

Emerge

For woodwind quintet

Duration: 8 minutes

This wind quintet was commissioned by the Festival of the Sound, in Parry Sound, Ontario, for a concert called *Painted Sound*. This piece is inspired by the painting *Watermusic: The Fireflies Tribute* by Wendy Hoffman.

The painting itself is tranquil and serene yet also brimming with energy. I tried to bring out that sense of stillness with a feeling of suspended motion while also allowing more active lines to emerge into the texture. The structure of this piece is linked to the different layers of the painting. While looking at this work, I found myself visually sinking into the different layers, moving from the whole to focusing on its smallest parts. The painting has a vertical expanse of trees and is outlined by water and sky, creating a clear vertical limit. This sense of vertical, and the idea of looking at the whole, became the structural idea for the music. There is a recurring static texture of low bassoon and high flute to represent the painting as a whole. Lines emerge from within this texture to lead the music in a new direction, almost as if focusing on the different layers of the painting yet always returning to the whole. An interesting twist to the painting is that it is actually a reflection in the water. In essence, it is upside down. There are several moments in the music which pay tribute to this feature, as the high and low parts are switched around a central point. This piece aims to integrate the idea of the painting rather than a literal recreation of specific surface elements. The colour, texture, and mood of the painting, which is evocative of magic, all contribute to the music. Lines come out and disappear, giving the piece its descriptive title: *emerge*.