

Spirit of the Arctic

A Message from the Producer

Denali, the largest mountain in North America, first captured my heart in the fall of 1981 when I made a solo trip into Denali National Park as a 20-year-old college student fascinated by arctic ecology. The place had an unexplainable grip on me so I moved to Alaska and I found myself drawn to be there as a lone visitor every season. In 1990 I saw a stunning aerial photograph of "Denali" in early spring, taken by *Michio Hoshino*. It had only then been 5 years since I discovered a passion to record natural sounds, but it ignited my imagination to someday produce an audio-visual DVD about the wildlife and eco-regions of Alaska starting in Denali-Interior. It would be another 5 years before I would meet the internationally-renowned and legendary photographer in person. The meeting with *Hoshino*, together with my exposure to many great Native Alaskans and scientists devoted to the study of nature in the north, inspired me to continue collecting recordings of natural sounds for an envisioned program called **SPIRIT OF THE ARCTIC**.

For nearly 20 years I have produced educational audio programs using my recordings to stimulate the imagination of the listener and motivate the public to learn more about the natural world. With the development of the web as an outreach tool in most homes and offices worldwide, it was a natural progression for me to use images to help showcase audio programs. The public's positive response to images used in association with natural sounds was overwhelming and it re-enforced my dream to create a unique surround sound audio-visual journey through Alaska - a media experience of the Great Land like no other. The opportunity to match the recordings I have collected throughout Alaska over three decades with the extensive library of Alaskan wildlife and landscape images by the late *Michio Hoshino* has allowed the dream to become a reality in **SPIRIT OF THE ARCTIC**.

SPIRIT OF THE ARCTIC gained further momentum through the involvement of other acclaimed sound artists. Native Alaskan *Doreen Simmonds* reads the introductory narrative, which includes a powerful translation of the Inupiat text. The program's soundtrack includes the music of highly acclaimed Native American flutist *R. Carlos Nakai*, teamed up with the well-respected Japanese musicians of the *Wind Travelin' Band*. Also included in the soundtrack is *Pamyua*, a popular and internationally-recognized Native Alaskan vocal group, plus 3 Native Alaskan women: *Agnes Moore*, *Lavern Huntington*, and *Sarah James*, sharing their traditional songs. The program's production team is also first rate, including soundtrack mixing by *Sonus*, an award-winning post audio production studio, and soundtrack mastering by *Christopher Boyes*, a 4-time academy award winning sound designer and engineer. An elaborate "fly-over" animation of the landscape of Alaska and additional image editing are by *Roger Topp*, a respected and accomplished multimedia artist.

I hope you enjoy **SPIRIT OF THE ARCTIC** as much as I have appreciated the opportunity and privilege of recording Alaska's wildlife in their natural habitats. The last time I saw *Michio Hoshino*, he told me that he considered each of his photographs a gift; I feel the same about each of the natural sound recordings that I have had the good fortune to acquire. May the sights, sounds, voices, and soulful music of **SPIRIT OF THE ARCTIC** instill in you a greater fondness and appreciation for the Arctic, one of the most remarkable places on Earth.

Kathy Turo