# “Memory is a River”:
# Imbert Orchard and the Sound of Time and Place

**by**

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## Abstract

This thesis is an examination of the radio production techniques and media theories of Canadian Imbert Orchard (1909-1991). Throughout his career at the CBC and a brief period as lecturer at Simon Fraser University, he championed notions such as 'aural history' and 'document in sound' over oral history and documentary. His system of 'levels of remove' intentionally employed acoustic impressions of time and place as a means of representing different historical perspectives within the radio format. Through a comparison with radio documentaries produced by his contemporaries, Glenn Gould (CBC) and the World Soundscape Project (CBC and SFU), the thesis makes apparent a theme of preservationist values with progressive techniques on CBC Radio. By analyzing archived materials and production techniques, the thesis aims to situate Orchard alongside these well-documented historical figures of Canadian sound studies in order to emphasize the importance of his concept of aural history.

**Keywords**: Aural History; CBC Radio; Audio Documentary; Imbert Orchard; Glenn Gould; World Soundscape Project

*For Claire,*

*my best friend who has always been there.*

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## Executive Summary

Through the advent of the portable tape recorder the sounds of life and place took on significant meaning in the context of Canadian broadcasting. The pulse of isolated communities and lives became embedded in households across the entire country, promoting the idea of a 'national consciousness'. An examination of the production techniques of Canadian radio producer Imbert Orchard (as well as the World Soundscape Project and Glenn Gould) highlights a unique point in time for radio broadcasting, the 1960s and 1970s, when unbound sound became an available resource for mediated representation.

The project is comprised of four chapters and a Conclusion, each exploring Orchard's contribution to the history of audio media in Canada.

Chapter 1 — *Hear Then*, a brief introduction to Orchard, the WSP and Gould, and a discussion of the CBC's role in establishing a 'national consciousness'. A discussion of Harold Innis' (1950; 1951; 1952) writings on time- and space-binding media establishes a framework for considering the significance of the appearance of portable audio media and the subsequent techniques of representation within Canadian broadcasting. This is connected to an overview of the Massey Commission and the resulting influence the policy had on national broadcasting throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

Chapter 2 — *The Aural Historian,* provides a biography of Orchard and presents him as aural historian. Given Orchard's omnivorous approach to audio media and production techniques, a discussion of his education and experiences provides a foundation from which to understand his approach to mediated representation. What distinguishes aural history from oral history is considered from Orchard's perspective, drawing from existing archival materials and a survey of literature from oral historians.

An overview of existing literature and discourse on the WSP and Gould demonstrates the prominence these figures enjoy today as cultural icons, both in

Canada and around the world. This is compared to the nominal amount that can be found on Orchard, an issue this thesis aims to help resolve.

Chapter 3 — *CBC and SFU: Production Techniques and the "Document in Sound"*, considers Orchard's role as radio producer through an examination of his productions, writings, interviews and recorded lectures. The significance of the documentary format in Canada is discussed, providing the context from which Orchard established his system "levels of remove". A review of archival materials provides a rich understanding of Orchard's awareness of the potentials of recorded sound, specifically the ability to record emotions.

Orchard's brief period at Simon Fraser University provides unique insight into the producer's theorizations of audio media and aural history. Key to this is a survey of course proposals, both accepted and rejected, as they demonstrate the fundamentals of what Orchard considered to be "literate in sound".

Chapter 4 — *Orchard, Gould and the WSP: Sounding Communities,* a comparative analysis of the programs the three producers completed for the CBC. Gould and the WSP are presented in more detail, establishing the context in which each approached their contracts with the CBC. The analysis of produced works is based upon the voice, music, soundscape continuum, as presented in Truax (2001). This allows for a detailed comparison of methods and techniques (both in recording and production). The impact of environmental sound on audio media is vital to this analysis, as it highlights the different approaches found in the work of each producer.

# Chapter 1.

# Hear Then

> When a person is talking, the inflection, the rhythm, the pauses, the volume, the emphasis of different kinds are part of the meaning ... the sound itself becomes a factor, it becomes part of the fact. *The emotion becomes part of the fact.* (Orchard, 1978)

## 1.1. Introduction

That the name Imbert Orchard (1909-1991) is not synonymous with early acoustic communication or sound studies is an unfortunate oversight in Canadian history. He is responsible for over a hundred hours of radio programs for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and generating one of the largest oral history collections in Canada, the *Living Memory* collection that now resides in the Provincial Archives (totaling 998 interviews and 2700 hours). He also developed and taught courses on aural documentation in the mid-1970s at Simon Fraser University (SFU). Orchard's sensitivity to sound, particularly his expansion of oral history to include broader aspects of aurality, indicates the key component of his legacy. By focusing on Orchard's techniques for representation, this thesis will demonstrate that Orchard's omnivorous approach to audio media situates him alongside the World Soundscape Project (WSP) and Glenn Gould, as a figure of importance within Canadian media. By including Orchard within the existing discourse of his contemporaries, this thesis aims to amplify the often obscured materials related to Orchard's career and his theorizations of aural history and audio media. Included in this discussion is a consideration of the impact of the portable tape recorder on national broadcasting, specifically how the creative uses of environmental sound fit neatly within the existing mandate of the CBC for the "creation of a national consciousness" (CBC, 1978). As well, I examine the concept of aurality within post-World War II media studies, specifically the work of

Canadian media theorist Harold Innis (1895-1952), to argue that the documentation of sound in place can be used to highlight the relationship of time and place.

Orchard's first recorded interviews were conducted with the intention of contributing to a book. However, upon listening to recorded voices he shifted his focus to radio, producing what he would call "documents in sound" (Orchard, 1974). He found the tape recorder allowed for the imbedding of vital information that was often absent in written accounts. Without any background in audio production, he developed an ear for the qualities of voice and space. The sounds he considered of true historical value were often the very elements lost in transcription: the accent, tone, tempo, cadence, pitch, and inflections of the speaker's voice. As a radio producer, Orchard focused on documenting historical accounts and was interested in recording the sound of the voice as witnesses brought their memories of the past into the present. His attuned awareness to the potentials of sound as establishing context led him to adopt the role of aural historian. Over the course of his career at the CBC, he developed a distinct method of production for the construction of his radio programs, a system he called "levels of remove", a documentation method that highlights the subjective construction of the past through a mixing of multiple perspectives in relation to an event or place (Orchard, 1974; Truax, 2001). This method for structuring accounts allowed for the presentation of multiple temporal perspectives toward a theme or idea within the province's past. Not only did Orchard's production techniques engage the audience's awareness of the effects of mediation, they also highlighted the impact of perspective in the construction of the past.

One of the most striking details of Orchard's career at the CBC is that he had successfully convinced his supervisors at the CBC to fund a massive archive collection for the purpose of establishing an irreplaceable resource from which productions based upon historical account could be based. He argued that many of the province's "old timers", as he referred to the province's settlers, were nearing the end of their lives, and with them the "living memories" of the province's past (McColl, 1973). The collection, one of the largest oral history collections in Canada at the time, was motivated by two goals: the gathering of recordings with the intention of contributing to future broadcasts; and second, for the purpose of preservation. Although the goals of the CBC were focused around production, Orchard was also motivated by a desire to document the

unique period of the province's past, in the voices of those who were there. For Orchard, the significance of the tape recorder was that it had the ability to record emotions (Orchard, 1978). While the stories of the past were significant, his motivation to document how the story was told, the words that were chosen and how they were spoken influenced the types of individuals who were recorded. In other words, the aural history collection that now exists in the provincial archives was greatly influenced by the aesthetic choices of a media producer. Given the significance of the archive collection today, the more we understand about Orchard's contributing motivations, as historian and producer, the better situated we are for interpreting his archive and radio works as historical artifacts.

By placing Orchard alongside Gould and the WSP, this thesis is also an examination of the influence environmental sound had on the treatment of voice and music on national airwaves. An analysis of productions for the CBC will show that all three producers demonstrated, to varying degrees, radically experimental approaches to mediation while also revealing conservative ideals and values of Canadian identity and place. As Arthur Kroker suggested, while discussing Canadian Harold Innis' theorizations of the impact of the railway on Canadian life, "Technology is not something external to Canadian being; but on the contrary, is the necessary condition and lasting consequence of Canadian existence" (1984, 94). The study of the representation of place on national radio will demonstrate a manifestation of cultural policy initiated decades before through the work of the Massey Commission. In the context of this thesis, the significance the Massey Commission is how the policy was designed to simultaneously make use of broadcasting technology to promote Canadian values while neglecting the influence and reliance upon those very technologies (Druick, 2007b). In the middle 20$^{th}$ century the portable tape recorder and the use of environmental sound greatly changed the mediated space of radio broadcast in Canada and around the world. It was a time when the quixotic notion of the Canadian wilderness and isolation was being promoted to an increasing urban population (Akiyama, 2014). As such, Orchard, Gould and the WSP demonstrate forms of tension between the utopic potentials (Benjamin, 1968) of the new media and the yearning for the preservation of something in transition. This was a unique point of time where the experimental approaches of

particular CBC producers to new media fit neatly within the mandate of establishing and promoting cultural identity on national broadcasting stations.

As technologies continuously shape and are shaped by patterns of use (Sterne, 2011), I will demonstrate how Orchard's approach to the documentation of voice and sound was an attempt at preserving ephemeral elements of a region's unique cultural histories. Furthermore, it was this sensitivity to the qualities of sound and the possibilities he recognized in the sound recording that situate him alongside his more recognized and revered contemporaries. Chapter one continues with a discussion of Canadian media theorist Harold Innis' ideas of time and space binding media, particularly warnings about "the modern obsession with present-mindedness" (Innis, 1951, 76), in order to place Orchard's notion of aural history within post war communications theory. As well, an overview of the Massey Commission will demonstrate the relationship of policy and art in Canada by highlighting the conditions that made the works discussed in this thesis possible. Chapter two provides a brief overview of existing literature on Orchard, Gould and the WSP to demonstrate a gap that this thesis aims to help bridge, and presents Orchard as "Aural Historian". By providing a brief biography of Orchard, his motivations as both historian and producer are made apparent. Chapter three delivers an overview of Orchard's career at the CBC and SFU. Through an examination of his theories, motivations and techniques, the chapter establishes Orchard as a maverick within Canadian media studies. Finally, Chapter four presents a comparison of works produced for CBC Radio. An analysis of a selection of Orchard's productions from 1962 to 1974 provides insight into his developments and refinements throughout his career at the CBC; likewise, Gould's *Solitude Trilogy* (1967-1977) demonstrates an evolution of techniques realized with the advancements of technology; and, the WSP's *Soundscapes of Canada* (1974) explores the potentials of sonic representation as a pedagogical device. I compare each producer's use of voice, music and soundscape (environmental recordings). The voice-music-soundscape continuum (Truax, 2001, 50) provides an ideal framework for examining the varying relationships to media and 'actuality' of each producer. While each navigated this continuum uniquely, a sense of tension between techniques and values is made apparent amongst all. The analysis demonstrates the privileged role place plays in the construction of these radio works. I will argue that it

was the inclusion of environmental sound that greatly blurred the distinction between voice and music within the audio documentary format.

## 1.2. A Note about Methods and Resources

As this thesis aims to rectify the obvious gap in literature that exists about Orchard and his legacy, most of my research was conducted through archival work. This was primarily conducted at the Provincial Archives in Victoria, where the *Living Memory* collection resides. Many of Orchard's documents (textual and audio) from the CBC can be found here and provide valuable insight into his approach, as well as demonstrating the genuine compassion he felt for his audience and subjects. A significant portion of this thesis, however, is drawn from a series of interviews conducted with Orchard by members of the CBC and Provincial Archive employees (1973-1978). This series of interviews represents a very thoughtful and reflexive approach as each builds on the previous one. While I did listen to each interview while at the archives, I relied primarily on the existing transcripts for much of my analysis.

As well as the Provincial Archives, the University of British Columbia also hosts a small amount of materials related to Orchard's career. Most significant are the research materials for one of the earlier CBC productions he worked on as script editor, "The Way of The Indian" (1961). There is also an early draft, titled "The Documentary in Sound", of his only single authored publication on sound recording, "Tape Recordings into Radio Documentaries" (1974). Considering that Orchard helped to develop and teach courses at SFU it is most unfortunate that the school's archives contain only a limited amount of material related to Orchard, particularly audio. Fortunately, my supervisor Barry Truax has been maintaining the WSP archives independently of the SFU Archives and through this collection I was able to find a recorded lecture from 1978 and original documents pertaining to course design at SFU. A document pertaining to a rejected course is particularly important as it demonstrates Orchard's unconventional approach to academia, as well as his progressive understanding of audio media. I have included all original documents I could find, in both the WSP collection and the Provincial Archives, pertaining to course description and proposals in the appendix. These range from course outlines, to course proposals (both successful and unsuccessful), to a letter I take to be

Orchard's original communication to the Communication Studies Department explaining his objectives and goals for an aural history stream of courses. Also in the WSP archive is a collection of Orchard's CBC productions, recorded lectures given at SFU and the *Sound Heritage* journal, to which Orchard was a frequent contributor. Of particular interest to the *Sound Heritage* journal is issue 3(4), "The World Soundscape Project" (1974), which features contributions from Murray Schafer and Hildegard Westerkamp of the WSP, as well as a transcribed conversation between Orchard, Truax and Howard Broomfield (also of the WSP) comparing the motivations and practices of aural history with soundscape studies. I based the majority of my analysis of audio works on those available in the WSP collection, as I was able re-visit these works at my convenience — as opposed to those retained in the Provincial Archives which required travelling to Victoria.

## 1.3. Time and Place of a Nation

In his studies of natural resources in Canada – *A History of the Canadian Pacific Railway* (1923), *The Fur Trade in Canada* (1930), and *The Cod Fisheries* (1940) – Innis examined the development of communication technologies in relation to ideological power exercised over broad geographic regions. Innis considered all methods of transportation to be media, as "the extraction or production of staples [natural resources] creates environments, or ecosystems, that *mediate* human relations and otherwise affect a people's thoughts or actions" (Babe, 2000, 59). Likewise, the study of each mode of communication was essential to understanding its effect on the circulation of information through space and time and to assess its influence within the connected community (Innis, 1951, 33). Just as the railway had negotiated the relationships between different cultures across Canada, the radio also contributed to the cultural ecosystem of a national consciousness.

To understand the potential impact of media on contemporary lives, Innis studied the developments of time-based and space-based media in *The Bias of Communication* (1951). Binding, Innis suggested, is the ability specific media demonstrate to transcend the limitations of time and space. For example, on the one hand, time-binding technology could be any lasting cultural artifact, such as a statue or a hand-copied

manuscript (or arguably a film or tape housed within an archive), which has the characteristic of relating information over an extended period of time. On the other hand, space-binding technologies compress space, such as papyrus or rail (and radio). Innis mapped out, in a survey spanning 6000 years, the transition from what has been considered oral to technological societies of Western culture by researching the evolution of writing materials through to the emergence of the radio. The work considers and references an extensive reading of historical findings while also demonstrating how the emerging technologies influenced and shaped the development of societies and ruling powers by adapting potentials – most significantly, in Innis' view, the control and dissemination of information (Innis, 1951, 33).

The emerging technology of radio Innis saw as creating a new bias with its dominance of space, that would foster an obsession with "present-mindedness". This fixation, Innis argued, would greatly challenge traditional relationships to the past and future, leading ultimately to "ruthless destruction of elements of permanence essential to cultural activity. The emphasis on change is the only permanent characteristic" (Innis, 1952, 15). Innis argued that oral messages favour tradition and stability as well, by retaining value and meaning for generations. I suggest that Orchard's use of recording technology for historical documentation, particularly in the context of the public archive, situates these recordings in Innis' time-binding category. Through a discussion of Orchard as aural historian, I will show that his treatment of audio media demonstrates a resolution to Innis' concern of imbalanced uses of media.

According to Innis, members of time-bound societies tend to rely on physical memory, both personal and cultural, such as stories or carvings, to retain cultural identity and practice (Babe, 2000, 72). Space-bound societies, on the other hand, tend to cover expansive geographic locations and are united under monetary systems. Residents of space-bound societies tend to cohabit space with factions of other cultures, as the space they inhabit extends beyond their local physical community. It is with this definition of space-bound societies that the idea of a national consciousness becomes vital to understanding the early developments and motivations of the CBC. In an attempt to resolve the balance between time and space, Innis encouraged face-to-face dialogue and verbal (aural) dialogue, versus the dominant use of formal text (Innis, 1950). This

emphasis suggests a traditionalist approach to communication. Through an emphasis of sound in place and the sound of place, and in parallel to a discussion on the preservationist values of archival work with the progressive techniques of radio producers, I will show how Orchard, the WSP and Gould shifted the space-binding bias of radio to include time-binding tendencies as a way of highlighting communities in transition across Canada.

## 1.4. The Massey Commission and the Establishment of a Mediated Tradition

A brief examination of the CBC's role in nation-building after World War II will establish a framework for analyzing Orchard's placement as a local historian within a national context. To do so, I will focus on the Massey Commission, formally known as the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, a government-appointed board that established national interest initiatives for education and the protection of culture, as related to broadcasting and universities. By way of securing continuous funding, the CBC adopted the role of educator and cultural protector, later claiming "broadcasting can be, must be, an instrument for the defense of our identity as a nation" (CBC, 1978). As this thesis is primarily focused on Orchard's epistemology of audio media, understating the CBC's agenda will demonstrate that its focus on public education and cultural protection is largely responsible for making his work possible.

By the time radio broadcasting reached a critical mass in the middle to late 1920s "almost every nation considered its usage a political issue with distinct social implications" (McChesney, 1999). Most Western countries, such as Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, adopted the social service role, guided largely by "non-profit and non-commercial broadcast" whereas the United States established an entirely commercially funded system, dominated by the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) and the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) (McChesney, 1999). A result of concerns over the future of broadcasting in Canada, and by extension the autonomy of Canadian citizens in the face of encroaching American culture, the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting (RCRB) was established by Parliament in 1928 to investigate the state of

broadcasting throughout Canada and to establish a framework for direction, organization, and financing of a national broadcasting system (Raboy, 1990). The primary focus of the Commission was to establish whether Canadians desired a national broadcaster, what its role would be as well as the degree of autonomy given to the provinces in programming materials attuned to the regional culture (Raboy, 1990). The overriding challenge of the Commission was to establish a unifying report that both spoke to and satisfied provincial needs for public communication. The mandate of national unity brought with it an emphasis on certain values and beliefs while maintaining support of marginalized voices or avoiding the outright silencing of those on the periphery (Raboy, 1990).[1] Members of the RCRB, later known as the Aird Commission (named after Sir John Aird, president of the Canadian Bank of Commerce and chair of the RCRB), conducted studies of US and European broadcasting agencies, recommending a policy drawn from both the British and German models — the latter because of the relative autonomy provided to regional broadcasters while still belonging to a unified system (McChesney, 1999).

The final report suggested that a resounding number of Canadians wanted a national broadcaster and it recommended that while the services should be publicly controlled and run from a national level, as with the Canadian National Railway (CNR), the provinces should be given complete independence in selecting and presenting materials (Raboy, 1990). The Commission's "trump card" (McChesney, 1999) was the threat of American commercial domination, as demonstrated through the writings of commission member Graham Spry who wrote: "At present, the advertisers pay the piper and call the tune … The tune of America is that of the peddler boosting his wares" (Spry, 1931; cited in Babe, 2000, 41). The concern raised by the commission was that broadcasting should serve the public, and they felt that the system in America put the interests of business ahead of the listening public.

