It is the spiritual and ancestral home of the Lytton and Mount Curry Indians, who have an unfulfilled aboriginal land claim on the valley, and it contains countless rock paintings, petroglyphs, burial and food-gathering sites. It is the home of numerous wildlife species, from grizzly bear to salmon.

...Who should be allowed first access to and use of B. C.'s last remaining pockets of undisturbed wilderness land resource extraction companies, or future generations of children, both Native and White, for whom the experience of wilderness is a priceless heritage? (HW: liner notes, Into the Soundscape #4)

As well as the sound document, Westerkamp was also involved in the production of a slide-tape show about the Stein Valley. Both of these productions are examples of her work as an environmental activist as well as a composer. Proceeds from the sale of the Inside the Soundscape cassette were donated to the Stein Action Committee, and the liner notes suggest that listeners contact parliamentary representatives and the media to express their views.

Women Voicing/His Master's Voice

In 1985, Westerkamp also expressed a commitment to feminism through her work as a composer. Women Voicing is a sound document about Canadian women's music,

produced by Westerkamp for Musicworks 31. It includes excerpts from the work of Alassie Alasuak, Wende Bartley, Susan Frykberg, Nellie Nungak, Ann Southam, Kim Erickson, Gayle Young, Westerkamp herself, and Pauline Oliveros as the sole contributor who is not Canadian. Excerpts are cross-faded and layered to produce a threaded narrative that brings together several disparate styles of music in conversation with each other, and with environmental sounds. At the same time, there is an emphasis on electroacoustic music, through the work of Southam, Frykberg, Bartley, Westerkamp, and Oliveros. This tape, along with the magazine issue, is an important document of a range of music, and writings about music, by women in Canada at that point. The issue editor, Tina Pearson, notes that it was a challenging project:

This issue of Musicworks is devoted to women, mostly Canadian women. We had quite a strong din of protestation and nervousness to listen to about making a women's issue, but still, undulating beneath it all is the calm deep rhythm of determination in Women's Voices. It has been challenging, but more so it has been hopeful and inspiring to listen, listen deeper, and help the rhythm unfold. It is my hope that this listening will continue, that the vibration of its intent be felt, and that this issue of Musicworks will help toward balancing the sounds we all hear and make. (Editor's note, Musicworks 31: 2)

One of the excerpts on the cassette is from Westerkamp's His Master's Voice.

His Master's Voice is an angry satirical protest against the male macho voice that one hears so relentlessly here in the media. (Westerkamp, as quoted in Smolders, 1993).

This tape piece brings together many well-known voices of authority, including classical radio station announcers, Hitler (the first political leader to use radio and television to ideological effect) and Rev. Jones (of the Jonestown Massacre) with the sounds of loud recorded music played by passing motorists, using music to occupy a territory. Like Cool Dool, this is a dark satirical piece about the broadcast human environment. His Master's Voice, with its emphasis on male voices and masculinity, becomes a critique which is specifically feminist.

Harbour Symphony

In 1986, Westerkamp was commissioned by the Canada Pavilion at Expo '86 to compose a harbour symphony for the ceremony to open the pavilion. Harbour symphonies had been inaugurated at the Newfoundland Sound Symposium in 1983, but had not been attempted on anything near this scale. In 1988, Westerkamp would also compose a piece for the St. John's harbour at the Sound Symposium, for six bothorns. Her composition for Vancouver harbour was for over a hundred bothorns, from small pleasure craft to large cruisers.

Here in Vancouver the Harbour Symphony will be a first. I do not know of any other harbour in the world of Vancouver's size that has undertaken such a large-scale project. To hear so many of Vancouver's horns and whistles combined in one large environmental composition is a rare opportunity. I see it as a celebration of our spectacular harbour and of the landscape within which Vancouver is situated. As you know, horns and whistles make the shape of an environment audible and, vice-versa the environment shapes and modulates the sound of the horns. Vancouver is particularly interesting in this respect and with the available "sound power" of your bothorns we will be able to produce environmental music, rich with echoes and reverberation.... [Horns] are our soundmarks that give Vancouver its character and give us, often subliminally, a "sense of place." (from an open letter from Westerkamp to participants of the Harbour Symphony, March 14, 1986) It is probably the largest environmental music event to be performed in Vancouver. Location recordings of the performance were mixed and produced as Inside the Soundscape #5. A review of the piece in Harbour and Shipping, a journal of the maritime community, finds it notable for its dialogic and artistic qualities, bringing together a disparate community of individuals used to spending long stretches alone at sea, in an artistic event that celebrates everyday sounds by re-contextualizing them:

It was a tribute to the maritime community that the participants were willing and able to come together in such large numbers and close quarters without incident. And as an artistic or musical occurrence it took the everyday, working sounds of the harbour and combined them in a creative statement on the role of the harbour in the city and the country. (Drushka 1986: 24- 25). Westerkamp dedicated the piece to her brother Helmut, who, as a cadet sailor on the German training ship "Pamir," went down in a hurricane in the mid-Atlantic in 1957.

