

Water from Trees by David Schumacher

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Bells
Xylophone
Vibraphone 1
Vibraphone 2
Marimba 1
Marimba 2
Marimba 3a
Marimba 3b

Water from Trees was written for my good friend Zach Field and the Pentucket High School Mallet Ensemble. This piece was inspired by the Minimalist works of composers Steve Reich, Phillip Glass, and John Adams. It evolves in subtle, sometimes imperceptible steps. A simple pentatonic scale provides the harmonic material for an intricate rhythmic counterpoint that becomes increasingly complex as the piece progresses. Within that rhythmic texture the listener should hear and feel an intrinsic "groove". This is the heart of the piece and it is important that the performers present it as such. To me, this piece is like a meditation. Listeners should give themselves up to the wash of sound and let it carry them on a journey. That journey, as the kaleidoscopic nature of the piece suggests, can be different upon each hearing.

This piece is written in standard arch form, and employs a steady crescendo of dynamic and rhythm toward a clear peak before quickly fading away. Along with the continuous changes in texture created by ever-evolving rhythms that move in and out of phase, this form is meant to conjure images of a waxing rain penetrating the canopy of a lush forest. The rain seemingly emerges from the trees themselves. The swing eighth notes emulate the water's playful cascade through the vegetation. I liked the irony of pulling the sound of rain and water from the wooden keys of the xylophone and marimbas. A mystical juxtaposition. Water from trees.

Many other works of various style, instrumentation, and level of difficulty are available from this composer. Commissions for new works, orders for existing works, and information about guest artist residencies should be directed to David Schumacher at stroderode@earthlink.net or 617-970-1177.

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