The Commission, however, was only set up to make recommendations. Following the report, lobbyists of both the private and public sectors began establishing

[1] As Innis wrote, "the economic history of Canada has always been dominated by the discrepancy between the centre and the margin" (1930, 385).

arguments to acquire autonomy of broadcasts. On the public side was the newly established Canadian Radio League (CRL) initiated by Graham Spry and Alan Plaunt. The CRL was concerned with the private service of a national system and was wary of private venture exploitation. Spry was cautious of a commercially financed system that he argued would lead to diminished educational value and worse: programming "designed for serving principally companies desiring to advertise themselves and their products" (Spry, 1931; cited in Babe, 2000, 41).

While the role of radio broadcasting was touted as an educational tool by the CRL, it is understood today that many of the members of the board were nationalists with the intention of using the communication system to strengthen the dominion "against provincial encroachment" (Raboy, 1990, 34). Years later Spry would write "The activists of plus or minus thirty years who ran the Canadian Radio League were not thinking of broadcasting only for its sake; they were thinking of it very deliberately and consciously as an instrument of communication which could contribute to the easing of the problem of nationhood" (cited in Raboy, 1990, 37). Easing the tension between local and national interests as well as those of the private and the public demonstrate the variety of competing interests in establishing what role the concept of culture played in the development of Canadian nationalism. To counter this, where the Aird Commission presented an ideological argument aimed at nurturing the national identity in the face of an encroaching empire, the CRL proposed both a nationally run network of publicly owned stations as well as regional stations that were privately operated but nationally regulated (Raboy, 1990).

Following the establishment of the CBC and the end of the Second World War, the Massey Commission was assembled, in part to assess the role of public and private radio in Canada. The threat of American broadcasting and cultural values encroaching through the national airwaves still lingered. While the Massey Commission echoed many of the sentiments put forth by the Aird Commission, the economic and technical climate had changed. Following a series of 400 hearings throughout 1949 and 1950 it was determined that the relationship between public and private broadcasting had already taken shape, where the publicly owned station would cater to the nationalistic purpose while the private served regional needs (Raboy, 1990). The Canadian Association of

Broadcasters (CAB), referred to as "free enterprise broadcasting stations", represented the private sector and argued that the public and private should not compete for advertising dollars. Rather, they argued, the CBC should focus on "'cementing the unification of Canada,' developing Canadian talent, and doing 'finer types of broadcasting'" (Raboy, 1990, 99).

Given the large number of Canadian homes with radio sets, "the sudden rise of commercial broadcasting forced the hand of Canada" (McChesney, 1999): either establish a national radio strategy or give way to American culture and values, as evidenced in the American-owned NBC's plans to include Canada as "part of the North American radio orbit" (Bowman, 1966, 124; cited in Raboy, 1990, 23). The solution, the Commission argued, was the promotion of 'high culture' programs to instill national values (Litt, 1992). This was in direct response to the fear that American broadcasting and advertising would impede upon the development of Canadian culture, particularly the English speaking parts (Litt, 1992). This policy is exemplified by the CBC's aggressive promotion of a national consciousness, or a Canadian identity, through the national airwaves in the mid 20th century (Hogarth, 2001).[2]

One of the most important aspects of the Massey Commission is that it acknowledged the role and function of public broadcasting in Canada, arguing that the CBC was "the single greatest agency for national unity, understanding and enlightenment" (Litt, 1992, 215). The goal of the CBC, argued the Massey Commission, was to establish empathy amongst Canadians, as fostered through a collective communication system. While Canadian broadcasting had been embroiled in a self-appointed cultural war with the United States since the 1920s,[3] particularly in the English speaking provinces, broadcasters had struggled to find a connection between the interests of the state and the interests of the individual. During the Commission's hearings, the CAB made the argument that "'Public interest' and '*the* Public interest' were not the same thing. The public may be greatly interested in a program which is not

[2] Druick (2007a) demonstrates similar objectives by the National Film Board.

[3] See for example: *The CBC - A Perspective: Submission to the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission in Support of Applications for Renewal of Network Licenses* (CBC, 1978, 1-2).

in the public interest" (Raboy, 1990, 100). This demonstrates the cultural elitism that critics were quick to point out, the connection between "high culture with mass media" (Druick, 2007b, 172) as a stance against a "loss of community, of pervasive amateur culture, of clear-cut values and traditions tied to European culture and religion" (Druick, 2007b, 171). As Druick (2007b) highlights, the aim of the Massey Commission, somewhat paradoxically, presents an undertaking to deemphasize the influence and effects of media through its very use. In other words, this was an attempt to foster a national identity without the recognition of Canada being a mediated nation.

While the CBC was exempt from pandering to commercial influence, it did need to cater to the national interest. To do this, a balance between national and regional levels had to be developed, giving local producers jurisdiction over the production of content. In their 1978 submission to the CRTC entitled *The CBC - A Perspective,* representatives from the CBC wrote that while "each region...has its own history...and perspectives...our similar philosophical beginnings, our unique capacity to accept pluralism and diversity, our common psyche, shaped by terrain and climate are both our anthem and our adversary" (cited in Budd, 2005, 34). This statement recognizes the individual makeup of unique regions while ascribing a unified whole (the public and *the* public*).*

The portable tape recorder allowed for intimate understandings of Canadian experience to be broadcast nationally, appeasing the Massey Commission's recommendations of a national broadcaster. When Orchard stated "I had this special interest and I was allowed to evolve it" (McColl, 1973, 9), he meant that not only had the CBC funded him to operate as an aural historian on the radio sharing historical accounts of British Columbia, but it had also allowed for his exploration of techniques in the representation of regional time and space on the national airwaves. By looking back at the cultural agenda of the CBC as both curator of national interest and entertainer we can better understand how local producers were afforded relative autonomy while dealing with representations of place and community. Producers like Orchard were vital to appealing to both political and public demand. Through a regional focus, Orchard collected historically based accounts from remote areas of BC. While the characters in his productions lived very different lives than many of those who heard the works

broadcast on the radio, regional contributions contributed to a national discourse that evolved through the proliferation of mediating technologies.

## 1.5. Summary

The voice is a communicator of the body in space. Not only is the sound of the voice affected by the very space it activates (through reverberation and resonance), but the speaker's paralanguage, the non-linguistic aural characteristics of the speaker, is also influenced by the environment through lifestyle, culture and geography**.** Dialects are representational of specific times and places; as you move through time and/or space so too does the dialect of that region. Orchard was keenly aware of this and used the tape recorder to document the manner in which individuals recalled their experiences from the province's past. In doing so he collected accounts that are highly symbolic of both the time they reference and the time they were recorded. Not only did this fit into the CBC's mandate of promoting regional focus but it also constituted what was considered 'high culture'. While his system of levels of remove was designed to produce engaging and entertaining representations of the province's past, his programs foregrounded the effects of mediation to a degree that required a level of media competency amongst the listening public.

As Canada is a country that matured in direct relation to the evolution of broadcasting technologies, the impact of media on Canadian culture is undeniable. As a direct result of the Massey Commission, the CBC was able to secure funding in its formative years through the promotion of regionally focused cultural productions (Litt, 1992). It was this fertile environment of cultural production (not to mention, his privileged position as a white male producer) that allowed Orchard the agency to record, comment on and construct retellings of places, events and characters. Orchard's emphasis of the adjective *aural* over oral and his use of extemporary recordings, that is, "recordings of happenings...discussions and reminiscence" (Orchard, 1974, 28) demonstrate an experimental approach to recorded sound that fit within the mandate of establishing a national consciousness. While Orchard emphasized the effects of mediation (as will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3) through his system of levels of remove, his productions

for the CBC were made possible largely because they contributed to an increasingly mediated society.

Alongside Orchard, productions of the WSP and Gould likewise fit within the mandate of promoting a national consciousness over the public broadcast network. While the motivations and approaches of each were quite different, there is a significant amount of overlap that ties the three together. Key to this is the instruction about, and experimental approaches to, environmental sound and listening. Through this thesis I will suggest that the techniques demonstrates by Orchard, the WSP and Gould demonstrate a key period of time in which the boundaries of recorded sound began to blur. Furthermore, the unique approaches to the treatment of voice, music and soundscape recordings for broadcast and archiving work represent a potential for audio recordings to function as both time- and space-binding media.

# Chapter 2.

# The Aural Historian

## 2.1. Introduction

As Orchard's career is largely defined by his dual roles as historian and radio producer, examining the balance of temporal and spatial relationships is key to understanding his promotion of aural history. Following the discussion in the previous chapter of governmental influence on the mediated construction and representation of Canada, this chapter presents Orchard as aural historian by examining his life and the personal motivations that resulted in the development of his awareness of the potentials of recorded sound.

## 2.2. Biography

Born Robert Henslow Orchard in Brockville, Ontario in 1909, Orchard spent his youth in both Canada and England. His formal studies included a degree in English Literature and History at Cambridge University. After returning to Canada, during the Second World War, Orchard made his first trip to BC while training with the Canadian Armed Forces. In an interview with David Mitchell and Dennis Duffy, of the Provincial Archives, Orchard stated, "I'll never forget the impression that British Columbia made on me ... I felt that I was in a completely different country, a country that I somehow felt was my own ... And I fell in love with it right away" (Mitchell and Duffy, 1979, 75). He felt that very little of quality had been written about the modernization of the province, a history that for Orchard was robust, vivid, and most importantly very much accessible. Compared to the eastern provinces, the westernmost province represented, for better or worse, a swift summarization of European settlement in Canada.

> I feel that Ontario is very rich ... the development that took [place at] that time in Ontario-from 1790 to 1970, if you like - that period is 'squeezed up' in BC. In about a hundred years of time, it's come from the bush to the big cities. This is a fantastic development. (Reimer, 1978, 6)

The impact of the rugged landscape on the settlers had, for Orchard, produced "different kinds" of people than he was used to in Ontario. The stories they told were often of epic proportions, as extreme conditions had generated unique experiences (Reimer, 1978). Most importantly, in the context of the story of Orchard, the rapid development period of the province had meant that many of the individuals who witnessed the changes were still alive with active "living memories".

One other major contributor to Orchard's unique skill set was his theatrical background. After the war Orchard moved to Edmonton to establish the Studio Theatre Program at the University of Alberta.[4] While this background can be seen in his role as producer for various radio dramas done for the CBC, when considering the development of levels of remove the most significant factor is the use of "reenactments". This entailed the use of actors reading from diaries and journals of historical figures, often in the accent believed appropriate. The aural qualities (such as the imposed accent, lack of reverberation, the pronunciations) of the dramatic readings clearly distinguish the 'level' these recordings belong to.

In 1955 he returned to BC and began working at the CBC in Vancouver as a regional script editor for both television and radio. Orchard had little experience with tape recorders but took an ad hoc approach to learning their use when approached by a woman named Constance Cox (McColl, 1973, 3). The fact that her personal narrative of the Klondike Trail of 1898 was different to the description of the Klondike Trail she had seen in a program on CBC Television triggered Orchard's interest in using audio recording as a means of capturing Canadians' personal histories. Initially, he thought about writing a book based upon these interviews. However, months later when Orchard played the tapes to CBC producer John Edwards, Edwards suggested that Orchard

[4] While I was unable to find any specific reference to Orchard's theatrical background, he made numerous references to this background in interviews (Duffy, 1978; McColl, 1973; Reimer, 1978).

should think about producing a radio program with the materials. The first *Living Memory* series was done in collaboration with Edwards in 1961 and was based around the recordings of Cox, along with two other 'old timers' of the Skeena River area.[5] For these recordings Orchard had travelled to the valley to collect material for the radio works. Shortly after that was completed, he proposed a second series on Victoria, during the centennial year of the province's capital. Orchard would then go on to produce two more main series for the CBC, *The Mountains to the Sea* and *People in Landscape,* while also completing a number of documentaries for CBC programs such as *Tuesday Night* and *Between Ourselves*.

During his formative years at the CBC, due to "union regulations stemming from the early days of radio" (Orchard, 1974, 29) Orchard was required to work alongside a CBC technician for recording and editing. The method Orchard developed for gathering interviewees required that he first travel to the region in focus and scout out potential candidates. This often included going to public spaces such as the post office or library to ask about leads (McColl, 1973; cited in Budd, 2005, 44-45). Following this, he would return with his technician, most often his long-term partner Ian Stephen. Stephen would often set the microphone and recorder and then leave the room while Orchard and the interviewee talked. Upon returning to the studio with the materials, Orchard functioned as something along the lines of creative director.

> [I]t was necessary to give elaborate instructions to a technician, which meant using his hands instead of my own, which was very frustrating for both of us unless what was required was very simple. It often meant that the raw material had to be turned into typescript, complete with 'ums' and 'ers', which had then to be marked with instructions. (Orchard, 1974, 30)

Once the policy was relaxed and Orchard was given more creative control and began to work with the materials in a more responsive manner: "It sharpened my ability to listen and to make quick decisions in matters such as timing" (Orchard, 1974, 30). Orchard's methodology as aural historian became informed through listening practices and by the techniques he developed in the studio. It was the realization that the "tape

[5] 'Old timers' was the generic title Orchard would use for describing his interview subjects. My interpretation of his use of the term is that he used it endearingly, as a way of recognizing the historical significance of the individual.

itself became a medium" (Orchard, 1974, 30), that the assembly of different sounds could construct "the sum of its parts" (Orchard, 1974, 32). This led Orchard to record not only the sound of individuals in place, but the sounds of place as well. The collection is scattered with moments of silence at the beginning of end of tapes that were recorded to fill the silences between cuts with ambience. It is interesting that given Orchard's propensity towards the aural, he was not opposed to editing dialogue for his productions, "culling unnecessary words or pauses…rearranging sequences" (Orchard, 1974, 32). However, as will be discussed in Chapter 3, Orchard was willfully aware of the effects of mediation and his understanding of aural history evolved from this realization.

As a result of this work Orchard generated one of the largest oral history collections in Canada, 998 interviews totaling 2700 hours. While the *Living Memory* tape collection was greatly influenced by contemporary production aesthetics and economic and political factors (as a result of being funded by CBC Radio), it was also guided by a historical responsibility to collect and document the history of BC as told from those who were there. As such, Orchard developed unique techniques for amassing and assembling numerous reflections of specific junctures of BC's past. Orchard's goal was to provide an impression of the past as told through the voices of his interviewees, unique voices that retained a sense of autonomy and identity through recorded sound.

> The interest was really in history, in the life, in the people that were able to bring this out of the past into our present and fix it onto tape to make this artifact, the new artifact which could then be replayed, and every time it's played it brings the past into our life. (Reimer, 1978, 13)

It was the relationship between past and present that Orchard was most interested in, the accounts of the past as brought into dialogue with the present. As an aural historian, he was aware that the recalling of events for the purpose of being recorded on tape had considerable impact on how the story would be listened to. Whether it was this awareness of the limitations of recording historical accounts that led him to adapt the aural moniker (and promotion of recording emotions) or the awareness of the potentials of phonographic sound which influenced this decision is unclear: it could have been both. What is certain is that Orchard was a historian and producer who "consider[ed] the tape to be the final product of their work" (Langlois, 1974a, 2). Orchard refined techniques of audio media production as a means of documenting the passing of time:

someone who produced historical artifacts by exploiting the limitations of the available audio tools.

## 2.3. Aural History

While the fundamental difference between oral history and aural history is the resultant media that is produced (text – audio) (Langlois, 1974a), and debates between the differences can detract from the actual collection and production of works (Langlois, 1974b, 2), the methods employed in the collection of materials significantly impact upon the resultant 'raw' materials. The distinction between the two is, on the one hand, minimal as both aim to document and preserve a 'sense' of the past, while on the other hand it may be extensive as the words spoken can be reduced to a naturalized text or embodied with emotion and presence. Aural history applies the communicational qualities of radio to the preservationist values of oral history, and as such can be thought of as resulting from the meeting of those two fields. Take, for example, the more recent writing of American radio producer/aural historian Charles Hardy III:

> Oral history interviews, as we all know, are performative, and each person's vocalizations – language, accent, intonation, sonority, cadence, tonality, vocabulary – the whole complex symphony of verbal expressions, is living history, a historical artifact, a vessel of culture forged over centuries of communal expression that emerges from the unique form of each of our bodies and lives. Listen to your grandparents, to any nonagenarian, to recordings of Jean Harlow, of Mussolini, or Martin Luther King, or Marilyn Monroe; there is no way for the imagined world of the written word or the best of actors of stage and screen to touch the authentic voices captured by aural historians. (Hardy III, 2009, 150-151)

Although this reads as a paraphrase of Orchard's theorizations, it is exemplary of the merits offered through audio media for the transference of personal account.

Oral history, as a practice, was designed to give authorship of historical events to those who experienced them firsthand (Sharpless, 2006). Writing on the justification of collecting oral history accounts, American historian W.T. Couch (1939) wrote "[t]he idea is to get life histories which are readable and faithful representations of living persons, and which, taken together, will give a fair picture of the structure and working of society"

(cited in Sharpless, 2006, 20-21). Often implied in the collection of stories, however, is that the assemblage only represents the voice of the interviewees. But these voices, while providing an account of the past, are only a part of the larger story, the story that also involves the recordists, the editors, the archivists, and countless others involved in the process of creation. This entrenched connection between recordist (researcher) and interviewee (subject) relates to all fields of social science. The history of the recorded document is not something that is unconnected from the cultures it was used to 'preserve,' but is rather an integral "part of that history" (Sterne, 2003, 321).[6] Orchard's interpretation of the historical account, the juncture of voice and memory, resulted from his adaptive use of recorded sound, which more than likely motivated his adoption of the title aural historian. As the audio document was the final product, the recorded voice offered not only the individual's narrative but also the emotions experienced during recollection. So as individuals today listen to the recorded voices of the *Living Memory* collection, the personal accounts of many of BC's founding pioneers are heard. But that is not all that is heard. Orchard's aesthetic biases and the influence of a public broadcaster producing an oral history collection can be detected as well.

In the introduction to *The Oral History Reader* (1998) editors Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson suggest that oral history is "the interviewing of eye-witness participants in the events of the past for the purposes of historical reconstruction" (Grele, 1996, 63; cited in Perks and Thomson, 1998, ix). While this definition recognizes that our interpretations of the past are based upon available sources and are an attempt to provide a representative portrayal, it exemplifies the visual bias that often dominates the discipline. While the definition of oral history is somewhat malleable, as Orchard was keen to demonstrate, it is generally understood as containing two areas of practice: oral reminiscence and oral tradition (Budd, 2005). The definition given above refers to oral reminiscence, the recollection of past events (Tosh, 1992). Oral tradition, on the other hand, is the embodied tradition as performed and spoken by members of a community and is understood as being "the collective property of the members of a given society"

[6] Sterne (2003) further emphasizes that the motivation for this audio preservation was very much the entombment of culture, the capture of 'dying cultures' which is a particular way of constructing and presenting ethnic identity.

(Tosh, 1992, 182). This distinction of recall and action is reminiscent of Cartesian thought, the division between the mind and the body. Orchard's approach to historical account through aural history avoids this division by approaching the individual in a more holistic manner — the sound of memory in action. Not surprisingly then, Orchard found the definitions of oral reminiscence and oral tradition inadequate. With regard to the recording of reminiscence, he stated: "It's only history as far as I'm concerned in a very limited way and that is as soon as you make this document, this recording, it becomes history. Five minutes after it is a historical thing, and fifty years from now it is going to be even more historical" (Orchard, 1978). Aural history, for Orchard, is found somewhere between oral reminiscence and oral tradition. It was the manner in which the individual spoke of the past that the tape recorder was able to document and preserve.