Teaching and Graduate Work

In 1986, The Harbour Symphony was a major public piece that brought Westerkamp national and international attention, and also made many people in Vancouver aware of her work. She was becoming established as a composer. At the same time, she had been teaching since 1982 at Simon Fraser University, and was a graduate student in the Department of Communications.

During this period, Westerkamp taught a course in field recording, studio techniques and compositional techniques with environmental sounds. Aware of her own ambivalent feelings about technology, Westerkamp attempted to balance studio work with body work by moving back and forth between the two, using Pauline Oliveros's sonic meditations as a guide:

We have a room right beside the studio, and we all lie down on the floor doing sonic meditations of various kinds, which gives you a chance to breathe, to get to know your voice and to experiment. The group really started experimenting with their voices. The techniques that they learned about equalizing and filtering in the studio, mic techniques they heard that they could do very similar things with their own voices. So it wasn't just the equipment that was altering their voices or their sounds, but they themselves could alter their voices so that their body became an equalizing and filtering body changing sound quality, sound colour, rhythms. Some of the students, both male and female, began to record their own voices, and apply some of the techniques in the studio. Then, in the next sonic meditation session they would try out what they had heard in the studio. There was a very interesting interaction going on between the studio techniques, and the body as an instrument, and group work. Then they got interested in recording the group, or recording several people making sounds together. So it went back and forth ... That was something I hadn't anticipated and it was fantastic. It was really very interesting because it changed the nature of the pieces they came up with.... [We were finding] a way to work with [technology] that makes sense to incorporate it into one's life and into teaching life, so that it's not such an alien structure any more. (Westerkamp interview with McCartney, April 1993) At the same time, she used the technique of role-modelling: asking questions herself, and demonstrating that she does not always remember every technique. This strategy, brave because it questions the authority and omniscience of the professor/technical wizard, has the result of making the teacher more approachable. She also encouraged students to work as a team, if they preferred to, in order to get over the fear that often affects people when they are first confronted with banks of equipment. These techniques derived from her own experience of working in the studio, and her conviction that she can develop different ways of working in this environment:

If I've taught people anything, it is just to be humans and not to be afraid of asking questions, and not to get so spaced out in the studio that you actually damage the equipment and yourself. (Westerkamp interview with McCartney, April 1993) Her teaching methods encourage students to focus on personal associations with the music that they are creating, as well as learning how to use the equipment itself. Her approach indicates to new composers that they do not have to give up contact with their bodies, or their subjectivities, in order to compose electroacoustic music. She taught at Simon Fraser University from 1982 to 1991.

As a graduate student at the same university, Westerkamp worked on a Master's thesis which was completed in 1988: "Listening and Soundmaking: A Study of Music-As-Environment." This study of the influence of background music or Muzak, which is piped in to accompany other activities, proceeds from ideas about soundscape and acoustic communication developed by R. Murray Schafer and Barry Truax, arguing that music-as-environment dislocates the listener from physical presence and self. Westerkamp includes a personal case study at the centre of the thesis, demonstrating how during her own childhood certain music became an imposed voice that affected her own listening and soundmaking.

The thesis builds on the writings of Attali (political economy) and Adorno (critical theory), both of whom provide a perspective on music in its social context. It also builds on the work of Deleuze and Kristeva who discuss culture and creative process from philosophical, psychoanalytic and semiological perspectives. The thesis argues that a balance between listening and soundmaking (sound input and sound output) is essential to the health of the human psyche, and that the perceptive immediacy of childhood and the cultural work of artists offer strategies by which such a balance can be regained even as contemporary urban soundscapes attempt increasingly to erode it. It is suggested that the creative process is a balancing agent against an overload of sound input, and that one's own sound output or creative expression not only lessens the authority of externally imposed voices, but also offers a new voice of vitality and energy. (Westerkamp 1988: iii)

Westerkamp further explores the relationship between the perceptive immediacy of childhood and the soundmaking of contemporary musicians in her work *Moments of Laughter*, also composed in 1988 for a commission from the Vancouver New Music Society, which is based on Kristeva's ideas about laughter as crucial to the development of the child's self.

