

## **TEARDROP** for Wind Ensemble *Program Note*

*TEARDROP* is an impressionistic view of life's journey, using water as a metaphor. From a human teardrop to a raindrop falling from the sky, from rippling river rapids to a violent storm, from the majesty of crashing waves to the vast unknown of the great oceans, I see a parallel for the human experience in each of these images.

My wife, Wendy Rees, has written a beautiful and powerful poem based on this idea and I, in turn, used her imagery as a launching pad for the sounds in this three-movement work.

The first movement begins with raindrops, signifying each new individual soul coming into the world. After this introductory statement, the music transforms into an insistent and violent storm, representing the dark, tumultuous and angry moments in life. There is a momentary triumph as the storm calms, sparkling, brilliant and exhilarating.

The theme, which begins the second movement, reflects upon the act of love, bittersweet and poignant. It originates from an image of dewdrops collecting on a hanging leaf, and then, slowly, one by one, dripping off the leaf. This romantic dance turns to a grappling with identity and sense of self. We are inexorably drawn through life, as if by a river's current, and the driving bass and percussion figure is an interpretation of these unpredictable 'rapids'. The initial theme returns as a moment of clarity and a release from heartache. Yet, the river remains and we continue to be pulled along.

The final movement is my personal hymn to the ocean. For me, the most spiritual place is to be standing ankle-deep in the surf and looking out past the waves toward the horizon. Just as each tributary seeks to empty into this ultimate body of water, each soul restlessly pursues completion of its personal journey - to return, forever home, to the ocean.

*TEARDROP* is dedicated with heartfelt love and respect to my wife, Wendy Rees, and my friend and mentor, David Maslanka. The support, encouragement, and generosity from these two beautiful souls has been a profound gift.

*Notes by the composer*

## TEARDROP

by Wendy Rees

A child asks the question curiously  
What if all time existed simultaneously  
    Only to stop  
        for a teardrop.

A moving reflection  
    changing shape  
        and direction  
Searching for identity  
    Resisting explanation  
Relentlessly  
    seeking destiny  
        in the journey.

Snowflakes  
    melting on a mountaintop  
A force  
    that will not stop  
        Descending  
            toward the river  
                where a thousand rivers  
Echo  
    in the alleys  
        on the way  
            to greet  
dew drops  
    twinkling on slim veined leaves  
A festival of lights  
    Individually  
        Sharing  
            and letting go  
                but never really letting go.

Uncertainty  
    beats  
        in the crack and ripple  
            of placid waters  
A dark storm  
    Raging  
the tormented howl  
of wind-torn voices  
    Haunting  
    Moaning  
    Clutching  
Screaming  
    Open wounds  
Bleeding

A sea of  
Red  
Suffering  
connecting  
everything.

Here  
without question  
the river remains  
Constant  
Rushing  
Still  
here  
the same  
yet new every instant.  
Seduced  
Blinded  
Cleansed  
Glistening  
with changing shapes  
that bore us  
and knowledge  
of all things  
that came here  
long before us.

Tears drop  
poetic  
and proud  
Bursting  
alive  
from the eye of a cloud  
Breathlessly  
weaving earthly designs  
A trail of restless souls  
Touching  
then  
Returning  
Forever  
Home  
to the ocean.