The oral label posed its own set of limitations, implying that "they [oral historians] just went for the content of the speech" (Orchard, 1978) rather than listening to the way the content was expressed, the paralanguage. Orchard's critique of the oral history discipline resulted from his view on the emphasis of transcription: text over speech.

> Put it in the book, put it on a shelf where the academic can pick it out, the one who is all eyes and no ears ... As you know, if you have ever seen a transcription much, in the way you look at it, compared it with the original, you are missing half the meaning. (Orchard, 1978)

While ironic that the material of this thesis fits the description of the academic "who is all eyes and no ears",[7] this raises the point of why transcriptions are relied upon for the dissemination of information: efficiency. This relates to the spatial bias discussed by Innis (1951), where the functionality of resourceful distribution allows for greater access to more materials but comes at a cost, and at an even greater cost for the aural historian. While each stage of transcription introduces levels of interpretation and transformation, and that this must be considered when exploring historical accounts, it is difficult to argue against the value of such easily produced and accessed material as a compressed text file. However, as Innis (1951) warned of the dangers of an imbalance between time- and space-binding media within a given society, Orchard was adamant in

[7] For reliance on written documents and lack of reference to the original, aural content.

fostering an awareness of the relationship between time and place in the province. Aural history offered, for Orchard and other aural historians, the ability to record physical impressions of time and place. Through his system of levels of remove, he adapted the potentials of aural history to the radio format. Where transcription obscures the stages of transformation, levels of remove highlight them. Rather than removing the complex path dialogue has taken from the speaker to the listener, levels of remove emphasize it. Aural history is a method designed to provide a sense of autonomy for the speaker while levels of remove presents those speakers in a dialogue with the mediated format.

## 2.4. An Unequal Balance

Other than Orchard's article "Tape Recordings into Radio Documentaries" (1974), which currently exists as the only document on Orchard's media theory, it was only in 2005, when Robert Budd's thesis "'The Story of the Country': Imbert Orchard's Quest for Frontier Folk in BC, 1870-1914" was published that any form of scholarship provided a detailed account of Orchard's career. Prior to Budd's thesis, Orchard's name and programs had only appeared in a handful of articles and publications. Of these, Truax (2001), Hardy and Dean (2006), and Franklin (2009) all draw comparisons between Orchard and his contemporaries, American documentarist Tony Schwartz and British producers Charles Parker, Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger. Key to all of these comparisons is the discussion of foundational practices in the representation of place through sound. Schwartz, a media theorist who wrote *The Responsive Chord* (1973), recorded the sounds of New York City and from 1945 to 1976 broadcast them on his public radio program on WNYC. Parker, MacColl and Seeger wrote and produced the *Radio Ballads* (1958 – 1964) for the British Broadcasting Corporation. The series developed a groundbreaking approach by incorporating recordings of "actuality" with "songs and music written in the folk idiom…interwoven" (MacColl, 1981).

Budd's thesis provides a succinct account of Orchard's career that culminates with a systematic analysis of the *Living Memory* collection. Budd wrote his thesis in the History Department at the University of Victoria and draws his analysis from readings primarily in anthropology, ethnography and history. Although this provides valuable insight into Orchard's methods, the approach applies criticism drawn from other fields

that forces Budd's interpretation of Orchard into an existing academic paradigm. While I find the thesis to be an exceptional account, I take issue with Budd's (2005) suggestion that Orchard's work falls under the heading of "amateur salvage collector" (15), as he "believed that he was recovering an authentic past" (15) by "using oral history as a window on place and as a means of nourishing a community identity" (9). While I do agree with Budd that the title of salvage collector is somewhat applicable, particularly that Orchard "would transport salvage ethnography directly into the nation-building mandate of the CBC" (Budd, 2005, 43), I partially disagree with his rationale. In his writing, Budd cites Tosh's (1992) claim that in oral history "personal reminiscence is viewed as an authentic instrument for re-creating the past - the authentic testimony of human life *as it was actually experienced*" (16; my emphasis). As discussed here, Orchard's approach to recorded sound was in the aural characteristics of the past being brought in to the present. Whether the stories were factual or not was not nearly as important as the emotional response of the interviewee while recounting the stories of the past.

We can further dispel Budd's claim by recognizing that the act of recall is an act of mediation, and that the claim to authenticity is misleading, as, while the reminiscence of the witness does contain authority, the description is itself an artifact of the recollection process. Budd (2005) claims that "Orchard believed that he was uncovering the voice of the past", and providing an "unmediated view" (177). He supports this claim by citing an interview with Orchard who said, "I'm very interested in the fact that this way of doing things... you get them [the old-timers] to tell you the story of the country and the stories of their experiences in the country" (Budd, 2005, 45). So while the interviewee is speaking of their own experience (voice of the past), the process of recall is an act of mediation. In other words, Orchard was aware that these stories were personal accounts of people's experiences, but were not necessarily factual – this was his argument with historians who mistrusted such anecdotal evidence; he felt that the story remained true for the speaker and that was enough. So while Orchard did search out 'authentic' characters, he was aware that the recorded documents were artifacts of the recording process just as he argued "that the documented accounts were only historical through the passing of time" (Orchard, 1978). While I agree that Orchard could be considered as having practiced something akin to "salvage" ethnography, he was not trying to preserve

culture, per se, rather he was documenting the impressions or interpretations of his interviewees' pasts. He was not recovering the past; rather, he was recording the resonance of the past as heard in the voices of those who experienced it.

Budd's thesis does provide an extensive analysis of the content contained within the *Living Memory* collection that clearly demonstrates Orchard's "selection process" (Budd, 2005, 68). Not only does this provide a list of topics discussed, but also discusses the gender and ethnic makeup of the collection. Most significant to Budd's analysis is his assertion that Orchard was keenly aware of the contributions each individual made to the development of the province, and that each interviewee was given the opportunity to "voice to their experiences" (Budd, 2005, 75).

An overview of the existing literature on Gould, the WSP and Orchard will demonstrate the need for further research to be conducted on Orchard's contributions. Any search, be it in a library catalogue or a web search, will turn up a sizeable number of references for both Gould and the WSP, yet there is a relative silence about Orchard. Gould's public figure generated extensive popular media coverage during his career and a legacy that continues to be theorized and critiqued in academic discourse (Carr, 2006). The WSP enjoyed a somewhat autonomous existence and, to a certain degree, wrote its own history for a good portion of the group's existence; a history that is shifting to a more contemporary discussion and analysis as various scholars are turning to the origins of the field (Akiyama, 2015; Bijsterveld, 2008; Marontate et al., forthcoming; Sterne, 2003). Compare this to a search for material about Orchard, which, other than links to archive collections, turns up one dedicated publication — the 2005 Master's thesis from historian Robert Budd.

It is difficult to think of a Canadian musician more iconic than Gould. For example, writings range from his relationship to his piano (and piano tuner) (Hafner, 2009), how the droning sound of a vacuum helped develop tactile techniques for performing specific pieces (Payzant, 1978), to his hidden sex life (Friedrich, 1989), his addiction to prescription pills (Ostwald, 1998), or to the significance the calculated manipulation of visual media played in the establishment of his fame (Carr, 2006). However, while his idiosyncrasies are documented in abundance, and their continued

discussion reinforces his legendary status, his uses of media and technology warrant an overview as it demonstrates a tension between isolation and communication that is foregrounded in his documentary series, the *Solitude Trilogy.*

In the article "Counterpoint: Glenn Gould and Marshall McLuhan" (1986), Paul Théberge writes: "Glenn Gould was a quintessential 'McLuhanesque' figure, living as though technology was an 'extension' of himself" (110). The significance of this is made apparent when considering that Gould used technology to isolate himself from both the public and his friends, claiming to have entirely "telephonic" relationships with certain close friends (Cott, 1984). His use of the recording studio, and most importantly the ability to "splice" edits of multiple recordings to create otherwise impossible realizations (Gould, 1966), established Gould as a renegade performer in the classical recording world — enabled his transition from public concert-hall performer to a completely mediated one, something related to Pierre Schaeffer's idea of acousmatic music.[8] Throughout Théberge's article, the author makes multiple connections between the discourses of Gould and McLuhan, ultimately suggesting:

> themes of isolation and technology are intimately linked to Canadians precisely because it was, in part, an attempt to overcome the problem of geographical isolation that made Canada so dependent on communications technologies. However, the contradiction embodied in mass media technologies — those based on a system of centralized production and individualized consumption — is that they simultaneously connect and isolate us. If Gould's ideas have been perceived as controversial it is because, by placing himself at the centre of the contradiction, he has revealed our own ambivalent relationship to media and technology. (125)

Théberge (1986) is implying that Gould's use of alienating technologies to isolate himself from and still maintain levels of communication with the public essentially embody the uncertainties many Canadians face when confronted with representations of a national identity. The paradox of Gould's public persona can be seen as a manifestation of the CBC's role as national voice, a voice so prevalent in the Canadian psyche that it often

[8] The contemporary use of acousmatic is credited to Pierre Schaeffer and François Bayle, the French electro-acoustic musicians who challenged composers and listeners to think about sound only in the sonic domain, devoid of visual and real-world source.

goes unnoticed — that the use of technologies to connect the isolated individuals, simultaneously, is so customary that becomes difficult to imagine one without the other.

Through a contemporary lens, the WSP, like Gould, offers many contradictions that provide insight into the group's motivations and choices. For many years the majority of writing on the WSP was by the group's members, or affiliates. Some significant works are: Schafer's *Tuning of the World* ([1977] 1994), which is largely recognized as one of, if not *the*, foundational text in sound studies; Truax's *Acoustic Communication* ([1984] 2001) adapts many of Schafer's and the WSP's concepts by reducing some of the rhetoric and prescriptive terminology in favour of promoting the concept of "acoustic communication", the idea that sound is a mediator between the listener and the environment. Key to Truax's (2001) adaptation of the "soundscape" is the placement of the listener at the centre of a system of communication where sound is considered the mediator between the individual and the environment; finally, Keiko Torigoe's (1982) Master's thesis "A Study of the World Soundscape Project" provides a survey of the group's background, as well as its research and educational motivations. Throughout the 1990s and 2000s Truax (1995; 1996; 1999; 2002; 2008; 2012) and Westerkamp (2002; 2011) wrote and composed extensively in the field of soundscape composition — a field of research and composition that largely originated as a result of the group's archival recording project, the WSP library.

Today there is a growing amount of literature dedicated to Schafer, Truax and the WSP's legacy. By analogy, if the field of acoustic ecology were a torch relay, the WSP would have passed on to the World Forum for Acoustic Ecology (WFAE), an international collective of acoustic environment researchers. The WFAE publishes the journal *Soundscape,* an outlet for many of the group's diverse members. More advanced and contemporary uses of the WSP's concepts can be seen in the work of Vincent Andrisani (forthcoming) who uses sound and the notion of acoustic community to examine the changing political and social climate of Havana, Cuba; Jennifer Schine's (2013) work on memory walks as a methodology for aural ethnography examines how sound provides new ways of examining "a sense of belonging to place"; Milena Droumeva's (2014) studies of smartphone documentation of everyday soundscapes; or, Randolph Jordan (2010; 2012) who applies concepts from acoustic ecology to film

studies as a way of examining the audio-visual relationship in cinema. Jordan has also spent time working with the WSP archive to develop longitudinal connections between the various eras of Vancouver recordings, and recently published the chapter "Seeing Then, Hearing Now: Audiovisual Counterpoint at the Intersection of Dual Production Contexts in Larry Kent's *Hastings Street*," which details the 2007 post-production addition of audio for a 1962 film shot in Vancouver (Jordan, 2014). In the chapter, Jordan compares the film's sound, constructed through foley and sound effects library, with recordings from the WSP archive (recorded around the same era). Jordan's work with the WSP archives is particularly interesting as it demonstrates the possibilities for longitudinally designed collections.

A more critical reading of the WSP can be found in Sterne (2003) who challenges some of the group's philosophies, particularly the idea of schizophonia. Schafer devised the term "schizophonic" to refer to a moment of disjuncture between sound and environment (Schafer, 1977, 88). While adapted from the etymology of the Greek *schizo,* "to split", Sabine Breitsameter has aptly pointed out that McLuhan used *schizophrenia* to describe literate societies, because "phonetic writing split apart thought and action, and passion and intellect" (Breitsameter, 2011, 19). In Schafer's discourse on sound reproduction there is a deeply embedded contradiction; on the one hand reproduced sound is unconstrained and possesses a very real potential for disrupting the balance of acoustic space. It maintains no reciprocal relationship to the surrounding upon which it encroaches. On the other hand, the recording and documenting of sound offers the ability to examine sound — being the result of actions in the environment — thus providing the listener with the potential for better understanding their environment. Ruth Benschop puts this another way: "The very technology that serves to preserve sound is at once guilty of destroying what it is employed to save" (2007, 487). While the contradiction of Schafer's stance arises from his perspective as an acoustic ecologist, it suggests a primacy of unmediated sound (Sterne, 2003), thus creating a hierarchy of mediation — an aesthetic value system that today is the most repeated critique of Schafer's work. In the article "Voices in the Soundscape: From Cellphones to Soundscape Composition", Truax (2012) provides a more nuanced reading of Schafer's concept by examining the function of the voice in the contemporary soundscape. As he writes, "sounds are experienced in a place, but they are not necessarily *of* that place; we

can refer to them as displaced and disembodied, or perhaps more accurately, re-embodied via the loudspeaker" (2012, 62; original emphasis). His article refers to a series of electroacoustic embeddings, which requires a listening competence to decipher, organize and navigate a given soundscape just as Orchard asked listeners to navigate his levels of remove.

## 2.5. Summary

As the past is continuously being reconstructed, Orchard's notion of aural history is a way of creating engagement with the past, of complicating it. A brief survey of the Massey Commission in Chapter one has demonstrated the complex relationship Canada, as a nation, has with the mediation and idea of a national consciousness. However, we must remember that any technology or practice that permeates a culture becomes a part of that culture (Sterne, 2011). The cliché that being Canadian equates to being isolated within vast geographic space often ignores the fact that this understanding was largely encouraged through very intentional uses of media (Druick, 2007b). The "ambivalent" relationship many Canadians share with technology is highlighted through the realization that the same technologies used to connect individuals across time and space further encourages different forms of isolation (Théberge, 1986). This is to say that while the representation of communities on the CBC has become as much a part of Canadian identity as the communities they represent, those very communities were also influenced by the technologies used to preserve them. The sounds from Canadians, their voices and environments, became identifiers of a community that is 'plugged in' together, connected and sharing; the sounds of Canada were increasingly becoming mediated.

While Orchard was fortunate to be the type of person 'authorized' by the CBC to produce Canadian stories, he was motivated by giving such a 'voice' to almost forgotten members of Canadian society. He believed he was engaging in a pseudo-conversation with the listeners — a voice that would engage with the listener to highlight their placement in the grand narrative of Canadian history. If it were not for the national interest, it is questionable whether or not his radio programs would have been created; more significantly, whether or not the oral history collection would have even been

possible. As with the story of all recording technologies when in the hands of a select few, this raises questions about power, ideology and value (axiology). As Druick (2007a) has demonstrated through the comparison between documentary and social sciences, these are fundamental questions of documentary practice that, along with epistemological views on history, culture, and ideology, will continue to evolve and change over time.

As Jody Berland (1997) writes: “Rather than celebrating or condemning the capacities of specific technologies, this paradigm suggests we seek a better balance among space- and time-biased technologies and knowledge forms” (78), Innis offers a comprehensive method for examining the effects of media on cultures in transition. In the following chapter, I will demonstrate that as a result of Orchard’s motivations as an aural historian, his production work resulted in media practices that resolve some of the concerns Innis (1951) wrote about. I will demonstrate that Innis’ theorization of space- and time-binding media offers an insightful approach for examining the historical significance of the media practices developed by Orchard at the CBC and SFU.

# Chapter 3.

# CBC and SFU: Production Techniques and the "Document in Sound"

## 3.1. Introduction

This chapter will consider the works Orchard produced for CBC Radio as well as his pedagogical contributions at SFU. Through an analysis of writings, interviews and lectures conducted by and with Orchard, this chapter will provide an overview of his production methods, by focusing on his levels of remove system. As Orchard was motivated by both his role as radio producer and aural historian, a discussion of his philosophies on sound and recording will demonstrate an advanced understanding of audio media.

## 3.2. Mediating a Mediator

In the article, "Tape Recordings into Radio Documentaries" (1974), Orchard articulates his theorizations of, and methodologies for using recorded sound. There also exist a series of recorded lectures and interviews from around the same time (while working at SFU) that are available in print form (transcripts) and original audio recordings at the Provincial Archives. Throughout all of this discourse is the argument that the tape recorder provides the ability to "record feelings", and that he considered his works "documents in sound", as opposed to the more general description of "documentary". The inflections, tone, and tempo of the speaker, Orchard (1978) claimed, were all fundamental elements of the recording. It was the distinction that "emotions are historical" which compelled him to promote aural history over oral history. For Orchard, the historical quality of a recording was not only in the message the recording contained,

but rather that the recording itself became a historical artifact by virtue of time (Orchard, 1978). He recognized that the document in sound was in itself an artifact of the production process, and believed that through playback the aural impression of the individual's "living memory" of the province's past allowed the emotions of his informants to be represented through audio media. In her discussion of the haptic potentials of cinema, Laura Marks (1999) argues that recorded media retains a fossil-like "trace of an object that once existed" (227), suggesting that the physical imprint on film allows the audience to "touch something [through film]…to be in contact, mediated by time" (Marks, 1999, 50). Similar to Marks' conception of media being a physical interaction, Orchard believed the tape recorder offered enhanced methods of representation for both historians and storytellers. As a lecturer at SFU he reasoned that "to edit tape" was "just like writing good English", and that it was not only beneficial for communication studies but would also benefit a number of sociological disciplines as well (Duffy, 1978, 8). Given his impassioned promotion of the capacities of recorded sound, his uneasiness towards the label of documentary is understandable. As an aural historian he believed he was providing more than a creative representation, he was documenting the emotional response to the past made audible through recorded discussions. This chapter will consider the permeable motivations of the aural historian and radio producer, and the influence Orchard's keen awareness to mediated sound had on the development of his system of levels of remove.

While the label 'documentary' has been a part of contemporary discourse since John Grierson ([1932] 1966) described it as "the creative treatment of actuality" (146; cited in Orchard, 1974, 29), many terms have been used in its place since. Within Grierson's definition is the understanding that the audience "is formally suspended between having access to reality and having an awareness of the filmmaker's enframing, as well as other limitations and constraints on the interpretation being shown" (Druick, 2007a, 12). This suggests an almost overwhelming possibility of options for rendering reality into mediated form, to the point that contemporary filmmakers like Werner Herzog see fiction and documentary as existing along a continuum (Herzog and Cronin, 2002, 95). So, while this understanding "undercuts the very claim to truth and authenticity on which the documentary depends" (Nichols, 2001, 24) it suggests a recognition towards the constructed nature of mediation. While Orchard preferred the label "document in

sound" over "documentary", he felt that Grierson's "clumsy description" (1966, 145; cited in Orchard, 1974, 29) was appropriate. Orchard considered two modes of documentary, one that was "concerned with prepared material" where programs were researched, written and performed, and the other being "recordings of happenings and in particular from extempore comments, discussion and reminiscences" (Orchard, 1974, 28). His productions used both approaches (the prepared and the extempore), relying on the perspective of the speaker and the aural characteristics of each recording method to suggest to the listener the speaker's relationship to the historical event.