Moments of Laughter [traces] musically-acoustically the emergence of the infant's voice from the oceanic state of the womb: from the soundmakings of the baby to the song and language of the child. According to Julia Kristeva, moments of laughter are those moments in infancy and early childhood in which the baby recognizes the "other" as distinct from the "self." They are the first creative moments that speak of recognition of self and place. The child expresses these moments with laughter. (Westerkamp *Moments of Laughter* score, 1988: 1)

v Meg Sheppard performed *Moments of Laughter* for the Vancouver New Music Society, where it was recorded for broadcast on Two New Hours, CBC radio. Elise Bedard performed it twice in 1988, at Music Hear and Now in Hamilton and the Sound Symposium in St. John's. It was performed by Debbie Boyko twice in 1988, at the Vancouver Art Gallery, and the Women in View festival, and once in 1989, at the Convergence conference of the Canadian Electroacoustic Community in Banff. I performed *Moments of Laughter* on radio in Toronto and in concert in Chicago in December 1998, and in a Kingston, Ontario concert in March 1999. I will analyze it later

in the dissertation.

As well as completing her thesis and composing Moments of Laughter in 1988, Westerkamp also worked further with the recordings from the Zone of Silence. She composed Cricket Voice in 1987, and released Music from the Zone of Silence at the Sound Symposium in Newfoundland, in 1988, where she also composed a harbour symphony for St. John's harbour.

More Live Performances

In 1989, Westerkamp composed two new works, both for tape and live performer. The Deep Blue Sea is a collaboration with Norbert Ruebsaat, with text by Brian Shein, who died unexpectedly of cancer on May 30, 1988. Shein had been a formative influence on Ruebsaat, and a collaboration between the three in 1972 marked Westerkamp's and Ruebsaat's emergence as public working artists. Like Moments of Laughter, The Deep Blue Sea is a piece written about a relationship between a parent and a child, but in this case it is a non-custodial father and his daughter.

As with Cool Drool, the performer of Kits Beach Soundwalk is Westerkamp herself. It begins in a similar way to her radio program series about soundwalking, with Westerkamp at Kits Beach, telling the listener about the time of day, season, and what she sees as we hear the recording of the site. But then Westerkamp leads the listener into the studio, to the realm of bandpass filters and equalizers, the possibilities of imaginary dream worlds, and their relationships to the original place. This piece will be analyzed later in the dissertation.

Also in 1989, Westerkamp composed TÉren der Wahrnehmung (Doors of Perception), a radio environment commissioned by Ars Electronica '89 in Linz, Austria, and Österreichischer Rundfunk.⁴

Breathing Room

By 1990, Westerkamp and Norbert Ruebsaat had separated, both personally and artistically. Westerkamp composed Breathing Room, for two-channel tape, on a commission by empreintes DIGITALes, for their Électro clips CD. I analyze Breathing Room later in the dissertation. This tape piece is also adapted for the beginning and ending of the tape part for École Polytechnique, for eight church bells, mixed choir, bass clarinet, trumpet, percussion and two-channel tape, commissioned by Montréal Musique Actuelles/New Music America 1990.

On December 6, 1989 fourteen women were shot to death by Marc Lepine at the École Polytechnique, University of Montréal.... École Polytechnique is dedicated to the fourteen women. This dedication is the essence of the piece and is what gives the piece its meaning: as a woman and a composer I cannot remain silent about this event and the impact it has had on myself and many others. I want to "talk back" to it. I also want to make room to remember it, to feel what needs to be felt, to breathe, to heal, to hope, to transform energies, and to understand the work that is ahead of us. I invite all listeners to take full advantage of this twenty- minute time span of École Polytechnique (a lot longer than it took Marc Lepine to kill fourteen women) to listen inward and search for what is sacred, what cannot be compromised, what cannot be allowed to be killed inside us and therefore not in the world. 'cole Polytechnique is meant to provide the sonic/musical environment for such a journey inward. (HW: Program note, August 1990).

École Polytechnique was a challenging commission because of the emotional intensity associated with this tragic event. Westerkamp created a work that gives the listener physical space to breathe, intellectual space to understand and emotional space to feel what needs to be felt.

Breathing Room 2(1990) is for tape, bottles, and audience, as well as for "The Guest," a sculpture by John Clair Watts that was in the gallery at the time. It premiered April 1990 at the Surrey Arts Centre, in Surrey, B.C. Breathing Room 3 - A Self Portrait is for spoken voice (Westerkamp) and tape. It premiered May 19, 1991 at Pitt Gallery in Vancouver.

