

Edge of the World: Music for Radio No. 2 (1946)

From 1941-1946, Weinzwieg composed incidental music for almost 100 CBC radio drama programs, in contrast to the usual practice of using stock recordings for the musical background. Weinzwieg's schedule was demanding: he would receive a script early in the week; by mid-week the music would be completed, and on Saturday it would be performed "live to air" by a small ensemble of players. The music Weinzwieg composed for the 1945-46 CBC radio series *The White Empire* (a historical-documentary radio drama about the Canadian north) gained a second life as concert music in the single-movement symphonic poem *The Edge of the World: Music for Radio No. 2*.

Weinzwieg was an early champion of the musical value and cultural importance of First Nations' and Inuit peoples' musics, and he frequently incorporated specific songs or styles, such as in *The Red Ear of Corn*, *To the Lands Over Yonder*, and *The Edge of the World*. In *The Edge of the World*, Weinzwieg combines a fairly dissonant musical language with the rhythmic and melodic features of Inuit songs and dances. Following a dramatic *tutti* opening chord, a transparent musical texture emerges, which focuses on short solos, unison and octave doublings, and small instrument groupings. By contrast to the striking opening, *The Edge of the World* fades away softly over four repetitions of a two-note string motive.

Written by Alexa Woloshyn