Early forms of audio documentaries can be traced to Germany in the early 1920s where young intellectuals such as Hans Flesch, Hans Bodensteedt, and Bertold Brecht experimented with new forms of representation in the relatively new medium. In 1929, Flesch, director of the Berlin Radio Hour, wrote: "We need to fashion not only a new medium, but a new content as well. Our program cannot be created at a desk" (cited in Hardy and Dean, 2006, 517). For example, Brecht's 'concert listening' expected the audience to participate collectively from remote locations. It was, however, the 'cinematic' exploration of actuality though sound that began even earlier with Russian Dziga Vertov in 1916 that originated the new sonic perspectivism. Vertov's "'laboratory of hearing' produced documentary compositions as well as musical-literary word montages" (Schöning and Cory, 1991, 316) that foreshadowed the potentials of aural representation that are still being explored today. With the ubiquitous nature of recording devices today, the 'imagined possibility' of sound technologies almost 100 years ago appears self-evident, but the story of how these techniques of representation came to be is anything but. In the (then) new format, Vertov "imagined the possibility of 'photographing sounds and noises' and of 'radio-film'—we might imagine these to be dreams of a future art of sound rather than any reality of the time" (Madsen, 2010, 395). Similarly, German director Walther Ruttmann, whose *Weekend (*1930) stands out as being one of only two sound collages of the time that can be heard today (Schöning and Cory, 1991), explored the potentials of sound montage by experimenting with the semantic meaning of environmental sound.[9] Ruttmann was able to avoid reliance upon

[9] Often, when a voice is heard *it* provides the context for the environmental sounds which accompany it. Ruttmann intentionally worked against this paradigm.

the voice by sequentially editing sounds along an imagined timeline of a suggested place — a weekend getaway from the loud cityscape to the country farm. According to Russian filmmaker W. I. Podovkin, he "re-solved the problem of sound in the most spontaneous and basic way through his technique of associated montage" (cited in Schöning and Cory, 1991, 316). The chronological series of sounds orient the listener within a linear timeline and through the envisioned place. The early experiments in sound by noted film directors Vertov and Ruttmann represent the envisaged possibilities of the representation of place through sound.

The maturing relationship of sonic representation and techniques of affect developed significantly during the Second World War. Increased budgets of state funded broadcasters in England, the United States and Canada provided journalists with portable wire recorders that allowed for increased access to remote locations that had never before been heard in broadcast. Canadian reporters Matthew Halton and Marcel Ouimet used the sounds of “barrages great and small, the talk of tankmen over their radios, and the sounds of battles overheard” (Powley, 56-57; cited in Hogarth, 2010, 127) to demonstrate experiences of the front lines. In these cases “*actuality* was equated with location sound” (Hogarth, 2010, 127; original emphasis) and environmental recordings were emerging as part of the broadcast narrative. The use of recordings made outside of the studio connected listeners to the world in ways never before experienced through sound. Similar to how the camera had previously shifted the public’s perspectives on major events, the portable tape recorder enabled the broadcasting of extemporaneous events. Most importantly, individuals of higher social status no longer dominated historical records; the lives of ordinary people became more accessible and, most importantly, part of the mediated collective memory.

In *Projecting Canada: Government Policy and Documentary Film at the National Film Board* Zoë Druick (2007a) compares the dominant world views of social scientists and documentary filmmakers throughout the 20th century, highlighting in particular the transition from singular to pluralistic understandings of the world. This shift relates to the “anthropological turn”, wherein the “grand narratives” of “positivism and structuralism” were challenged in favour of a more “humanistic” approach to social studies (Kalb et al., 1996, 6) — this “turn” will also be discussed in relation to the field of history (and oral

history). While attitudes toward objectivity and subjectivity have greatly changed since Grierson coined the term 'documentary', the function of narration has largely remained the same: the construction of representation (Chamberlain, 2006). It is in this shift from a singular narrative to a pluralistic one that we begin to understand Orchard's emphasis of aural over oral, as oral history often ended as written history through transcribed text and paraphrasing to fit the historian's voice (in text) — the removal of the personal interaction in favour of efficiency that concerned Innis (1951). For Orchard, the qualities of the recorded voice were representative of the individual: "Because what is so frequently important is that we experience what lies behind the voice — namely the person" (Orchard, 1974, 39).

## 3.3. Levels of Remove

Orchard's technique of employing the qualities of sound to further the stories' narrative developed over the years at the CBC, and while his early productions (such as the *Living Memory* series) could be considered primarily voice as text his later productions (*A Journey of Two Summer Moons* (1974) or the *People in Landscape* series) suggest a connection to soundscape studies through the inclusion of environmental sound as narrative element, a distinction that will be covered in the final chapter. Most important to Orchard's techniques of representation, however, is the inclusion of the reverberation of the speaker's voice in space, as his main technique of using environmental sound was the documentation of the individual in their own place, opposed to the artificial, acoustically isolated space of the recording studio. In his theorizations, there is a complex relationship between the individual and their environment. What drew him to so many people, the way they expressed themselves and their past, was that he believed that you could hear the impact of the environment in the way they spoke.

One of the more striking examples for highlighting the influence the tape recorder had on Orchard's development of narrative is found in the use of multiple voices to portray something of a single impression of the past. The program *Skeena: River of the Clouds* (1962; 1976) opens with a description by Orchard that can be considered something of a leitmotif to his entire career:

Orchard: Memory is a river. It begins as a drop of cloud on a cool mountainside, and is lost in the sea. A river is memory.

Looking back today, the inversion of memory and river can be read as a clever reference to the potentials afforded by tape: the ability to splice, juxtapose, compare, or layer sound sources that would not likely happen without mediation. However, a more significant realization about the piece is found in Truax (2001), where the author suggests, "[Orchard] creates a flowing 'stream of consciousness' in sound by skillfully linking different speakers, sometimes with such smoothness that each seems to continue the thought of the previous one without a break. The river of voices flows as relentlessly as his geographical subject" (221-222). Truax's suggestion is that the program itself becomes a metaphor of the content, where the audience floats down the audio steam as voices approach like bends in the river, ever shaping the story of the river. Shortly after the introduction, interview subjects recorded at different times are heard intersecting one another's sentences.

Orchard: And little Hazleton became the hub of all that North Country. A place where the pack trains waited for the big canoes to come up river. And these were Haida war canoes, used as freight canoes.

Male 1: They were made from big cedar trees from the Queen Charlotte Islands, you know. And they ran everywhere from thirty to fifty, maybe sixty feet. They were huge, some of them, you know.

Female 1: Oh, they were great big canoes. I remember them making them. They'd go way back in the woods and pick out a great big cedar tree. And they would just hew it out in the shape of a canoe and bring it out, and they would work on it right in the village there. And I remember waking up in the morning with the sound of the axes, or whatever they used.

Male 1: They all hewed it out their little hands (sic), you know. It took them months to make a big canoe…

Female 1: And when they were ready to spread out they'd put the water in the canoe and throw rocks, hot rocks in it and they'd steam and open it out. And I used to watch them as a child, you know, they would build holes and put a stick in there and that's how they measured how thick it was all over. And then they would put these crossbars in it, you know, where they would sit for paddling and (Male 1) they had a very high piece at the prow. Different to these canoes in the South, these are very flat. And then at the stern it rose way up again for the big steering-sweep.

After the section on the building of the canoes, Orchard describes the building of the Port Essington trading post at Spokeshoot, along the Skeena River, by Robert Cunningham.

> Orchard: So travellers for the interior would disembark there and hire one of these canoes and a crew of native people to take them up the river.
>
> Woman 2: I think it was September ninety for, when we left. Ken Cole (?), the father, had charge of the mission there. And things were being mismanaged at Hazelton so they sent for him. We went by canoe.
>
> Man 1: The average canoe, ah, carried a skipper and four men, like deck hands, you see, and five passengers as a rule. And they carried two tons head weight freight besides, so you can imagine they were pretty big ships.
>
> Woman 2: We had the centre of the boat, fixed up very comfortably, you know, the little canvas topping, there we sat the four children (laughs) and mother, cause father had gone ahead of us, you know.

By using different accounts of a related event Orchard was able to foster an impression of an era of time in British Columbia's past, as reflected upon by members of that original community. The juxtaposing of the male and female voices in what could be read (in transcription) as a single narrative highlight the importance aural characteristics played in Orchard's understanding of recorded audio's potential as a historical tool.

The nuanced understanding of sound, particularly the qualities of the voice, relates to Roland Barthes' essay "The Grain of the Voice" (2013 [1972]). In that essay, Barthes considers "*the encounter between a language and a voice"* (505; original emphasis) by exemplifying the significance of the act in the process of bringing a work to life: "the 'grain' is the body in the voice as it sings, the hand as it writes, the limb as it performs" (509). The essay considers the relationship between the script and its performance, and the autonomy of the individual through the realization. Barthes (2013 [1972]) refers to the "geno-song" as the point of exploration between performance and the material (performance, autonomy, originality), whereas the "pheno-song" is the necessary information to express cultural significance (script, core idea). It is when performers engage with the scripted material to create new interpretations, argues Barthes, that more significant communication occurs. Barthes' motivations for the essay

was what he saw as individual culture being lost to commercial interests, “the ‘truth’ of language - not its functionality” — the grain of the voice — was essentially being removed from cultural practice (507). Returning to Orchard, it was specifically this quality of sound that compelled him to focus on the aural representation of his interviewees, how individuals used their audible presence to communicate their unique existence. Orchard did not consider the stories recorded on tape to be historical recordings,[10] but rather it was the geographic influence and the impact of living conditions (often in remote locations) on the way his interviewees spoke that was of historic value. In other words, the tape recording was a mediated imprint of the cultural and geographic impression made on the individual’s memory: the presence of memory, as relayed through the voice, during the settlement period of BC. As with Orchard’s concerns with oral history and the text, the words spoken were important because their retrieval evoked some form of an emotional response from the interviewees. It was the juncture of text and emotion, in the mind of the listener, that Orchard believed was an artifact of historical significance.

Orchard developed this interview technique by often asking his interviewees to explain what they heard, or smelled or saw while reminiscing. Not only did this help to revive memories for the speaker (directing) but also provided the listener with more vivid and tangible accounts that would develop as the recall became more descriptive. He was, after all, extremely selective (casting) in the type of people he would choose to record. As mentioned, individuals were selected based on two basic criteria: active memories with an ability to recount, as well as the knack of communicating those memories in a manner that was aesthetically pleasing. He sought interviewees, like his long time collaborator Martin Starret, who were "aware of the significance of history, where the time had passed ... [they] would try to describe it as vividly as possible to recall it and bring it into the present for us" (Orchard, 1978). Take, for example, this transcription of an interview with Starret:

> And another time, it was after this Graham Bell, wasn’t that the name of the man that got this telephone working first? Telephones installed in the

[10] Regarding the historical value of a recorded document, Orchard stated, “It's only history as far as I'm concerned in a very limited way and that is as soon as you make this document, this recording, it becomes history. Five minutes after it is a historical thing, and fifty years from now it is going to be even more historical” (Orchard, 1978).

> store here and another one down in the hotel, I mean the Hudson's Bay store in the Fort Hope Hotel. And ah, they were gonna put a job up on this dad Yates and he didn't understand that how people could talk over wires could hear each other plainly. And he was outside or something fooling around and they had it fixed up, 'Now if the phone rings ten o'clock you put Yates on.' So this other fellow over here was a Scotchman at the other end, and uh, Fraser the store manager was busy, he said 'Hey Yates, answer that phone! I'm busy,' so Yates comes in, picks 'er up and listens. Never said a word and kept listening and listening, and then he dropped it 'Well I'll be damned', he says, 'that thing talks Gallic too!' This other fella was talking Gallic at him all the time as all put up and it just kept coming. He said 'if that darn machine doesn't talk Gallic too!' (Starret, 1963)

While the introduction of the telephone into communities was a significant moment in the process of modernization, for Orchard the significance of this was the way Starret was able to contextualize the introduction of the technology.

This simple observation that the manner in which we speak is different from how we write carries considerable weight when distinguishing between oral and aural history. Orchard was unwavering about this distinction, claiming that when we write we do so in such a way that compensates for the additional information such as tone, tempo, etc. (Orchard, 1978). It was this awareness that motivated his aesthetic choices as aural historian, which in turn influenced his radio techniques. Interestingly, oral/aural historians Hardy and Dean (2006) argue that Orchard's narration makes "extensive use of a formal male narrator and a prose that reads better than it speaks" (520). They, however, appear to be making their entire assumption about Orchard's career through an analysis of his first production, *Skeena: River of the Clouds,* the revised version which featured Orchard as narrator. The original version had featured Haida artist Bill Reid. While his insistence on one voice at a time (being in strict opposition to Gould's contrapuntal radio) did result in a narrative that appears linear, the levels of remove approach to commentary greatly shifted Orchard's role by situating the narration as another character from a particular vantage point of time and place, as opposed to an omniscient and anonymous narrator that stands apart from the event. Nevertheless, while this technique did challenge the traditional role of narrator as all knowing and objective, his productions did often contain narration that provided a compressed rendering of facts based on interpretations that were essentially Orchard's (whether these were read by Orchard or an actor is

inconsequential). So, as the scripted dialogue established continuity by contextualizing the stories of individuals, the emphasis on perspective represented through levels of remove established tangible relationships between speakers and events. While the narrator provided a perspective that was further removed than the other speakers in any given work, the connection to the story shared by all speakers was emphasized through the structuring of perspective.

## 3.4. Techniques of Actuality

As Orchard developed his techniques of representation over more than a decade at the CBC, he became a foundational figure in sound design for documentary media. Although environmental sound only became a larger component in his later works, his use of the sound of voice in space was a fundamental component to the aural history collection. With the exception of *River of the Clouds,* a survey of Orchard's productions for the CBC demonstrates a trajectory of expanding the sound palette for the representation of space on the radio. Through an increasing interest in the documentation of the aural characteristics of individuals, Orchard developed a self-reflexive understanding of mediation and the effects of sound reproduction technologies. In an interview with the CBC Orchard described the process employed in the making of the *People in Landscape* program *Hell's Gate* (date unknown) as such:

> One of the ways I have clarified it for myself is to conceive of different kinds of sounds coming along from different levels, rather like an orchestration … coming from different levels of instruments. It isn't exactly the same, but you get the ground bass, you might say, of the event itself if you were there and there were sound effects. For instance, when we were going down this wild river with the Boy Scouts, the ground bass is really the noises of the boats banging on the rocks and the boys shouting and jumping in and out of the water — all this kind of thing. Then the next level would possibly be my comment on what's happening. Then another level would be a conversation with somebody, dialogue; maybe we'd stopped on a sandbar, and so we were reviewing what has passed and what is to come. Then another level would be away from all that altogether; all that is the actuality. Afterwards, I'm interviewing somebody and we're reminiscing, bring back — the voices — that will float in over the top at certain places. Or I'm carrying on the narrative myself afterwards, looking back at it, commenting on another level. Again, it's not out in the open air; it's done inside. But the background and particular

> sound effects you've got helps to distinguish these different levels. Finally, there's a level of an actor enacting as if in reminiscence the character of Alexander Mackenzie and also one of the character[s] of Simon Fraser based on their own journals. (McColl, 1973, 2)

This example demonstrates a complex mixture of sound sources for providing a broad and visceral representation of time and place. While his later works more commonly employed such ambitious practice, a majority of his oeuvre tends to focus on the mixture of a few 'levels' at a time. For example, the docudrama *Morning at Metlakatla*[11] makes use of mixing re-enactment with running commentary and narration. Interestingly, the program does not use first person accounts, thus omitting recall. The program is about William Duncan, an Anglican Missionary and the controversial mission in Metlakatla established the mid nineteenth century. Duncan persuaded a number of aboriginals from the Port Simpson region to found a new Christian city, one that was free of "heathen" and European influence, as well as being somewhat autonomous of church and government management. The program shifts between Orchard's narration and dramatic re-enactments and poignantly ends with Orchard making concluding remarks on location in Matlaktla.

> Actor: I shall never again set foot on Canadian soil. While I was in Washington and Philadelphia Mr. Thomson and a party of our people searched the coast of southern Alaska and found a very suitable location at Port Chester on a net island, for which the American government has granted us squatters rights. And here we are, all safe, through the God's gracious protection. In the fall of the year, the year 1887. Already our joyful axes ring in the somber forests, building a new Metlakatla on these untroubled shores. To God be all the praise and glory, amen.
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> Actor: A change has at last come over Metlakatla. A large body of Mr. Duncan's Indians have removed to a place about seventy miles distant, just within the United States territory of Alaska. Before leaving the Indians destroyed their houses and left the village to a large extent a wreck. I and my faithful band remain.
>
> Orchard (running commentary):(Ambience fades in: birds heard in the expansive background). Thinking of the conflicts as I came up this morning, it was heavy. Heavy feeling everywhere.

[11] No known date of broadcast other than sometime in the 1970s. The program was presented on the program "CBC Monday Evening".

> As the hours went by they seemed to resolve themselves because Metlakatla is so peaceful now. The sun is warming everything up and the breeze is playing with the trees. Birds are flying everywhere: squawking, chirping, and singing. The children were playing and the men were hammering. (Ambience fades out).
>
> Orchard (narrator): It was noon and there was the ferryman approaching up the channel to take me back to Prince Rupert. The water was sparkling around him. I had seen all there was, I suppose, all there was to see. I had come like a traveller who passes through. Like a stranger, coming and listening, and going away again.

Although this piece is atypical to the majority of Orchard's works for the CBC (as it relies primarily on re-enactment), it is representative of the effectiveness of levels of remove. As the majority of the story is told through re-enactment and narration, Orchard uses running commentary to begin (describing the arrival at Metlakatla by boat) and to end the program (reflecting on the place's history and his personal experience). The bookending of extemporaneous observations establishes the dramatization as belonging to historical account.

While the possibilities of recorded sound in communicating an understanding of place might appear more evident today, in the context of radio in the early 1960s it was a different story. It was only when the tape recorder became available that location recording emerged as a practicality for broadcasters. Prior to tape, wax disc recorders (similar to the phonograph) were used by CBC radio for collecting 'instantaneous' recordings beyond the confines of the studio. In the 1930s, the CBC invested in wax recorders for the purpose of preserving the dialogue of key events (such as speeches made during a Royal visit) for future broadcasts (Hogarth, 2010). Around the same time, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Radio had been building portable recording units in small lorries and driving them to remote locations for the creation of "special features" (Orchard, 1974). At the time, the process of broadcasting actuality, as it was referred to at the time, was further complicated by the editing process, in which a series of the devices were used to mix down selections of recordings to single discs, which were then played 'live' on air (Franklin, 2009). The process of dubbing down greatly reduced the clarity of the audio signal as distortion was added with each duplication. While the wax disc or wire recorders of the time did offer the possibility of recording outside of the

studio and increased the presence of extemporary recordings on air, it wasn't until the tape recorder was incorporated by broadcasters that the potentials of capturing and relaying 'actuality' became a realized practice.

