

KITS BEACH SOUNDWALK (1989)
for spoken voice and 2-channel audio

by Hildegard Westerkamp

In the late seventies I produced and hosted a radio program on Vancouver Co-operative Radio called *Soundwalking*, in which I took the listener to different locations in and around the city and explored them acoustically. *Kits Beach Soundwalk* is a compositional extension of this original idea.

Kitsilano Beach - colloquially called Kits Beach, and originally named after the Squamish First Nations chief X̱ats'alanexw (Khahtsahlano) - is located in the heart of Vancouver.

In the summer it is one of the most crowded beaches in Vancouver, packed full with sunbathers. At the time the piece was created, in the late 80s, it was also filled with music coming from many ghetto blasters, indeed light years away from the silence experienced here not so long ago by the indigenous inhabitants.

The original recording on which this piece is based was made on a calm winter morning, when the quiet lapping of the water and the tiny sounds of barnacles feeding were audible before an acoustic backdrop of the throbbing city. In this soundwalk composition we leave the city behind eventually and explore instead the tiny acoustic realm of barnacles, the world of high frequencies, inner space and dreams.