I am now forty five years old. My mother is 84 and wants to go horseback riding again. I have two sisters. I have my daughter, of course, and I have women friends. I believe that, right now, the Golden Ball is hidden somewhere under a pile of clothes on the floor of my daughter's two rooms. She is thirteen and one room is at her dad's and the other room is at her mom's. The Golden Ball is where she is. Until she hands it on. (HW: Breathing Room 3)

The ending of this performance is about both continuity and rupture. There is a strong sense here of continuity in Westerkamp's relationships with women: her mother, her sisters, women friends and her daughter. The rupture within continuity is indicated by the two rooms where her daughter lives, and by the reference to The Golden Ball, a poem by MËnchhausen, that Westerkamp gave as a birthday present to her father when she was a teenager. The golden ball is the love that parents feel for their children and that children cannot return in the same form.

The Golden Ball gets thrown from one generation to the next and nobody throws it back. My hugs are not for him, I try to tell my father through the poem. My hugs are like the Golden Ball that gets handed on. (HW: Breathing Room 3) The Breathing Room series

are studies of continuity and rupture in Westerkamp's life, at a time when she was confronting the personal loss and fragmentation surrounding separation and the severing of a long-standing and important artistic collaboration, as well as the potentials for new explorations afforded by breathing room.

At the Pitt Gallery (Vancouver) performance was the premiere of *My Horse and I*, for two-channel tape, with poem and reading by Sharon Thesen. Similarly to *Cool Drool*, this piece explores in a satirical way, the soundscape of the mall (specifically the perfume counter at Eaton's) through Thesen's poem which presents the surreal image of riding a horse into that reflective hall.

To the Present

Since 1992, Westerkamp's work seems to have followed two streams. One is the production of compositions that go inside and around the sonic formations of forests and water, from Canadian west coast recordings. The second is work influenced by Westerkamp's soundscape workshops through the Goethe Institut. This will be discussed later in the section entitled *International Work*.

Sonic Formations

Beneath the Forest Floor is composed from sounds recorded in old-growth forests on British Columbia's west coast. It moves us through the visible forest, into its shadow world, its spirit; into that which affects our body, heart and mind when we experience forest. (HW: program note, 1992)

It was commissioned by CBC Radio for "Two New Hours." Westerkamp composed it at CBC's Advanced Audio Production facility in Toronto, using sounds recorded by Westerkamp in the summer of 1991 in the Carmanah Valley, with the assistance of Peter Grant, whom Westerkamp had met at Co-op Radio.

Its stillness is enormous, punctuated only occasionally by the sounds of small songbirds, ravens and jays, squirrels, flies and mosquitoes.... A few days in the Carmanah creates deep inner peace transmitted, surely, by the trees who have been standing in the same place for hundreds of years. (HW: program note, 1992) As in *Cricket Voice*, here Westerkamp is working with a sparse wilderness soundscape.

Sensitive Chaos was commissioned by the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra for the 1995 Winnipeg New Music Festival. It is a piece about the sonic architecture of water, which is always moving, always sensitive to the smallest environmental changes, always subtly changing the shape of its environment as it moves through it.

The German romantic writer Novalis called water *Das Sensible Chaos* (the sensitive chaos) and Theodor Schwenk wrote a book of the same name examining the formations of water and air. Both their work inspired me to explore water in its sonic musical shapes: water's surfaces and depths, its playfulness and its dangers, its frozen and moving shape; never static, always in motion, always externally shaped, fragile. (HW: program note, 1995)

Here, Westerkamp notes the influence of two German writers, a more explicit reference to her German roots than in previous work. She has also told me of the influence of German romantic writing on her approach to *Beneath the Forest Floor*, which she says brings together her experiences of forest as a child, with German romantic notions and west coast Native mythology about forest. These two pieces mark her growing acceptance of her German background within a Canadian context.

In *Talking Rain* the ear travels into the sonic formations of rain, into the insides of that place of nourishment as well as outside to the watery, liquid language of animals, forests and human habitations, all of which are nourished by the rain. (HW: program note, 1997)

Talking Rain again goes inside familiar sounds, rain sounds, to explore their rhythmic, melodic, timbral, and harmonic relationships with the world they move through. As with *Beneath the Forest Floor*, Westerkamp thanks Norbert Ruebsaat for providing some recordings made in the Queen Charlotte Islands, as well as magically finding the name for *Talking Rain*. While they have separate lives, Ruebsaat and Westerkamp continue to influence and contribute to each other's work. Westerkamp also thanks several others for recordings from the World Soundscape Project, and notes that a rainy forest soundwalk in Lighthouse Park formed another sound source. *Talking Rain* is not specifically connected to a particular location on the west coast, bringing together different experiences of rain from many locations.