The often debated relationship between reality and representation has been perhaps the most challenging aspect of the documentary form since its emergence in the early 20th century. While contemporary film scholarship considers works to be both representational of the event as well as an object in the present (Clarke, 1997; Marks, 1999; Shaviro, 1993), the challenge of mediation is being aware of the effects of the representation. Sterne (2003) writes that the idea of "vanishing mediator" (218), that a copy faithfully represents the original form, is a cultural myth that has been exploited by advertisers of reproduction technologies. The promise of fidelity has been one of the great marketing strategies of the 20th century. Edison's "Tone Tests", for example, capitalized on the infancy of the audience's listening experience with reproduced sound (Thompson, 2002). The importance of Sterne's claim is recognizing the impact advertising has had on the general understanding and interpretation of recording media. As consumers subscribe to the belief that the mediated representation is just like the original, we must also consider how this influences the interpretation of representation in all forms, including documentary film and audio.

In one of the many insightful moments of *The Audible Past*, Sterne (2003) critiques the notion of original versus copy in regards to reality and recordings.

> By virtue of their physical location, all sounds are *different* sounds, my argument is historical in scope: the 'original' sound embedded in the recording ... certainly bears a causal relation with the reproduction, but *only* [original emphasis] because the original is in itself an artifact of the process of reproduction. Without the technology of reproduction, the copies do not exist, but, then, neither would the originals. (Sterne, 2003, 219)

Perhaps the most useful application of this understanding is in debates regarding authenticity in reproduction, most notably found in arguments surrounding Walter

Benjamin's concept of the *Aura.*[12] If the original is an artifact of the recording process, as Sterne argues, what is the role of authenticity in a mediated society? I suggest that as Orchard considered recording as producing artifacts, he also recognized that the recordings were of accounts made specifically for the recording. Just as the recording technology creates its own perspective, the recounting of the events for documentation produced unique moments of reflection.

With the tape recorder came many benefits that shaped how recorded audio is thought about. The accessibility to events, both near and far, the efficiency of editing, the ease of duplication, and the improved signal afforded new ways of thinking about the representation of the world through sound. Franklin (2009) suggests that the inclusion of remote recording radically shifted the general audience's relationship to the radio in England, from passive listeners to frequent contributors. Perhaps most importantly, like the 35 mm camera, the tape recorder became a ubiquitous device that permeated the daily lives of many homes with modest incomes. Not only did tape enable private acoustic space through the introduction of the Walkman (Bull, 2004), but it resulted in a new generation of unintentional documentarians. It could be, as Orchard (1974) wrote, "a serious tool or a light hearted toy" (29).

Just as the editing process implies a manipulation of events, it is easy to forget that the act of recording impacts equally on the formation of the document. Who is the recordist? What is the environment like? What kind of dialogue is encouraged? What equipment is used? All of these factors play into the creation and interpretation of artifacts made historical over time. These were questions that were fundamental to the early development of soundscape studies and will be covered in Chapter four. As well, I will examine the impact of audio editing from the perspective of both producer and listener in relation to Benjamin's (1936) argument that the juxtaposition of recordings

[12] While Benjamin's *Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* ([1936] 1968) is his most well known writing on this topic, a more nuanced reading that bypasses the quasi religious implication can be found in *The Arcades Project* (1999) in which he states: "The trace is the appearance of a nearness, however far removed the thing that left it behind may be. The aura is the appearance of a distance, however close the thing that calls it forth. In the trace, we gain possession of the thing; in the aura, it takes possession of us" (1983; 447). For a thorough survey of Benjamin's uses of the term see Miriam Bratu Hansen's "Benjamin's Aura" (2008).

presents new ways of imagining the world. Similar to historical accounts, recorded events are often accepted as fact, as singular truths: 'photographic evidence,' for example. This issue is not raised to discredit the value of representation, but rather to suggest that it implies authorship and effect. While the recording process requires a set of techniques and technologies to be performed, it must also be recognized that the performance of recall follows a similar process that contributes to the subjective rendering of reflections of the past.

As Meaghan Morris (1990) wrote, "Anecdotes need not be true, but they must be functional in a given exchange" (15), Orchard's recording method was designed to portray impressions of the region's history. The interviewees, the dialogue and aural qualities, provided the listener with inscriptions of the characters of BC's past, and the artifacts contained on tape provided, for Orchard, a sense of the past.

> Well, they were factual in a kind of way, but very very limited. After you had heard about thirty, or forty, or fifty from one particular ... area, you began to feel through all this to the true currents that were running through that part of the world ... In a way that I would never get from the history as it has been written, or printed, or reproduced in some way. (Orchard, 1978)

As Orchard considered the recording a historical document only through the virtue of time passing, and was more interested in 'a sense of place' rather than providing a definitive account, his productions allowed for a sense of playfulness on the part of the stories he collected. While he favoured certain interviewees for their unique vernacular and active memory, Orchard generally was not concerned with fact checking, or avoiding contradictions. Rather, by recording a multitude of perspectives, he gathered moments, or impressions, that were suggestive of the suggestive of the past, not *the* past.

> I know it [fabrication] happened with Harry Marriot and his tall stories ... I had somebody come along after and say, "Well, that's so much bullshit", or whatever it was he was saying, you know. And I don't know, and I don't care, because it's introduced as ... "Caribou Tales" ... True, it's about certain people and so on like that; so what? If I'm definitely making a historical program, then of course you're going to check every darn thing. (Laughter) And by the end of that, you'll have such a dry sort of program that nobody will listen anyway." (Reimer, 1978, 6)

This is not to suggest that Orchard was indifferent to historical merit: “I would certainly be as accurate as I could.” Rather, he was exploiting the medium as best he knew; “you’re really trying to draw people into a sense of time, a sense of atmosphere. Even if the story is untrue, largely untrue and rather tall, it gives a sense of the feeling of the times” (Reimer, 1978b, 6). Like Sterne’s ‘vanishing mediator’, Orchard understood that the accounts recorded onto tape were not historical artifacts of the times they portrayed but rather became historical artifacts from the time they were made. Ultimately, these were accounts made for the tape recorder at the behest of Orchard’s direction and as such would not have existed in such form without his intervention.

While levels of remove is used to varying degrees throughout his career, it is more apparent in later works, such as *A Journey of Two Summer Moons* (1974). This program was based around recordings made of Orchard and Vancouver actor and broadcaster Peter Haworth as they traced the steps of British explorer and fur trader David Thompson in 1807. Mixed with the observations of the landscape (how it appeared when Orchard and Haworth did the journey while speculating on how it would have appeared similar and different to Thompson) are recordings of an actor reading Thompson’s journal mimicking what they believed Thompson’s voice would sound like; “Just as we in our conversation slip into the past, so Thompson’s subjective reactions and observations are brought into the present” (Orchard, 1974, 35).

Collins: The Kootenay Plains are low and level. And the country are [sic] not withstanding the rugged snowy appearance of the chain of mountains. All around [sic] is pleasant [ambience fading in], and one might pass an agreeable summer here.

Orchard: We’re at Kootenay Plains, the famous Kootenay Plains. Near a bridge, a little wooden bridge that goes across the North Saskatchewan here to the other side where the plains are very extensive, and a good deal of this is going to be flooded.

Haworth: It is undoubtedly a very impressive area. It’s so big. I’d imagined before I came here that it was just a small sort of meadow like area, maybe a few miles. The actual area is much, much bigger. Hemmed in by mountains.

Orchard: Perhaps half a mile up the bridge here, where a little stream comes down, it’s more than likely that it’s just there that Thompson camped. It’s right by the flats of the river. They could draw up their canoe very easily and the horses would get pasturage, and there was wood just behind them. And

of course they had the water from the stream itself, which they (Haworth: Ya) which they'd use rather than the water of the river.

Haworth: It was, I suppose, in a way a kind of oasis in the wilderness to them. It was green, fresh, lovely. The dark green of the fur trees up the mountainsides, and the very pale green of the plains in front of us. It's an area that people seem to remember all their lives to fall in love with, as it were.

Orchard: There's a kind of rhythm about this place, things are almost in a dance.

Haworth: Everything is quivering, isn't it?

Orchard: Yes, it's very light. It's kind of a livable place in spite of the fact that the mountains are fairly close around. But they're very beautiful, light in colour and not brooding, too much, as they are further up when the river gets up around, really into the central core of the Rockies. It's a bruiting big ice field sort of country.

Haworth: This was really the last place where they could rest for a few days; take stock of their provisions; hunt; and prepare themselves for the ordeal of crossing the mountains [ambience fades out].

Collins: At the foot of the rocks behind the plains are the lodge poles of a Kootenay camp presently deserted. I observe that their tents are constructed with poles, like those of our plains Indians, and covered with leather in the same manner. Opposite the plains on the south side of the river we see many more deserted camps where all the huts and tents are formed of split wood…

While location sound was used in many of his productions, he was first and foremost a recorder of personal accounts. Aural history implied, for Orchard, the priority of the individual's presence over the content of their dialogue alone. While environmental sounds can be heard in most of Orchard's productions, the inclusion of such sounds was a practice that developed over time. As such, *A Journey of Two Summer Moons,* one of his final productions, stands out in Orchard's oeuvre for its use of environmental sound, which Orchard referred to as 'aural space'. Sounds "belong[ing] to a quiet river, a rushing mountain, bulldozers building a dam, a windy promontory, birds, the gurgle of water under a bridge, road traffic, a train" (Orchard, 1974, 34) were discussed in the running commentary, comparing what they experienced in relation to what they believed Thompson would have experienced a century before. From a sound studies perspective this technique of interpreting the environment through its sonic diary affords listeners

today a chance of hearing some of what Orchard and Haworth heard, while also providing insight into how they interpreted the environment themselves.

As Sterne's vanishing mediator concept brings awareness to the effects of mediation, the system of levels of remove indicates the motivations for Orchard's production practices while suggesting attentiveness to the limits and potentials of mediated representation. While he was concerned with the recording of authentic individuals from the region's history, he was not as concerned with the accountability, per se, of their descriptions. Actuality, for Orchard, was the present. Ultimately, recollections of the past were only significant in how they impacted upon those in the present. We could say that when Orchard recorded accounts he was listening for resonances of the past imbedded within the memories of each individual.

## 3.5. Preserving Emotions

Aesthetic judgments such as the quality of voice (i.e. being phonogenic), content and tempo all guided Orchard's decisions in the recording process. I suggest that Orchard's background in literature, history and theatre, as well as his training as a radio producer, instilled in him a unique understanding of how to approach media production. Was this artistic approach a downside to the long-term value of the collection? I don't believe so as the collection speaks of Orchard's encounters and veneration with the region's "old timers". I do, however, feel that an understanding of Orchard's motivations is beneficial to the interpretation of the *Aural History Collection* in the Provincial Archives and along side Budd's work (2005; 2010) it is my aim that this thesis contributes to that understanding.

Any collection raises questions about power, ideology and value (axiology), and the *Living Memory* section of the Aural History Division at the Provincial Archives is no exception. Orchard, like many oral historians and anthropologists of the time, was a white, upper middle class, and foreign educated male. His background had instilled a different epistemology than most of those he interviewed. He was interested in the province's past and wanted to learn about something he did not know; what Paul

Thompson refers to as the *modus operandi* of the oral historian (cited in Budd, 2005, 11).

An understanding of the value system that guided the collection is vital to the evolution of its interpretation. One of the key points when considering the archive today is the influence of the aesthetic values of the radio producer. Recording has long been associated with the act of preservation, and decisions about what is worthwhile for preservation have an influence upon how the past will be conceived. Regarding the aestheticization of sound documents, Sterne (2003) states:

> In many ways, embalming is an analog of [the] studio process. Both transform the interiority of the thing (body, sound performance) in order that it might continue to perform a social function after the fact. Like the cosmetic touch-up of corpses, even the most "realist" approaches to sound recording took extensive steps to beautify the product for future ears. (297)

What recording technologies do, Sterne (2003) demonstrates, is preserve the "exteriority" of sonic events for a period of time, with unique bias. The use of recording technology as a way to extend an individual's presence in the social world is a fundamental component to Orchard's approach to media production. Through the promise of preservation he was able to assemble the extensive oral history collection under the fact that many of the interviewees, who had lived through much of the province's developing stages, were nearing the end of their lives. The CBC funded the massive interview collection with the understanding that these recordings would become the basis for future productions (McColl, 1973). The *Living Memory* collection today is the result of extensive bias, the bias of an aural historian who was trying to record emotions (in other words, individuals with active memories) as well as the bias of a radio producer trying to record compelling storytellers.

The practice of collecting interviews prior to any specific production plans was not unique to Orchard's project at the CBC. The proliferation of remote recording practices that had begun in the 1950s through the Canadian crown corporation was a result of the portable equipment and the interest "to enrich the biographical record of important figures" (Franklin, 2009, Appendix). CBC archivists Dan McArthur and Robin Woods had encouraged broadcasters such as Peter Stursberg and Mac Reynolds to

conduct interviews, strictly for preservation, with and about those who were a part of Canada's development (Franklin, 2009). The materials would serve as posthumous memories of the 'great and the good' (Stursberg, 1993, 1). While this demonstrates that Orchard's collection was not unique to the CBC in the assembly of recordings of historical figures, it does suggest a possible unique value to the collection. While historical recordings are understood to preserve the "exteriority" of the sound (Sterne, 2003), Orchard's motivations as aural historian obligated him to document the emotional accounts of his interview subjects. While it could be said that any recording of voice captures emotional inflections, it was the relationship of the emotional response with the story of the past that had compelled Orchard to record the event.

While the distinction between aural historian and radio producer is pronounced throughout this thesis, as a media producer it is unlikely that Orchard was aware of, or concerned with, this distinction. Orchard was a radio producer who focused on historical account. However, as the *Living Memory* collection becomes more historical and significant with every passing day, understanding the choices that resulted in the collection become more pertinent. In the following section I will discuss Orchard's role as lecturer and course designer at Simon Fraser University after his departure from CBC in 1974 as the courses provide great insight into the methods that guided his work at the CBC.

## 3.6. Concept and Design at Simon Fraser University

After 18 years at the CBC, Orchard felt that he had achieved what he could as a producer focusing on the region's past. His final series *People in Landscape* had finished a run of four seasons, and he had been producing individual pieces for various programs such as *Bush and Salon, Tuesday Night* and *Between Ourselves.* That same year, 1974, he took a lecturer position at SFU teaching courses on aural documentation in the Department of Communication Studies. He had been asked to lecture at SFU because "some of the professors up there had heard my work" at the CBC and were looking for a "worker in sound and tape to complement the work in photography ... and the visual side of things" (Duffy, 1978, 8). However, he quickly felt that the work he was more interested in belonged in a more general studies program: "Some of them [the

faculty] did, very definitely [understand], but I had quite a struggle to get the kind of curriculum that I wanted, and to get the courses that I wanted, and I had to explain myself constantly, over and over again, because it was something new" (Duffy, 1978, 8). This sentiment is seen in a letter I presume was addressed to the Communication department regarding the value of Orchard's stream of Aural History courses:

> We all know that when words and numbers became symbols and were able to be fixed in space, our civilization entered a new era. A statement could be read and re-read, interpreted, analyzed, rearranged and so on. The impact this made on human development was so vital that the written or printed word is still the medium in which we carry out the greater part of our academic work. But with the arrival of the tape recorder the fixing of words in space has taken on a new dimension, and it is now possible to make a record of words spoken, including the inflexions, rhythms, tempos and pauses, which themselves are part of the meaning. In addition, something of the personality of the speaker is likely to get onto the tape, together with the background sounds and sense of the acoustic dimensions and qualities of the space in which the words are spoken; and because we are so used to communicating via the written and printed word, we forget that all this, too, can be part of the meaning. (Appendix A)

By mirroring the rhetoric of Walter Ong and McLuhan, and to some extent Schafer, this framing is indicative of Orchard's feelings towards academia's arrested development of the applied uses of media for historical and cultural studies. It echoes Ong's (1982) 'neo-orality,' the techniques of oral society with the technologies of a literate society by placing an importance on the evolution of methods of communication, particularly developing, as he saw, the potentials of the tape recorder.

Given that sound studies today is not an autonomous discipline per se but rather provides different frameworks for examining and making new connections between existing fields of study, we can comprehend some of the tension that arose through Orchard's conception of audio documentation education. This section will look at the courses Orchard proposed and explain, from his perspective, why they failed to realize their full potential.

His background in history, theatre, literature, as well as interest in art and music that had provided him with an exemplary skill set for the CBC put him at odds with some of the faculty at SFU. "Most CBC producers have these kind of backgrounds, and they

didn't get any particular training; they got training in other things, and then they were brought together into this different medium, but one that could make use of this sort of thing" (Duffy, 1978, 11). In this regard, particular course proposals were considered too broad to belong to a single department and were more suited to general studies, or cross-discipline programs. Reflecting on this, he stated:

> When I got down to it and was working out my programs and began to see the importance of this, more and more importance of this to the university as a whole, more and more I began to feel that their interest in it was altogether too narrow and special for what it was, and that that kind of work should have been in general studies and applied to geography, history, literature, playwriting, education...a general understanding of what it is to make a tape and what it is to edit a tape [while] rather basic and rather important, [is] just like writing good English, writing an essay and things like that. (Duffy, 1978, 8)

For example, Appendix B shows the proposed outline to the Faculty of Canadian Studies for a series of courses based around Orchard's research of BC's history. What is of particular interest in this document is the list of contributors it calls for. As the province's history relates to all residents, the History course would have had contributors from "Archeology, Anthropology, Political Science, Sociology, Economics, Communication Studies, Biology, Geography and Geology" (Appendix J). The broad range of contributors would provide the program with a breadth of interpretations, values and methodologies.

Regarding the making of documentaries, Orchard wrote: "I think it's very important that students have a certain background, which communication students, by and large, don't have: first of all in history, and particularly in BC history, both of the content of BC history and the general training of history -- the historical method, the approach to documentation, approach to source material" (Duffy, 1978, 10). While this shows Orchard's bias to his own research interests and education, it also represent a comprehension of complexities that are beneficial for the construction of documentaries.

While less ambitious, his *Aural History I* course outline for the Communication department represent his core epistemology and methodology of acoustic representation.[13] The outline reads:

*CMNS 332 - OBJECTIVES*

*To Learn about:*

1. *The nature of sound tape recording and its meaning for today.*
2. *The document in sound: its various categories.*
3. *Acquiring information from tapes: listening, making outlines, selecting.*
4. *Using the information*
5. *Related research.*

*(Work on the above objectives will culminate in the first major assignment, which will be written.)*

6. *Recording techniques and qualities.*
7. *Conducting recorded interviews.*
8. *The running commentary.*
9. *Narrative.*
10. *Tape editing.*
11. *Compiling a simple documentary in sound.*

*(The second major assignment will be a compilation in sound of interview material and narrative, while the third major assignment will be a review and critique of sound tape recording as explored during the course.*

While this suggests a general discussion on the uses and potentials of the tape recorder, it also indicates elements of levels of remove. Most significant is the importance of 'The running commentary'. While journalists did experiment with location recording as early as the Second World War, subjective interjection was a developing technique. Reflexive documentary filmmaking had been developing through the early

[13] I believe that this document is from 1974 as there was no date attached to the original document. (See Appendix E)

1960s (Nichols, 2001); however radio productions of the time were often more conservative — relying more on the traditional and authoritative performances of factuality, as constructed in the studio. This has been emphasized in Biewen's (2010) introduction to the edited book *Reality Radio: Telling True Stories in Sound,* writing about the relatively recent practices (post 1980s) in radio documentary,

> In fact, our essays [in the book] argue that it's the very subjectivity of their work — the editing of words into 'poetry,' the manipulation or even manufacturing of sound, the synthesis of chaotic material into a cohesive idea, even the injection of pure fiction — that allows them to say something important, to achieve something closer to the 'real.' The embrace of the subjective is part of what distinguishes this work, which I'm broadly calling documentary radio, from conventional news. (5)

I suggest that Orchard's ambitions in academia were ahead of their time. While the lower level course *Aural Documentation I* continues to this day (renamed *Introduction to Electroacoustic Communication* to fit within Truax's framework), the larger scope of Orchard's hopes for the inclusion of the tape recorder as a literary device continues today as a recognized, yet largely unrealized, possibility of pedagogical practice.

