

Music of Ann McMillan

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FSS 34006

WHALE-WAIL, IN PEACE, EN PAIX

for Voice and Tape Structures of Whale and Other Animal Sounds

With thanks to Katherine and Roger Payne, The Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University,
and Richard Alexander of The University of Michigan for some of the sound sources,
and thanks to the Columbia Princeton Electronic Music Center for the use of their studios



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SIDE I

Band 1) Part I

Verse 1:23

Whale I5:26

:05

Band 2) Part II

Verses 2 and 3:41

Whale II7:43

Duration: 14:18

SIDE II

Band 1) Part III

Verses 4, 5 and 61:12

Band 2) Part IV

Whale III7:52

Duration: 9:09

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632 BROADWAY, N.Y.C., 10012 N.Y., U.S.A.

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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Commissioned by Moses Asch

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Whale-Wail, In Peace, En Paix was begun ten years ago with Whale I. Another version of Whale II was commissioned by Gregorio Fritz for choreography in Mexico. The text was written in France, when the whole piece was taking shape as a plea for a more peaceful human race. The new Whale II and Whale III have just been finished. Whale IV with ink still wet, is a piece for a capella chorus.

Whale-Wail, In Peace, En Paix was built with the following sound-sources:

- The Text is written, and read by the composer.
- Part 1. Whale I uses Humpback Whale sound-source
- Part 2. Whale II is made with Humpback Whale,, Bull, Insect, and Chinese cymbal sound-sources.
- Part 3. Whale III is made with Humpback Whale, Bottlenose Dolphin, Chinese gong, Insects, White-handed Gibbon monkey, birds, including a South American Bell Bird, geese, and water sound-sources.

A preview performance of Whale-Wail, In Peace, En Paix took place at the northernmost trading post of Baffin Island, north of the Arctic Circle, during an Inuit Teachers' Conference, Spring of 1986. The work Whale-Wail for Spoken Voice and Tape Structures of Whale and Other Animal Sounds, is by the New York composer, Ann McMillan and was commissioned by Moses Asch, for Folkways Records. Carolyn Graham heard the new piece at the composer's studio and decided it would be particularly appropriate music to play and use for her Conference workshop. The Inuit teachers asked her to come as their honored guest because they use Ms. Graham's books which teach English as a second language, combining oral English with music - often jazz - and the language's natural rhythms.

Whale-Wail has a very simple phonetic text in English and French, the languages of Canada, both second languages for the Inuits. It is a plea to humans to be more like whales "in peace, en paix, in peace, en paix..."

The animal sounds for Whale-Wail came from zoologists Katherine and Roger Payne, Richard Alexander, and the Ornithology Laboratory of Cornell University. McMillan recorded some of the Bottlenose Dolphin sounds herself. These animal sound-sources are used as if they were instruments, cutting rhythmic patterns, changing pitches and timbre and superimposing sound on sound as one does for orchestra music in a score.

The composer was as thrilled at the prospect of an Inuit audience as if it were a Carnegie Hall premiere. Inuits, like Native Americans, have a reverence and respect for animals quite foreign to most of us. They kill animals for food and clothing, but never for either sport or fashion.

Ann McMillan wishes to thank Donald Griffin who introduced her to the world of zoology and many of

its inhabitants; Roger and Katherine Payne, Chou Wen Chung, Richard Alexander, and the Cornell University Laboratory of Ornithology Library of Natural Sounds. The composer also thanks Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center, NYC, for the use of its facilities, and many friends too numerous to name.

Biography: Ann McMillan was born in New York City. She graduated from Bennington College, having studied composition with Otto Luening. But before concentrating on composing, she pursued two other music careers: Music editor in the recording industry and producer for non-commercial radio. As an LP Music Editor she worked at Columbia Records briefly and then helped to open the LP Red Seal Division of RCA Victor Recording Company, directing engineers with scores. Tape was new and tape music was just beginning to be heard and not yet on disk in the States.

When Ann McMillan met Edgard Varese, she became his student-assistant, helping him with the tape portions of his Deserts first version. In '55 after playing the tape parts for Deserts' US premiere, sponsored by Bennington College, with Frederick Waldman directing a Guest Orchestra at the Bennington Armory, McMillan left with a Fulbright Grant for Paris. There, she worked at the Radio-diffusion Television Francaise Studio d'essay of Pierre Schaeffer - the first studio open to composers. On return to New York, she became Program Director at RTF Broadcasting in North America, also free-lancing for Canada's CBC French and English Networks. She composed a film-score for a Norwegian Documentary "Rhino Safari" in '61, but not until after serving as Music Director of Pacifica Radio WBAI-FM for four years did she finally leave radio to work more fully on composition. Since then, she has received commissions here and abroad and has been awarded Guggenheim, Rockefeller, CAPS, Meet the Composer and several Resident Fellowships.

Currently she is working on a commission for the Quintet of the Americas, which will have a tape part of structured animal sounds.

Ann McMillan's music is available at the American Composers Edition, 170 West 74th Street, NYC, NY 10023.

Recordings are available at New Music Distribution, 500 Broadway, NYC, NY 10003, or at record shops.

*McMillan's music is also on Folkways Albums: #33904 and #33451, and on Opus I #79.