International Work

Since 1992, Westerkamp has been invited by the Goethe Institut to undertake several international soundscape workshops. The first was in New Delhi, November 1992. Then in November 1993 and May 1994, she went to Brazil, in fact to Brasilia, a newly-designed city of over one million inhabitants which has only existed for less than forty years. Here, she led a sound excursion, and introduced a number of local people to the process of creating soundscape compositions with the help of Michael Fahres and Piet Hein van de Pool from Netherland Radio (NPS), who provided computer technology and technical expertise. These compositions were produced as a CD, *Soundscape Brasilia*.

Perhaps it is precisely the contrast between the anonymous international city sound of traffic and the cricket and cicada sounds specific to this place that characterizes acoustically what Brasilia still is: a pioneer venture, a master plan, modernist urban architecture with its claim for internationalism, cut into the Brazilian cerrado (bushland). It has in a sense "emigrated" into foreign, undeveloped territory, to start a new life, to transform social order and to negate and overcome underdevelopment in the rest of the country. But the soundscape reveals that the human psyche has not yet emigrated at the same speed, the international character of the city is only audible in the sameness of traffic noise, the worst aspect of internationalism. (Westerkamp "Soundscapes of Cities": lecture presented in Tokyo, October 6, 1994: unpaginated)

Unlike her earlier work, this workshop was not focused on soundwalks, but rather on a sound excursion: the design of the city does not encourage walking in defined neighbourhoods, and the participants had to drive from one place to another. Westerkamp missed the social life of neighbourhoods, but many of the residents say that they like the city.

I was told again and again by people who live in Brasilia that they really like the city. Apparently, in comparison to the conditions in other parts of the country, the conveniences and practical advantages outweigh the feelings of cultural estrangements and loss of community life. There is a certain freedom in a place of cultural anonymity. It reminds me of my own emigration from Germany to Canada: to be freed from those traditions that are experienced as being restrictive means to have more freedom to move, both physically and psychically. One is free to invent a new life and to hear inner voices not tied to the voices of tradition. There is a liberation in that. But deep down the longing for those small nooks and crannies, those intimate places, those village and city squares with their fountains and old oak trees, those bells that tell the time and make music, that longing stays. (Westerkamp "Soundscapes of Cities": lecture presented in Tokyo, October 6, 1994: unpaginated)

Westerkamp attempted to understand this new place through her own experience of being a resident of two different cultures. Her understanding was deepened by her experiences giving workshops in Tokyo in October 1994, and in New Delhi again in 1994, 1997 and 1998.

Her longer and more involved visits to India have resulted in several compositions: Dhvani (1996), a short tape piece; the India Sound Journals, to which she is constantly adding until the present; and Gently Penetrating Beneath the Sounding Surfaces of Another Place (1997). The latter piece, and its relationship to the India Sound Journals, is the subject of analysis later in the dissertation, where I will discuss the significance of this soundscape and cultural experience to her recent work. I also interviewed Westerkamp about her compositional process with this piece, which formed the basis of the "In the Studio" section of the CD ROM.

Hildegard Westerkamp's current work is multi-faceted. After several years editing the Soundscape Newsletter for the World Forum for Acoustic Ecology, she has passed this responsibility on to others in order to focus more on composition. She is also on the editorial board of the new Soundscape journal. Westerkamp is still actively involved as a sound ecologist, sitting on the boards of the Canadian Association of Sound Ecology and the World Forum for Acoustic Ecology. She visits India frequently, working with a group of New Delhi residents on various soundscape projects that have grown from earlier contacts. In the fall of 1999, she will go to Israel to do a workshop with a group of Israelis and Palestinians. She also visits Germany more frequently than before, spending time with family as well as performing and presenting workshops. Westerkamp continues to compose in her home studio in Vancouver.

1 I was introduced to Hegi's work by Westerkamp, when I told her that my own upbringing in post-war England prejudiced me towards Germans to positive and negative extremes. Most of the composers whose work I played were German, so I associated my favourite activity, playing the piano, with Germany. At the same time, we watched many war films on television, and every German in these films was evil. There was no separation of Nazism from Germanness. The first book that I read by Hegi was a novel about a town on the Rhine in the years preceding and during the war, Stones from the River.

2 It could be argued that recorded sounds are already one step away from reality in that they have been altered by the recording process. They are already only copies of sounds. However, when listeners hear recorded sounds that have not been otherwise processed, they tend to perceive them as connected to their sources in the world.

3 Is this a construction of northernness as both of the included Native women are Inuit?

4 It is first broadcast in September 1989 during Ars Electronica, broadcast into public urban places.

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