As convinced as Orchard was about the potential of the tape recorder as a device for literacy, he often found himself at odds with the different departments, particularly History. This is not unique to Orchard, as the discipline had, until around the early 21st century, "been engaged with two major battles with the established tradition of historiography … the struggle to ensure acceptance of the validity of oral sources" as well as "the attempt to widen the horizons of historical research" (Passerini, 1998, 53). Oral history is recognized as being conventionalized at Columbia University under the guidance of Allan Nevins whose book *The Gateway to History* (1938) proposed opening up history to the voices of individuals, "a systematic attempt to obtain, from the lips and papers of living Americans who have led significant lives, a fuller record of their participation in the political, economic and cultural life of the last sixty years" (cited in Sharpless, 2006, 21). In the interviews available at the Provincial Archives and his own writing, Orchard (1974) argued that in the 70s the practice of oral history was discredited in the academic world because of the role subjectivity played in the creation of the story. He stated that arguments against oral history were often along the lines of "it's all just hearsay; it's just coming through memory, and I want facts" (Duffy, 1978, 12). To justify

the validity of ordinary individuals, Orchard considered the quantity of recordings to provide a counter to the institutionally instilled hierarchy of historical account. By providing individuals with a voice of authenticity and authority, his motivation was that “if you can ... get numbers of tape recordings, numbers of witnesses about one thing, then you’re coming closer to the truth” (Duffy, 1978, 13). We can consider this something akin to a pointillistic approach to representation, a belief that embodies the credo of oral historians: the possibility of multiple truths.

For Orchard, the tape recorder was a device for extending the communication palette with the ability to record, and by extension preserve a sense of emotion. He argued that it was this feature that caused departments such as History to often oppose its use (Duffy, 1978, 3). All recorded accounts are based upon interpretation and are a synthesis of information, crystallization into mediated account. The tape recorder offered Orchard the ability to record the inflections of individuals, as it was “the feeling that’s in the voice, as voice, not that comes on the page afterwards, is historically important” (Duffy, 1978, 12). While the tape recorder did not provide a window to the past, it did offer additional means for documenting the memories of that past.

Under the course number CMNS 336: *Aural Documentation I* the outline (Appendix F) reads as follows:

> Students must know how to make recordings on a tape recorder. They may use their own equipment — reel-to-reel or cassette. Those supplied by the department are Uhers.
>
> The meaning of sound tape recording for today: categories of sound documentation: how to handle content on tape: techniques of interviewing, editing and compilation. As a preliminary requirement it will be important to know how to carry out research and produce a clear, well-structured <u>written</u> article.
>
> The first assignment will be written, the second will be an exercise in editing, compiling and narrating. For the last assignment the student will record an interview, extracts from which will be compiled with narrative to form a short "thesis" or "documentary" in sound.

As the portable tape machine was a relatively new device in the 1970s, at least in the hands of the general public, establishing a familiarity amongst students was a

challenge. Orchard not only struggled to get students to a level of competency for making documentaries, but felt that he faced an uphill battle with the different departments in communicating the potentials of the new technologies. Today as the radio documentary form has flourished through the proliferation of devices and continually developing means of dissemination, courses and programs in universities throughout the world are beginning to distinguish the radio documentary from journalistic practice. While Orchard aimed to establish a level of competence with the tape recorder, he was more concerned with the goal of developing a mediated consciousness, an awareness to the possibilities and pitfalls of electroacoustic sound.

## 3.7. Summary

Writing about the intersection of effect and affect of sonic mediation, sound artist and scholar Salomé Voegelin (2010) writes, "Listening when it is not concerned with sharing the meaning produced in its practice is indifferent to the failure to do so, and remains focused on the solitary production of what it hears, —whereby, in this phantasmagoric practice, objectivity and subjectivity exist in a close and reciprocal bond" (46). While this reduction might seem like a stretch from Orchard's emphasis of emotion as inscription, Voegelin's dissection of listening to its basic action suggests "the meeting point of the semiotic and the phenomenological" (ibid). By highlighting the intersection of the literal and the abstract Voegelin provides a methodology for exploring the oral and aural elements of audio documents. While this understanding of sound and listening in contemporary pedagogy draws awareness to nuances of mediated sound it retains the intersection of sound and language, a distinction that resonates those arguments suggested by Barthes (2013 [1972]) and Orchard (1974).

A true proponent for the recognition of audio media's possibilities, Orchard's frustration with the institutionalization serves us today as a reminder of how much has changed in regards to technological acceptance while also reminding us of how rooted in traditional methods academia remains. While the use of recorded sound continues to develop through practice and theory, the frustrations vocalized by Orchard in the 1970s continue to be echoed today by prominent figures across various disciplines. For example, anthropologist Steven Feld (2004), suggests that "Until the sound recorder is

presented and taught as a technology of creative and analytic mediation which requires craft and editing and articulation just like writing, little will happen of an interesting sort in the anthropology of sound" (471).

Through an overview of Orchard's background and time spent at the CBC and SFU, this chapter has demonstrated the epistemological position from which he navigated his career as a producer of radio and historical records, and as an educator. Although his feelings of disappointment about the breadth of training available for students of documentary studies are understandable, it is equally comprehensible why such ambitious programs were not fully realized. What stands out most from this survey, however, is Orchard's understanding of the potentials of recorded sound for not just documenting history, but for furthering an understanding of the potentials of audio media. The tape recorder, for Orchard, was not just a device for recording dialogue. It was a means of capturing the presence of an individual; it was the recording of the juncture of dialogue and voice in space that created a historically significant document.

# Chapter 4.

# Orchard, Gould and the WSP: Sounding Communities

## 4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the argument that it was in this era — largely due to the inclusion of the portable tape recorder into production practices — that a particular sense of place was fostered on the CBC through the broadcast of 'acoustic communities'. It is on this precise point, I argue, that Gould, Orchard, and the WSP converge in their common aim of representing Canadian communities through their innovative use of environmental sound on national airwaves.

The balance of control and freedom in the creation of cultural products is a fertile ground for analysis when discussing the sound work of Orchard, the WSP and Glenn Gould. While all three were held to the standards of the CBC and each project dealt uniquely with the subject of Canadian identity there was, by today's standards, an unusual degree of independence provided to each group. Orchard was able to gather one of Canada's largest oral history collections while collecting materials for current and future broadcast; Schafer had negotiated the editorial rights of the *Soundscapes of Canada* series; and finally, Gould, the golden child of the CBC, had been given his own studio and engineer for experimenting with production techniques, as in his *Solitude Trilogy*. It will be demonstrated throughout this analysis that while each of these producers did enjoy the liberties of their projects there is a resounding and complex theme of place as well as an overwhelming intersection of producer and subject that ties these productions together.

An emphasis on both technique and technology is relevant while examining the motivations that compelled these producers to use audio recordings to increase listeners' awareness of their unique locations of both time and place. The large volume of work produced under the headings aural history and acoustic ecology was largely influenced by the possibility of expanding listeners' awareness about their unique spatial and temporal vantage point by representing a multitude of perspectives. Both Orchard and the WSP had prior interest in expanding individuals' awareness of their relationships to time and space, respectively, but it was the inclusion of the tape recorder that elevated their ventures to radically new forms of communication. The tape recorder enabled new ways of examining and understanding the world, something Benjamin (1968) optimistically foretold when he, while writing about the utopian potentials of cinema, described "the dream of a better nature" (362).

While Benjamin's "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1968) is often referenced as an argument regarding the lack of authenticity in reproduced works, it is instead a treatise on the utopian potentials of modern art forms. His essay argues that it is specifically the lack of an *aura,* the perceived one-of-a-kindness, of producible works that frees new works of art from the traditional bindings of authoritarian control: "mechanical reproduction emancipates the work of art from its parasitical dependence on ritual" (224). In other words, Benjamin was arguing against the production of art being tightly controlled by conservative authoritarian figures (who maintain a monopoly on the production of culture). His argument was ultimately that limitless reproduction is cultural freedom, and cultural freedom, not the imagined integrity of the object, is of highest value.

Benjamin (1968) used cinema as an example to argue that the modern perception of the world was being altered by experimental techniques (such as those used by Vertov and Chaplin). Specifically the ability to splice time and space were linked to new ways of thinking about collective experience. While cinema did indeed offer new ways of engaging with the world, the influence of creative practice on perceptual awareness was nothing new; cinema simply offered different ways of thinking about perception. He explains:

> During long periods of history, the mode of human sense perception changes with humanity's entire mode of existence. The manner in which human sense perception is organized, the medium in which it is accomplished, is determined not only by nature but by historical circumstances as well (Benjamin, 1968, 236).

Like cinema, recorded audio is "at once a form of perception and a material perceived, a new way of encountering reality and a part of reality thereby perceived for the first time" (Shaviro, 1993, 41). Audio and optical recording devices allow for an unprecedented representation of the world that not only reflects upon events but influences collective experience and interpretations of them. Orchard's awareness of mediation, its dual nature of object of the past in the present, influenced his techniques of representation – as seen in his dual roles as aural historian and radio producer.

The portable tape recorder provided the possibility of splicing different recordings together to construct a representation of time and place that only exists in the minds of listeners. Mediated identity is the construction of awareness that arose through the influence of media on cultures. In the case of CBC Radio, the representation of place on national airwaves came to embody sounds of Canadians in their environments as well as the sound of the Canadian environment itself. This chapter will examine the techniques employed by Orchard, the WSP and Gould and the construction of place on the radio.

## 4.2. Gould and the Aesthetic of the North

Orchard's treatment of sound and voice can be considered progressive and experimental when compared to the general practices of oral history at the time. However, when we contrast his work and writings with that of the younger Gould, his conservative nature begins to become clearer. While 'aural' implied the qualities of the sounds of the voice, the significance of dialogue cannot be understated. It was, after all, the disappearing stories of the past that had compelled, and enabled, him to record and produce such a collection in the first place.

For Gould, the potentials of recording technology were twofold. At the age of 32 he had shocked the music world by retiring from public performance, claiming that the

concert hall was a dying medium and that its practices compromised musical integrity. He pronounced "the concert is dead". He vehemently argued that the recording studio, and by extension the recorded document, had become the new medium for musical form and function (Gould, 1966). While the studio allowed Gould to address his audience in a more direct manner, and through a means primarily under his control, it also allowed him to remove himself from direct access to the public, essentially isolating himself through the use of technology. From his controversial recording techniques for his piano recordings of splicing multiple takes into one single idealized version to his contrapuntal radio documentaries, the exile of the studio provided a safe place for Gould to explore internal and external manifestations of isolation: the self and the North.

Gould was emphatically drawn to the notion of the North as it provided both a literal and metaphoric concept to explore, as both an individual and member of the Canadian population. Not unique to Gould at all, the notion of the North is richly embedded in the Canadian psyche. Sherrill Grace (2002) suggests, the North "is part of an imagined community called Canada and a defining characteristic, a crucial metonym, for the whole" (50).[14] While Grace's quote demonstrates the ubiquitousness of the North in the Canadian consciousness, it more subtly points to the constructed nature of, or the function of discourse within, the imagined community. This, however, was not the concern of Gould who used the idea to propel himself further into isolation in search of the "aesthetic ideal" of creativity (Mantere, 2012). While Gould explored the isolation from multiple perspectives, he simultaneously projected his public figure further into the psyche of CBC listeners, as part of the imagined community he sought to document.

The three programs that make up the radio series the *Solitude Trilogy* are *The Idea of North* (1967), which focuses on the Northern Canadian landscape; *The Latecomers* (1969), about Newfoundland's outports, and the encouragement of urbanization through a centralized state; and finally *The Quiet in the Land* (1977) about a Mennonite community in Manitoba struggling with the tension between religious isolation and modernization. While the theme of each episode is isolation, it has been argued that

[14] The concept of "imagined communities" was first written about by Benedict Anderson in his book *Imagined Communities* (1983) as a way to explain the modern (since the 18th century) idea of nationalism.

the programs are more telling of Gould's isolation (in the studio and life); as Markus Mantere (2005) suggests: "*The Idea of North* is less a documentary on the Canadian North itself — the Inuit and other indigenous inhabitants, for instance are markedly absent in Gould's documentary — than about Gould's own construction of the North and about his own aesthetic world-view" (90). Over the course of the three programs Gould developed a contrapuntal radio technique that stands as a testament to his creative intellect. An examination of his techniques with knowledge of the technological developments (particularly stereo sound) highlights his adaptive and exploratory nature. While it may be more fitting to consider the works as studies of Gould's self-imposed isolation rather than those of particular Canadian communities, this insight emphasizes the relationship between producer and subject in the construction of mediated representations.

Tim Hecker (2008) has underlined that Gould's transition from public performer to studio recluse was at a "point in which recorded music was at a crossroads, where traditional compositional values were being matched and arguably trumped by production aesthetics" (78). I suggest that Gould's documentaries represent a time where physical isolation was being challenged by encroaching communication technologies — the exact same advancements that Gould was, ironically, using to isolate himself. However, as the "reliance on conventions, norms and canons that make up the 'system'" (Mantere, 2005, 90) had driven the younger Gould from musical performance, he saw in recording technology the possibility that allowed diversity to be recorded, preserved, and most importantly communicated. As Orchard used recording technology as a way to increase listeners' awareness of history and their relationship to the passing of time, and as the WSP used the same technologies to enhance listeners' awareness of their acoustic environments, Gould used recording technology to highlight the mosaic makeup of Canadian identity in the face of an imagined unity, one fostered largely out of the construction of national broadcasts. Kevin McNeilly (1996) suggests that Gould's contrapuntal radio experiments reflect the dynamic makeup of his imagined communities, a "site at which many voices and 'ideas' coalesce, antagonize, support, subvert, mingle, and separate" (87). Mantere (2005) furthers this notion by suggesting that, unlike the contrapuntal music preferred by Gould, the single voice of homophonic

music creates, for him, an inequality within the piece, ultimately promoting that of a "totalitarian ideal."

Perhaps oversimplifying his argument and showing his conservative tendencies, Orchard was critical of Gould's musical approach at representation. In his 1974 paper, Orchard wrote about the danger of "treat[ing] speech as if it were music and composing 'speech fugues' or 'speech sonatas'" (Orchard, 1974, 37). Somewhat contradictory to his emphasis of aural history, he wrote: "To miss the meaning of a sentence is to reduce it to mere sound" (Orchard, 1974, 37). His argument was that the qualities of the sound contribute to the dialogue, and without the meaning of the text the qualities of the sound lose contextual value. While this compresses our understanding of Orchard's treatment of sound, particularly the voice, it helps to define the possibilities he imagined in aural representation. His radio productions were verbal documents enhanced through the qualities of sound: the sound of the individual (voice); the sound of place (reverb, ambience); and, the sound of time (levels of remove).

In comparison to Gould we see the earnest approach of Orchard's attempt at something closer to transparent representation, albeit through emphasized mediation (i.e. levels of remove). While he recognized the aesthetic judgments made in choosing individuals and the stories they told, he did consider the need for his works to contain the integrity necessary for portraying the individual's acoustic presence through sound. Where Gould used voices as symbols of remote and ephemeral perspectives, Orchard found the voice as symbolic of the individual, a character of the past as documented for the present.

## 4.3. The WSP and the Sound of Place

Whereas Orchard drew motivation from the possibility of recorded sound to increase listener awareness of the past as well as to highlight their individual placement within history, the WSP aspired to expand the individual's awareness of their relationship to place. Even prior to his conception of the WSP, Schafer was concerned with the ecological impact of sound emanating from mechanized and amplified sources. His motivations were guided by a desire to make hearing an active experience rather than a

passive one, believing that a consciousness of the acoustic environment would function as the catalyst of political and social action. The apparent contradiction between the positive social potential he advocated for sound technologies, while still abhorring their popular use, has provided many contemporary academics fertile ground for critiquing Schafer's approach (Akiyama, 2010; 2014; Bijsterveld, 2008; Kelman, 2010; Sterne, 2003). However, like the polarized approaches of Orchard and Gould, the contradiction is typical of the evolution of attitudes towards recording technologies (Benschop, 2007). While the recordings began as "trying to retain an ephemeral historic event" the WSP's reflexive response to listening to the recordings in the studio ultimately led to a "new listening experience", one that, in turn, greatly influenced the group's output (Benschop, 2007, 489).

When Schafer moved from Toronto to Vancouver in 1965 to serve as the Resident in Music at the Centre for Communications and the Arts for the inaugural year of SFU, the climate and architecture of the West Coast left the composer vulnerable to the barrage of industrial sound that had been intensifying over the previous decade; "I was struck by the noise of Vancouver almost as soon as I arrived" (Marontate, 2011). The lack of insulation essential for the frozen winters of central Canada, allowed homes on the West Coast to be breached by the increasingly mechanized soundscape, what he would refer to as "The New Soundscape".[15] For Schafer, it was the continual traffic of seaplanes, the influx of mechanical sounds and amplification of electric signals that motivated his politicized reaction to what he perceived as an unhealthy acoustic ecology. Initially, he petitioned neighbours on his own but joined the local chapter of SPEC (Scientific Pollution and Environmental Control Society) with the hope of acquiring a stronger voice. However, Schafer found that SPEC largely neglected the issue of noise pollution, so he took it upon himself to publicize its impact, beginning his crusade against unnecessary sound (Torigoe, 1982, 47).

The WSP grew out of Schafer's campaign against noise pollution in the 1960s and a course at SFU he developed on "noise" and the transformation of "our sonic

[15] *The New Soundscape (A Handbook for the Modern Music Teacher)* (1969) demonstrates the proactive transition towards acoustic design that Schafer would employ throughout his academic life.

environment." In response to the cynicism and fatalism of his early students who felt little could be done to abate the sounds of modern life, Schafer developed a more proactive approach by establishing soundscape and acoustic design studies. The new field analyzed contemporary soundscapes through comparisons with literary and personal (i.e. earwitness) descriptions of sounds and soundscapes from the past. After receiving substantial grants from the Donner Canadian Foundation and UNESCO in the early 70s, Schafer was able to hire research assistants who would form the WSP team, an autonomous group of researchers based at SFU primarily through the 1970s. The team included Barry Truax, Howard Broomfield, Bruce Davis, Peter Huse and, soon after, Hildegard Westerkamp. As suggested earlier, through the inclusion of the hi-fidelity Nagra IV-S tape recorder and AKG microphones into their practice, the research rapidly evolved into a documentary project about disappearing sonic artifacts (Bijsterveld, 2008; Marontate et al. (forthcoming); Schafer, (1994 [1977]). The group produced a collection of field recordings that represent a landmark study in acoustic ecology and field recording practices: completing a study of Vancouver in 1972; a cross Canada tour in 1973; as well as a study of five European villages in 1975. While the original tapes are housed in the Sonic Research Studio at SFU, the collection has been digitized and can now be accessed online through special permissions.

In 1973, the group released a double LP and 72-page booklet detailing the Vancouver Soundscape Project recordings. While the "studio techniques used at that time consisted mainly of transparent editing and mixing of untransformed original recordings" (Truax, 2002, 5) the group quickly adapted musical sensitivities to the recordings, establishing the field of *soundscape composition.* Truax defines soundscape composition as "the presence of recognizable environmental sounds and contexts, the purpose being to invoke the listener's associations, memories, and imagination related to the soundscape" (Truax, 2009, 54).

