## Richard Truhlar / THREE NATIVE TEXTS FOR RICHARD HEULSENBECK



## / EXTENDING VOICES

Extending voices through means of the tape recorder is relatively new to Canadian Sound Poetry. Few writers in our country today are exploring the convergence of written and sonic disciplines; and the sound poets themselves have, for the most part, ignored the tape-recorder as a compositional tool.

While musical composers have increasingly used the tape recorder to treat the human voice, the poet has only begun to explore this avenue of vocal expression. When poets do explore it, however, a unique art form emerges—an art form which in sound and language is perceived from a literary sensibility rather than from a musical one.

My Turner Visits Blacking House is the convergence of two disciplines I have been actively pursuing: text/sound composition and musique concrete. All the sounds used in this work are derived from acoustical sources. These sounds include: human voice, struck brandy glass, blown bottle, metronome, and bricks scraped with a cast-iron shovel. No sound was electronically produced (i.e., synthesizer, ring modulator, etc.), but was treated with echo and speed/pitch changes. No editing or tape splicing was used. Most, but not all of the sounds were first recorded on a master track which was then phased on other tracks at differing speeds and pitches.

As for the sense of the piece, all sources of content came from a single dream which juxtaposed the following diverse elements: various lyrical phrases from the Rolling Stones' song Paint it Black, the children's rhyme Baa Baa Black Sheep, images of Victorian workhouses for children, John Turner's haunting and impressionistic seascape paintings, the sounds of fog horns and tolling bells.

The piece was composed in 5 hours. As I worked and chose the sounds to be used, I was aware of operating from an intuitive sense of composition so that the form of the piece as it evolved seemed to have been pre-designed unconsciously.