By reframing the context of sound and environment, the goal is to increase the listener's awareness of the place of origin (Truax, 2001). While there are many audio pieces that could be credited as the origins of the genre that pre-exist the formation of

the WSP,[16] it was the group's "Entrance to the Harbour" (1973) which, unique to the rest of the *Vancouver Soundscape* album, employed relatively simple studio manipulation to simulate the journey a ship would make entering the city harbour. The piece was completed by recording locations (soundmarks) that were chosen to be representative of the passage and arranging those sounds in a chronological pattern illustrative of the actual route. The vessel's engine that made the real journey possible and would have masked all of the soundmarks that made the voyage acoustically interesting had to be omitted from the recording (Truax, 1996; 2002; 2012). "Entrance to the Harbour" was a subtle yet foundational work for the group that questioned what we hear and what we ignore or miss in our daily lives and foreshadowed the possibilities of artfully extracting and arranging the sounds of place.

Following the release of *Vancouver Soundscape*, Davis and Huse completed a coast-to-coast tour of Canada in 1973, documenting the unique, historic, mundane and transitory acoustic elements of the interpreted Canadian experience. A subsequent ten part series of one-hour radio programs titled *Soundscapes of Canada* that aired on CBC Radio's *Ideas* program in 1974 was constructed from materials collected during the Canadian tour. Under the direction of Schafer's autonomous editorial control, the group explored techniques and themes of representation. The first three episodes are more didactic as they are intended to establish the group's methodology and motivations. These include Truax and Schafer's *Six Themes of the Soundscape,* Schafer's *Listening,* as well as Davis and Schafer's *Signals, Keynotes, and Soundmarks.* Following the instructional opening to the series, "more extensive transformation was used with the sounds and their composition" (Truax, 2002, 5), programs such as Davis' *Bells of Percé, Work* and *Games*, Truax's *Soundscape Study* and *Maritime Sound Diary,* and Broomfield's *A Radio Programme about Radio* expanded the conceptual framework of the radio format while also establishing foundational techniques of soundscape

[16] Notably Walther Ruttmann's *Weekend* (1930) which simulated the sounds that might be experienced on a weekend trip from the city to the country; Luc Ferrari's *Presque Rien No. 1 Le lever du jour au bord de la mer* (1970) (trans. almost nothing) which compressed the sounds recorded over the period of a day on a beach in Yugoslavia; as well as many radio works by Tony Schwartz such as *New York 19* (1954) which is comprised of recordings from his postal zone in Manhattan. The recording, according to the Smithsonian Folkways release "reveals the melody and rhythm of everyday life" of Schwartz's neighbourhood.

composition. Huse's 'mappings' of dialects and soundmarks across Canada in the two programs, *Directions* and *Soundmarks of Canada,* demonstrate early explorations of the geography of sound. One of the most unique pieces in this collection is *Summer Solstice,* a program consisting of excerpts from a 24-hour recording the group made in a rural area near Mission, BC. One important distinction about this, and the program *Dawn Chorus,* is that they followed the group's traditional practice of collective creation, whereas the rest of the series represents a departure by crediting individually authored compositions. Ultimately, through explorations of quite radical techniques the works in this series aimed to foreground the listeners' relationship to their surroundings by representing elements of the Canadian soundscape, as heard through a microphone and orchestrated by the various members of the group during post-production; in other words, both phonographic and abstracted approaches were used. The programs made conscientious modifications of field recordings to foreground everyday elements of daily life to affect the audience in a way intended to make them aware of their own acoustic experiences.

As Gould used voice as a signifier of imagined place, the WSP used recordings, from reflections (what they called "earwitness accounts") to chance environmental events, to reconnect the audience with their surroundings through aestheticized interpretations of place. In both cases, for the WSP and Gould, "the sound itself...is pre-eminent" (Orchard et al., 1974, 4), meaning that sound in and of itself was part of the narrative structure; the sound contained an autonomy for establishing the context in the mind of the listener. For Orchard, and aural history, "speech — what people are saying — is the pre-eminent thing" (Orchard et al., 1974, 4); the voice created the context and the qualities of the voice and additional sounds developed a richer perspective. While the three producers used voice, music and soundscape recordings in diverse ways it was always to establish a sense of place on the radio. That sound is an artifact of action in place allowed all three producers to formulate new ideas about the mediated community on the radio: based on their own experiences of different times, different places, and with different relationships.

## 4.4. Critical Comparison of Orchard, Gould and the WSP: Voice, Music and Soundscape

This comparison of Orchard to Gould and the WSP will survey the techniques used to document and represent the experiences of individuals and communities across Canada. I will examine how each navigates the voice-music-soundscape continuum (Truax, 2001, 50) in their production practice to demonstrate unique epistemologies and relationships towards the recording technology while also relating each to the larger theme of Canada as a mediated nation. The analysis will be based upon the more popular productions of each: Gould's *Solitude Trilogy*; WSP's *Soundscapes of Canada*; and a selection of Orchard's works for the CBC. Key to this discussion is the use of environmental sound recordings, as these producers represent a dramatic shift in production techniques for CBC Radio away from a reliance on studio recordings.

### 4.4.1. Orchard

***Voice***

Moreso than in the work of Gould and the WSP, voice is the most significant element of the voice-music-soundscape continuum found in Orchard's productions. As his venture into radio was the result of recording the stories of Constance Cox and her recollections of growing up in the Skeena Valley in the late 19th century, he was motivated to record the reflections of individuals from the perspective of an historian. That he took such a definitive stance as aural historian, as opposed to oral, highlights his sensitivity to the potentials of sound recording as a tool for furthering literacy in an increasingly mediated world. However, statements such as "as an aural historian I'm not much concerned with transcribing" (Orchard et al., 1974, 8) suggest a tension when considering the significance of dialogue in his works.

Studying Orchard's methods today, we can stipulate that he considered the recordings as documenting the juncture of dialogue and speaker, both equally contributing to the impression of the individual on the acetate tape. His statement "emotions are historical" (Orchard, 1978) demonstrates the motivation for capturing the aural characteristics of the individual. It was through the voice that such information was

conveyed — information that would largely be omitted through traditional transcription practice. I postulate that it is in the tension of the oral/aural divide that we can better understand the significance of the voice in Orchard's work as he developed his techniques of representation to bridge the gap between his roles as historian and radio producer.

The program *Patterns of the Valley* from the *Mountains to the Sea* series is a good illustration of Orchard's more general use of recording techniques of constructing a narrative from multiple voices.

> Orchard (narrator): The Hudson's Bay people operated a large farm on Langley Prairie, at the back of the fort. But there was little other settlement in the area, apart from a few cabins owned by trappers or employees of the company. That is, not until the 1858 gold rush which changed the whole quality of life in the colony and brought in hundreds of people of all shapes and sizes seeking their fortunes. It seems that the Indians were not too impressed with them, and the name for a white man in the Chilliwack town is hwalitum.
>
> Interviewee 1: Hwalitum, well that's what the Indians called the white man. Because in them days, those white people up there were travelling to the gold rush, they were starving. Well the Indians began to feed them 'til they get all right, and then they start again. They say the Indians here in this valley as about the kindest Indians that are living, that's what the white people said.
>
> Orchard (narrator): Well if one of these fortune seekers happened to be a farmer at heart he couldn't help but notice the large patches of meadow land down at the delta, or up around the shallow slews and rivers.
>
> Interviewee 2: They just figured this was a cattleman's paradise.
>
> Interviewee 3: The bushes used to grow grey, tall, green brushes; heavy stuff would grow and be green all winter long. Along the edges would be all these strings that was running around in this low, boggy place. And the cattle would just roll in fat there.
>
> Interviewee 4: At that time they knew from one year to the next that the whole whole country was going to go under water. There was a flood for sure every year.
>
> Orchard (narrator): And that created the prairies at…

Though less dramatic than the earlier example of the male and female voices finishing each other's sentences, this example demonstrates Orchard's use of different voices for

the purpose of creating a composite construction. Relating this to the theorizations of Benjamin (1968) who wrote of the utopian potentials of cinema (the possibilities offered through editing) we can understand how Orchard considered this new technology as a means for enhancing understandings of the past, and placements within the present.

An analysis of the use of speech in Orchard's productions is an analysis of his methods of representation. In an interview with Dennis Duffy in 1978 he stated "I centre on people — their experiences, their personalities, the qualities that come through in sound, in the way they speak, and what happens to them; how their lives [are] reflected" (Duffy, 1978, 5). "Levels of remove" is primarily concerned with *voice* as it creates a system for organizing different recordings of characters to emphasize multiple perspectives and relationships; that is, it is a tool for composition.

### *Music*

*Pioneer People of the North* (1962) was Orchard's very first piece for the CBC, and featured recorded music throughout — including Aaron Copland's *Billy the Kid* (1938). In the interview with Duffy in 1978 he said: "Running music behind everything, I think, can be most annoying, particularly music behind actual old-timers talking extemporarily (sic)… The rhythms are so utterly different" (70). Orchard considered *Pioneer People of the North* a learning piece, "like a student's sort of first little mess" (70). Following that, his productions only used music when he worked with composers. His first successful documentary was *River of the Clouds* (1963) that featured original music by John Henry Avison, conductor of the CBC Vancouver Chamber Orchestra, and narration by Haida sculptor and artist William (Bill) Ronald Reid. As well, the series *From the Mountains to the Sea* (1967) received funding from the CBC for centennial celebrations — as did Gould's *Idea of the North* (1967) — and allowed Orchard to work with composer Elliot M. Weisgarber and different groups of musicians. Each episode, focusing on specific regions, featured unique music that was written for ensembles of different instruments. Orchard and Weisgarber had chosen different groupings of instruments to enhance the variation between each episode. Their decisions on which instruments to use were based upon what they believed best represented the episode's subjects (Reimer, 1978, 2). His approach to using music was only to provide an accompaniment to the narration, the music being written to match the rhythm of the

narration. This technique of accompanying the narrator created a very distinct dialect between the voice of the narrator and the voice of interviewee, leaving the interviewees' voices to be heard on their own, in their own acoustic space while the narrator, devoid of any specific space other than the studio, was accompanied by music to enhance the production's mediated atmosphere. This also allowed the aural qualities of the interviewees to be heard on their own, not influenced by external, post-production sound. Apart from the *Mountains to the Sea* series, Orchard moved away from using music in his productions. While royalties and rights certainly favoured this decision (as evident in revised reproductions), it is more likely that Orchard's developed interest in acoustic space and focus on the aural qualities of the voice was most responsible for this aesthetic decision.

### *Soundscape*

Throughout Orchard's career he gradually increased his use of environmental sounds, from originally being the acoustic space of the speaker, as conveyed through reverberation, to the naturally occurring sounds of a place. While most of the sounds in his productions were related to voice and the characteristics of a voice in space, later works included what could be called soundscape recordings, or "acoustic space" as Orchard referred to it. By extending the available sound palette, he conveyed the places he was representing as vividly as possible. While *River of the Clouds* contained the sounds of water and birds as aural cues for the narrator's story, his later productions featured commentary on sounds themselves, highlighting their functions and significance to that particular place. By the time Orchard began teaching at SFU, his interest in sound had extended beyond speech, yet he was still anchored in the significance of the dialogue itself. For Orchard, sound was, after all, an artifact of happenings (interviews, recollections, observations) and as such could be used to communicate activities (not just words) over space (radio) and time (tape).

While multiple 'levels' were used in all of his productions (most commonly narration and recall), rarely did all exist in one. As mentioned before*, A Journey of Two Summer Moons* makes use of re-enactment, and running commentary. However, instead of basing the piece around re-enactments (as is the case with *Morning at Metlakatla)*, the running commentary of Orchard and Haworth makes up a majority of the

program. Field recordings of discussions were made along the journey as they retraced the steps of British-Canadian fur trader David Thompson from 200 years before. Orchard and Haworth's commentary fades in and out of readings of Thompson's journals by actor Michael Collins. The contrast in the aural spaces of the studio (re-enactment) and field recordings (running commentary) emphasize the temporal difference between the different accounts. The absence of external sound in the recording studio stresses the content of the dialogue and the silence of the printed word (although Collins' use of an English accent does appear to challenge this), whereas the ambience of the running commentary accentuates the presence of the recording technology and documentarians in the world.

A similar use of acoustic space, but different balance of 'levels', is heard in the program *In the House of the Old Doctor* (1978). It opens with Orchard spending five minutes standing in the front yard of the home in Victoria, BC, with cars heard in the background, describing the yard and home of pioneer doctor John Sebastian Helmcken. Orchard uses his voice-over description of the sounds absent from the modern soundscape as a way to place the listener in a historical frame of mind. The sequence begins outside as you hear Orchard describing various factors that contributed to the Helmcken House being built. After the introduction Orchard walks inside the house and the transition from outside ambience to a small space changes his vocal qualities as hardwood floors and walls add thick reverberation. The *voice-in-space* becomes the vehicle of mediation as Orchard describes the visual characteristics of the space. This is emphasized in moments when Orchard moves away from the microphone and the amplitude of his voice drops while becoming more reverberant. While discussing the furniture of the home, Orchard describes a conversation he had recorded sixteen years prior (while making *the Living Memory* program *The Old Doctor*) with two of Dr. Helmcken's grandchildren. The piece then cuts to this recorded conversation made in the same location at a different time. Not only is the listener hearing a recording from a different time, but the dialogue is referencing a different time altogether; whereas Orchard comments on the present, the interviewed grandchildren recount a time that only exists in their memories. The program continues in this manner with Orchard remarking on the present condition of this place while using recordings as a way of reaching back into the collective memory of interviewees he had amassed over two

decades as a radio producer at the CBC. The ambience of the home as animated in the sounds of Orchard's presence (i.e. his footsteps, opening doors etc.) and his *voice-in-space* (i.e. how his voice echoes and reverberates) suggests for the listener a mental image of the place in discussion. These cues are subtle and rely just as much on the listener's awareness (that they hear the sound) as on their attention (that they focus on the sound).[17]

*A Journey of Two Summer Moons* and *In the House of the Old Doctor* are illustrative of Orchard's techniques of aural representation as they offer the listener multiple vantage points of the place in reference. The system situates the listener in relation to Orchard as producer and the interviewees as individuals with active memories. Orchard does prioritize the voice in the sense that the voice is the manifestation of the individual in space, and that it is the voice in the space that conveys the emotions of the reflection. It is through the documentation of the acoustic qualities of the individual's presence that the place is illuminated in the listener's imagination. Among the qualities of the sounds used in his productions, the technique of levels of remove provides the listener with information about the speaker's unique relationship to the past, thus highlighting the listener's historical vantage point.

### 4.4.2. Gould

#### *Voice*

In the article "Radio as Music" by John Jessop (1971), Gould claimed that his use of contrapuntal radio in *The Idea of North* (1967) originated from a need to fit the program into the allocated time slot (i.e., as a time compression technique). This justification, however, is unlikely given his musical background and admiration of

[17] Westerkamp (2011) discusses the distinction between attention and awareness in the listening process and how the listener navigates their point of focus. This comparison relates to Truax's (2001) distinction of *Listening-In-Search* and *Background Listening.*

contrapuntal music — particularly the works of Bach, Schoenberg and Webern.[18] As well, one cannot but notice the increasing presence of the technique throughout the series. When listening to the final part, *The Quiet in the Land* (1977), it is apparent that the complexity with which Gould was able to compare, contrast and emphasize ideas and perspectives would be near impossible without the technique. As his use of contrapuntal radio was greatly enhanced by the use of stereo sound (the CBC celebrated the arrival of stereo broadcast by commissioning Gould's *The Latecomers* in 1968), the series can be seen as an evolution of the producer's awareness of the possibilities of creating complex realizations of place through sound.

*The Idea of North* features the use of the contrapuntal technique, but in a limited manner; the interviewees fade over one another within the single audio channel, and this technique only appears at the beginning and end of the piece. The program is based around an imagined train journey on the *Muskeg Express*, from Winnipeg to Fort Churchill and features the narrator Wally McLean. Following the contrapuntal introduction that provides a survey of the different contributors to the program, Gould provides an introduction that explains his fascination with the "the North". As Gould describes his interest in the north and introduces the characters, his voice is heard above a dense assemblage of voices and bird song, but when he transitions to describing the train journey and meeting McLean, sounds of train travel fill the background. The uses of travel sounds remain consistent throughout the piece establishing the illusion that all recordings were made along the journey. He emphasizes a sense of continuity among the recordings by carefully editing the dialogue, as if one speaker were telling their story to the narrator or responding to each other when in fact they were all recorded at different times.

In *The Latecomers* he uses the contrapuntal technique more fluidly as the voices appear to fit around the sound of crashing waves — an allusion to the water surrounding the island of Newfoundland. The sound of waves crashing pull and push the momentum

[18] Contrapuntal music uses multiple voices (melodic lines) that share a harmonic structure while remaining independent rhythmically. Gould's international fame as a concert pianist was established through his 1955 recording of *The Goldberg Variations*, a series of 30 variations of an aria written by Johann Sebastian Bach in 1741.

of the piece, as voices are panned left and right, establishing space in the stereo field to exist simultaneously. Of particular interest in this work is the use of reverberation on the voice of the preacher whose voice seems to traverse the vertical plane, opposed to the more popular horizontal movement of the stereo field. As the piece moves from introduction to the main body, individual voices tend to fade from one to another with very little overlap, focusing on each interviewee at a time (similar to Orchard's technique). The sequences at the beginning and end are the only times in the piece that use the contrapuntal technique. As mentioned above, Gould's use of contrapuntal radio comes to fruition in *The Quiet in the Land* where recordings of multiple speakers are heard simultaneously throughout the piece, an example from which is described below. In this piece Gould uses voice, music and soundscape as equally contributing components.

### *Music*

Music plays a limited role in the first two programs of the series, with the exception of Sibelius' Fifth Symphony being played at the end of *The Idea of North,* where the imagined train journey ends in Fort Churchill. The music is highly symbolic of the open northern tundra, an association with Sibelius' native land of Finland. Conversely, *The Quiet in the Land* is by far the most ambitious episode of the *Solitude Trilogy.* The piece opens with spacious environmental sounds from a Mennonite community (a church bell, children playing, cars driving over a gravel road) that fade into a recording of a church organ, and following the direction of the highly reverberant preacher to "let us stand, please", the congregation begins a hymn that fills the stereo field for the first time with the rich and resonant tones. The voice and dialogue of what could be a preacher begins, but the lack of reverberation creates a noticeable spatial distinction between the recording of the voice and of the music. This opening sequence establishes the rich tapestry of sound sources that make up *The Quiet in the Land.* As the second speaker discusses isolation between traditional Mennonite communities and the surrounding secular society, he mentions listening to Janis Joplin on record. At this moment "Mercedes Benz" is played, panned hard right, essentially isolating it from all the other sounds of the Mennonite community that reside in the mid-central range of the stereo field. Gould's use of Joplin's song represents a critique of consumer culture and the desire for ownership; it is played throughout the piece when mainstream culture is

discussed. The sequence is composed of a montage of sacred and secular sounds; Joplin (panned hard right) is heard alongside the congregational singing that has remained since the opening. The interplay between these two cultures parallels the content of the speakers' dialogue.

Near the beginning of *The Quiet in the Land* there is a comparison made by one of the interviewees between the traditional Mennonite way of life and "great art". By "great" the interviewee refers to "classical" as opposed to "popular". The fugue (the contrapuntal technique of establishing a theme with two or more related yet independent voices) is discussed as a Bach Cello Suite is heard. The low-mid pitched sound of the cello, a very warm sound resulting from the natural reverb, fits in the centre of the spatial field while the congregation is place mid-left while Joplin's "Mercedes Benz" is hard right. Again, like the preacher's voice in *The Latecomers,* the dimensional field of the recording is enhanced through the rich reverb and resonances of the cello. Towards the end of this sequence one of the speakers mentions the challenge many Mennonites face of "being in the world and not of the world", a phrase that Gould fixates on throughout the program. The complexity of the piece is emphasized through numerous moments like this where the use of music is intricately tied to the themes of the speakers. When the effect of such a counterpoint is considered together with the content of the dialogue, Gould's valuation of multiple sound sources becomes apparent. Gould uses the stereo field as a way of mirroring the relationships within the Mennonite community and with the outside world, using the space of the stereo field to represent "being in and of the world".

### *Soundscape*

In *Idea of the North,* the focus of the production is on narration, the environmental sounds merely provide an acoustic setting. The recordings of the train carriages establish a place to imagine the voices as belonging to, but remain background sounds throughout. By contrast, in *The Latecomers* the dialogue is incorporated into environmental sounds in order to add layers of symbolic meaning, as well as an embodied experience for the listener within the acoustic space of the recording. The placement of voices within the stereo field suggests unique relationships to the geography of the island, and the recordings of waves passing across the stereo

field situate the audience in a fixed position as the environmental sounds move around them.

*The Quiet in the Land* builds upon the contrapuntal techniques established earlier in the series. Whereas in the other programs the use of 'keynote' sounds, to borrow a phrase from soundscape studies,[19] such as the train and water, serve as generic reference points that anchor all dialogue to the conceptual root. Rather than relying on one sound to tie the interviewees to a sense of place, or commonality, Gould uses the idea of "in and of the world" as a means to develop tension and resolution throughout the piece. This is achieved through the contrapuntal (and often contrasting) use of voice, music and soundscape.

### 4.4.3. WSP

#### *Voice*

While the *Soundscapes of Canada* series is firmly rooted within an academic research paradigm, only four of the ten programs can be considered as being influenced by that didactic model. The other programs explore environmental sound as a compositional element — what could be considered proto-soundscape composition pieces. The didactic pieces *(Six Themes of the Soundscape, Listening, Signals, Keynotes & Soundmarks* and *Soundscape Design*) employ explicit and intentional use of the narration to instruct the listener on themes and concepts: those intended to inform the listener on what to listen for in the radio programs as well as ways in which to listen in their daily lives. These programs function to promote awareness toward the sound of place with the ultimate goal of creating more ecologically engaged listeners.

Each piece begins with CBC Ideas host Doug Campbell briefly introducing the series and providing the name of the particular program. Schafer then describes the given program, what it's about and what motivated its creation; this is achieved through

[19] Schafer (1977) adapted the concept from music theory where the keynote is the root note, the tonic, around which the composition is based, they are "important because they help to outline the character of men [sic] living among them" (9).

a discussion with its author. These conversations vary, from a didactic description of how the piece *Summer Solstice* was conceived and executed to the almost comical, and deliberately unedited, conversation with Howard Broomfield:

> Schafer**:** Stay very close to the mic, k. Um, actually, listening to your program, I did, ah found, actually listening to your program I did find it … rather inconsistent in places. It's it's a very strange program, isn't it?
>
> Broomfield**:** Um, well… it's the kind of program that I make.
>
> Schafer**:** I know, uh, we had a lot of discussion before we… ah, decided to accept it for broadcast as to whether it was suitable for broadcast, whether it came up to the CBC's high standards.
>
> Broomfield**:** mm hmm.
>
> Schafer**:** Ah, let me cut that because that's too, that's too much (both laughing, quietly). Actually, we did have a lot of discussion, ah, about these programs as we discussed them all, um, as to whether it was suitable for broadcast. Ah, we thought perhaps it would be a bit too far out for many listeners.
>
> Broomfield**:** Ah, it seems to be the kind of thing I hear on the radio all the time. Um, someone said it was a radio program so I just tried to make a radio program the same way radio programs are made.
>
> Schafer**:** So it's a radio program…
>
> Broomfield**:** about radio programs.

These introductions serve to establish the conceptual framework under which each piece was conceived as well as provide credit to the individual authors, which was a new practice for the group who had previously worked collectively.

*Program I: Six Themes of the Soundscape* (Rhythm & Tempo; Ambience and Acoustic Space; Language; Gestures & Textures; The Changing Soundscape; Silence) serves as a conceptual introduction to the series, drawing upon literature, legend, historical account, as well as fundamental principles for explaining properties of sound such as acoustic reflections and reverberation. The key aspect of this program is that it establishes a theoretical connection between field recordings and composition. This connects the use of discrete sonic recordings to a larger thematic structure: soundscape composition. These programs are demonstrative of the techniques that would later

distinguish the genre. As *Program I* follows a more conceptual approach to sound — the narration comments upon and contextualizes the recordings and their significance in mediated and non-mediated form — there is a referential element that establishes an educational tone for the entire series.

In part one of *Program II: Listening* Schafer conducts an "ear-cleaning" exercise. This serves to increase listeners' awareness of their own acoustic environments. Ear cleaning is a practice developed by Schafer designed to open listeners' ears to all the sounds around them (Schafer, 1994; Truax, 2001) and is itself an adaptation of critical listening practices from music education. An illustrative example of Schafer's editorial control in this series is the full minute of silence used to attune the listener to the sound of his or her own environment. In this regard, the series is exemplary of the WSP's motivations of using recording technologies to increase the general public's awareness to their everyday lives as well as to challenge the standard conventions of radio.

*Program VI: Directions,* composed by group member Peter Huse, presents the listener with a mapping of the changing dialects across Canada's southern border. While driving across Canada in 1973, Davis and Huse asked directions from bystanders through the car window while discreetly holding the running Nagra tape recorder on their lap. The piece is comparable to Gould's The *Idea of North* in that it can be considered contrapuntal in the limited manner that voices overlap while fading in and out (as heard in the opening and closing sequences of The *Idea of North)*. However, *Directions* is more focused around the aural qualities of the voice than the content of the speech. In this regard the voices of those recorded could be considered environmental, or cultural, impressions in that the qualities of the voice are indicative of the geographic place they inhabit. This compares to Gould's treatment of the voice in that speakers were often treated as musical voices (in the contrapuntal sense that each voice carried a unique melody or projection). As well, this relates to Orchard's considerations of the aural characteristics of the voice and the impact of emotions (as well as cultural and environmental influence) on the speaker's inflection and tone.

Among the other uses of the voice that stand out is the dialogue with a parish priest found in Bruce Davis' *Bells of Percé,* a piece that could be considered as being

both a work of oral history and soundscape composition. Davis describes the recorded voices as being suggestive of the saints the bells are named after. There is a strangely ominous feel to the opening sequence as the highly reverberant sound of the voice cuts in and out with fragments from the dialogue of the priest. A drone-like sound of filtered bells fills the background as the different phrases, with different acoustic qualities, in both French and English, cut in and out.

### *Music*

While music in the traditional sense is largely absent from this series, the group makes extensive use of musical sensitivities in the form of soundscape composition. After the introduction of *Program I* a pulsating drone begins, and ominous cries of wind are heard as waves quietly crash in the distance. An echoed voice, one panned hard left and the other hard right, recites a mantra on listening. This mixture of dialogue and sound serves to develop a framework for the subsequent radio series while also providing the listener with analytic tools for exploring daily soundscapes. In a similar manner, in the final section Truax, Schafer, Jean Reed and Adam Woog speak about the values of silence while a resonant tone is heard, harmonically pitched through parametric equalization. These two ambiences serve to bookend the program, providing the piece with compositional sensitivity. A similar effect is found in the filtering of recordings of church bells in *Bells of Percé.* The processing transforms the sound from phonographic to abstracted, suggesting the musical qualities as well as the alluding to the historical possibilities of the sounds as suggested by Davis in the program's introduction.

The one exception to the series in regard to the use of music is *Program IX: A Radio Programme about Radio* composed by Howard Broomfield. The program is a kaleidoscopic scan of radio broadcasts as recorded over the car radio by Davis and Huse while driving across the country. In the program's introduction, Broomfield describes it as "being the kind of thing I hear on the radio all the time," suggesting that Broomfield spends a lot of time on the radio scanning different stations. It begins with the popular song *Turn Your Radio On* (1972) by Ray Stevens, intercut with fragments of interviews about radio. Technically, the piece stands out for its use of splicing, layering, juxtaposing, and mixing of recordings. It could easily be considered as a precursor of

micro-editing techniques made popular with dedicated sound editors on desktop computers twenty to thirty years later. Also in the introduction Schafer describes it as "inconsistent" and "a very strange program," and indeed, compared to the rest of the series this is the wild card. Sonically it is suggestive of the *musique concrète* techniques and aesthetics established by Pierre Schaeffer, yet it remains in the soundscape domain by retaining a sense of place, i.e. radio broadcast. The piece at times deals with contrapuntal sound, mixing multiple radio announcers with contrasting styles of music, but, again, compared to Gould's refined use of this technique in *The Quiet in the Land,* Broomfield's work is more impressionistic, composed of washes of sound that fade in and out of stations' signals through the movements of the radio dial.

### *Soundscape*

The most unique element of the WSP's production methods is the malleability of what is defined as voice, music, and soundscape. As one of Schafer's primary motives was to instill in listeners a sense of wonder to the sonic artifacts of daily life (Schafer, 1994), there is a sense of listening to environmental sounds as if they were music, i.e. with the same mindfulness. While the term *soundscape* has been adapted to fit countless mandates, for the purposes of this analysis it refers to the environmental sounds used for the representation of place on the radio. Soundscape composition, according to Truax (1995), is the use of "recognizable environmental sounds and contexts, the purpose being to invoke the listeners' associations, memories and imagination related to the soundscape" (54). The goal is to create in the listener an imagined sense of place, thereby bringing forth acoustic elements that would not otherwise be evident (Truax, 2001). For example, in the case of *Directions*, although the piece is comprised entirely of speech fragments recorded across Canada, the context of the recorded medium presents the listener with an imagined sense of community, gradually shifting through the varying dialects in a relatively short span of time.

One of the most distinct programs in regards to challenging the traditional radio format is *Summer Solstice.* The edition that aired on the *Soundscapes of Canada* is an edited version of the recordings the group had made by recording 15 minutes of every hour for 24 hours on the grounds of a rural monastery near Mission, BC The aim of the recording is to give a representation of the changing soundscape over the course of a

day, recording the ebb and flow of insects, frogs and birds. Schafer (2011) has referred to this type of recording as “phenomenological recording”, suggesting that what was recorded was largely left up to chance. While this labeling proposes challenges — in that choices needed to be made (when to record, what microphone to use, where to place the microphone, when to stop recording, etc) — these are essentially recording choices, not necessarily choices of what to record. The techniques employed in the construction of the *Summer Solstice* program foreshadow the field of bioacoustics — a cross-disciplinary field of study that combines acoustics and biology. From each recording the group collectively chose the most representative two-minute period. Suggestive of the group’s earlier sociological methods, *Summer Solstice* was collectively authored for the purpose of removing individual bias as much as possible. Also of particular interest to this program is the minimal use of dialogue throughout the piece (only to identify the hour), contrary to standard radio practice as well as all other productions covered in this analysis.

While critique can correctly be applied to the biases of the group as manifest in the scope of their collections and representations (Akiyama, 2014), it must also be considered that “the work of these soundscape researchers suggests that research on the nature and experience of acoustic environments provides potentially rich avenues for investigation of changing contexts and modes of engaging with the listening to the world” (Marontate et al., forthcoming). In other words, these works must be considered as artifacts of Canadian culture, artifacts that contribute to Canada’s history in sound studies. The contribution made by the WSP to Canadian identity is a direct result of their intentions to raise individual’s awareness of the changing world around them. It is important to consider that all listening is based on perspective, and through the consideration of intentions and perspective these artifacts provide insight into both the practitioners and the culture that made their work possible.

## 4.5. Summary

In many regards it was when environmental recordings became available materials for radio productions that distinctions between voice and music began to blur. One the one hand, in Gould’s *The Quiet in the Land* voice, music and soundscape

recordings are treated equally, each source contributing to and commenting one another. Gould essentially blurs and adapts the symbolic significance of each source so that, while each is understood as a language in and of itself, all sounds are treated equally as forms of human activity and communication. On the other hand, the WSP's examination of the soundscape, and the compositional element of human activity, represents a distinct relationship between the acoustic and electroacoustic. The evolution of the group from simply documenting disappearing sounds to analyzing recorded sound is heard throughout the *Soundscapes of Canada* series. Finally, Orchard can be considered as belonging somewhere in the middle of these two distinct sonic epistemologies. While Orchard's production techniques are more conservative, being primarily concerned with the relationship between dialogue and voice, his awareness of the potentials of acoustic qualities positions him in the vanguard of sound on the radio during this period.

# Chapter 5.

# Then Hear

## 5.1. Conclusion

When Benjamin wrote *The Work of Art*… paper, he was writing it as a Jewish German citizen during the first years of the rise of Nazi Germany. He saw the very real dangers of a totalitarian state controlling media production. Through mass production, he also saw the potentials of alleviating art from authoritarian control and the diminishing of "cult value" (1968, 224-225). While Orchard, Gould and the WSP had radically different perspectives on life than Benjamin, they too saw the potentials in technologies (and techniques) of mechanical reproduction. The portable tape recorder offered new ways of exploring, documenting and representing social, and private, worlds and the environments that contained them. Orchard, Gould and the WSP all saw utopian potentials in the new technology, ways of considering the relationship of time and place within Canadian culture.

The exploration of the techniques and technologies used by Orchard, Gould, and the WSP in the late 1960s and early 1970s highlights a very particular point in the history of sound recording. The availability of the portable tape recorder allowed for an unprecedented level of access to individuals and environments. Through the analysis of the use of voice, music, and soundscape in the presented works, this thesis considers the introduction of environmental sound on sonic representation within the audio format. While Orchard could be considered as prioritizing aural artifacts of the voice, his productions (particularly his later works) shifted to incorporating more soundscape elements as a means of situating his subjects in place. Greatly influenced by his musical training, Gould constructed works that, although primarily dialogue based, explore the sonic field of the recorded format (most notably in the latter two stereo programs of the

*Solitude Trilogy*). In the exploration and representation of Canadian soundscapes the WSP developed multiple studio techniques (many of which became fundamental processes of soundscape composition) intended to highlight elements of the changing acoustic environment. While this summary only discusses the most general elements, any close listening will reveal that all three producers continually navigated the continuum of voice-music-soundscape. This is to say that the producers discussed here extended the sonic palette of Canadian radio in a time when funding was accessible and producer freedom was broad. The experimental approaches demonstrated throughout the different programs for the CBC propagated elements of Canadian life in ways never before experienced through broadcast. While radio had been connecting Canadians since the 1920s, and wartime broadcasts presented experiences from the frontlines in Europe, the appearance of the portable tape recorder allowed for a new type of connectivity. Not only did the public become contributing members of national radio (Franklin, 2009), but their homes, activities and the space they occupied began to be represented with sound through creative recording techniques.

Through the recorded interviews with Orchard conducted by members of the Provincial Archives, his course descriptions and the recorded lectures he gave, it is apparent that he had established a methodology for others to keep using.[20] While the roles of aural historian and radio producer were at times interchangeable, his treatment of audio media suggests that his epistemological perspective as aural historian ultimately informed his role as radio producer. This is noteworthy when we consider the influence of his career as a radio producer on the impact of the archive collection. His aesthetic judgments must be considered when studying the documentation of the province's history. Ultimately, the coevolution of radio producer and aural historian suggest that Orchard's media production methods highlight both temporal and spatial

[20] While Orchard's influence can be seen in the pages of the *Sound Heritage* journal that was published in British Columbia from 1972 to 1983 his most resonating influence can be seen in the current work of Robert Budd. Following the completion of his Master's degree, Budd released *Voices of British Columbia: Stories from our Frontier,* a collection of transcripts from Orchard's collection and photographs of the storytellers. Budd has further followed in Orchard's direction by continuing to collect historical accounts. Rather than receiving funding from the CBC, however, Budd is hired by families to collect and produce historical records in the form of audio and printed documents.

relationships. His approach to recording and emphasizing the sound of place (ambience and environmental sound) and the sound of time (vocal qualities) connected communities across Canada with their broadcasts in the 1960s and 1970s (space), and continues to connect individuals through access to the archive collection (time). In *A Plea for Time,* Innis (1950) proposes "history is threatened on the one hand by its obsession with the present and on the other hand by the charge of antiquarianism" (2). What this means is that Innis was concerned with the duality of the past and the present — how history can be used, and of value, in the present, but at the same time history itself is critiqued as irrelevant precisely because it is out of date. His concern was that historical lessons and understandings are lost in the obsession with the present, and civilization will continue to find itself in an amnesiac state: the same mistakes will continue to be made. Innis (1950) offered a solution:

> We must somehow escape on the one hand from our obsession with the moment and on the other hand from our obsession with history. In freeing ourselves from time and attempting a balance between the demands of time and space we can develop conditions favourable to an interest in cultural activity. (21)

Innis' theories present us with an encompassing approach to media for examining how the use and uses of media function within our societies. The solution Innis offers isn't to choose between the present and the past, but to think about the relationship between time and space. With space-binding media generally belonging to the more ephemeral, which aids in its dissemination, Innis (1951) warned about the dangers of "the modern obsession with present-mindedness" (76) — the ever present flow of information that continues to increase to this day. The solution, argued Innis (1950), is a balance of time and space biased media. I propose that Orchard's use of aural, over oral, and the relationship between archivist and producer demonstrates a sympathy to Innis' concern for time in a heavily mediated society.

By considering Orchard's use of audio media as functioning within both time- and space-binding media, a comparison of his work to the WSP and Gould presents an alternative perspective to the already large body of literature dedicated to these cultural icons. Orchard, the WSP and Gould produced their seminal radio works during a time when the CBC was heavily promoting a national consciousness. While this was a direct

result of the Massey Commission's recommendations for preserving and nurturing Canadian culture, this course of programming also helped to secure funding for the state dependent corporation. The ambivalent nature to Canada as both a mediated and unmediated country is highlighted by Druick's (2007b) observation that the Massey Commission sought to promote the high culture of Canadian life while omitting any recognition of the channels with which it was broadcast. In the attempt to represent Canadian communities over national airwaves, the CBC and its producers coincidentally constructed representations of Canadian life that were equally reflective of the establishment of the CBC and the producers, as they were of the lives of individuals represented. It is in this context that we need an understanding of the factors that made Orchard's career both possible and significant. While he sought to document impressions of BC's history, he inevitably became a part of that history through the aesthetic and economic decisions that guided his collection and production techniques. Orchard's epistemology of recorded sound and the resulting production methods he developed over his career greatly influenced his representations and documentation of Canadian life.

As the *Living Memory* collection now resides at the Provincial Archives of British Columbia, in Victoria, this thesis also aims to help contextualize that collection by demonstrating some of the motivations and techniques used by Orchard in its collection. Where Budd's (2005) exceptional thesis examines Orchard's work from the perspective of an (aural) historian, I have focused my analysis and examination on his radio production techniques as a means to provide further insight into the construction of the collection as a cultural, material and historical artifact of Canadian (radio) history.

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