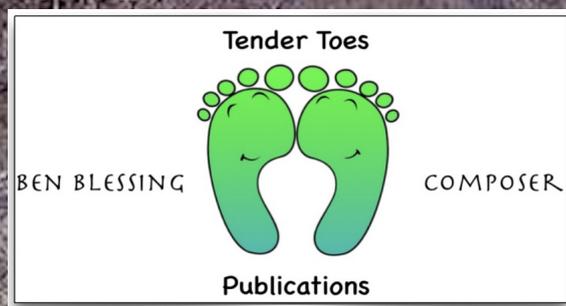


BEN BLESSING

Wilson Creek Winds

for Concert Band
Grade 2



BEN BLESSING

WILSON CREEK WINDS For Concert Band, Grade 2

Transposed Score
Performance Time: Ca. 3'

Instrumentation

Flute 1
Flute 2
Oboe (opt. Flute 3)
Bassoon (opt.)
B♭ Clarinet 1 & 2
B♭ Bass Clarinet
E♭ Alto Saxophone
B♭ Tenor Saxophone
E♭ Baritone Saxophone
B♭ Trumpet 1, 2
Horn in F (opt.)
Trombone 1, 2
Euphonium
Euphonium T.C.
Tuba
Timpani: G, A, C, D
Glockenspiel (opt.)
Vibraphone (opt.)
Percussion 1: Drum Set
Percussion 2: Egg Shaker, Suspended Cymbal, Tam-Tam

Full Set-\$68.00

Extra Score-\$12.00

Extra Part-\$3.00

Tender Toes Publications

Every mile a measure, every measure a mile



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Program Notes

Wilson Creek Winds is set in the stark winter landscape of Wilson Creek, nestled in the Owyhee Mountains of southwestern Idaho. In this season, the terrain feels both vast and intimate—carved canyons, open ridgelines, and a quiet that seems to stretch endlessly beneath grey, overcast skies. The music reflects this subdued environment through restrained colors and spacious textures, allowing the natural contours of the landscape to shape the work's unfolding sound world.

The piece also draws from my experiences of long-distance running in these conditions, where physical exertion gives way to mental detachment and a kind of earned stoicism. As the miles pass, thoughts simplify, emotions flatten, and awareness turns inward. This sense of solitude and clarity is expressed through calm, steady motion and a deliberate pacing that resists urgency, mirroring the measured breath and footsteps of winter running.

At the heart of the work is a powerful brass statement that rises from the muted atmosphere—a moment of true “big” sound against the otherwise restrained palette. This climax is not triumphant in a traditional sense, but elemental, reflecting the immensity of the landscape and the quiet resolve it demands. Wilson Creek Winds ultimately seeks to capture the beauty of endurance, stillness, and reflection found in Idaho's winter high desert.

Conductor Notes

Wilson Creek Winds is a Grade 2 work designed to develop rhythmic independence, ensemble balance, and expressive control within a wintery, restrained sound world. One of the primary teaching goals of this piece is the clear understanding of 6/8 meter with 16th-note subdivision. Students often feel 6/8 only in two large beats; this work encourages them to feel both the dotted-quarter pulse and the internal subdivision that gives the music its forward motion and clarity.

A helpful approach is to begin by establishing the two-beat feel (“1-la-li, 2-la-li”), then refine it further by subdividing into six 16ths per dotted quarter. Have students speak or clap using a consistent system such as: “1-te-la-te-li-te, 2-te-la-te-li-te.”

Another effective strategy is to rehearse rhythmic passages by first converting them to straight 3/4 at a slower tempo, then returning to 6/8 while keeping the subdivision intact. Emphasize that clean 16th-note subdivision is what keeps the ensemble together, especially during softer, more transparent textures.

The bass line plays a crucial role in the character of the piece and may be deceptively challenging for younger players. Low reeds, low brass, and percussion should be encouraged to treat their parts as melodic and directional rather than purely supportive. Isolate these lines in rehearsal, focusing on smooth note connections, consistent air, and shape through longer phrases. When the bass line is confident and flowing, the entire ensemble gains stability and depth.

Balance is essential throughout Wilson Creek Winds. Much of the piece lives in subdued dynamic territory, requiring players to listen laterally and vertically across the ensemble. Encourage strong but contained air support at softer dynamics, particularly in the winds carrying sustained textures. At measure 37, allow the trumpets and trombones to explore a true fortissimo, searching for the “sweet spot” between control and raw energy (think Chicago Symphony brass). This is an excellent opportunity to teach students how to produce an edgy, resonant sound without overblowing—full tone, solid core, and unified articulation. When performed with thoughtful balance and confident subdivision, this moment becomes a powerful and rewarding focal point for the ensemble.

About the Composer

Ben Blessing (b. 1984) is a composer, conductor, and educator based in Nampa, Idaho. A former Marine and a long-serving member of the Idaho Army National Guard, he currently serves with the 25th Army Band in Boise. Blessing holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music Composition from Northwest Nazarene University and a Master's in Music Education from the American Band College.

His compositions have garnered national recognition, with his Symphony No. 4 and Grandma's Coat named finalists for The American Prize in 2025. His music is published through GPG Music, Knightwind Music, and Randall Standridge Music, and has been featured on the American Band College Top 100 List. His piece Standhope Peak won the 2022 NFMC Armed Forces Composition Competition.

Mr. Blessing is passionate about creating music that resonates with performers and audiences alike, writing extensively for concert band, orchestra, choir and electronic mediums. As an educator and conductor, he is the band director for the Baker School District in Baker City, Oregon.

Outside of music, he's an avid ultramarathon runner and the founder of the Standhope Ultra Challenge. He cherishes time spent with his wife, children, and their dog, balancing a life of artistry, adventure, and service.

Please visit www.benblessing.com for additional works for wind band:

The Burning Walls of Leslie Gulch
(2025) Grade 1
Bitterroot Trail March
(2025) Grade 1
Dusk at the End of the World
(2024) Grade 1
Pioneer Trailblazer's Fanfare
(2024) Grade 1
-
Lost River Harmonies
(2025) Grade 1.5
-
Fire in the Frank
(2025) Grade 2
Labyrinth of McCormick
(2024) Grade 2
Lemhi Twilight Serenade
(2025) Grade 2
Loss
(2025) Grade 2
The Oregon Ash
(2025) Grade 2
Shadows of the Rockies
(2025) Grade 2
-
Crimson Skies of August
(2025) Grade 2.5
Dance of the Cascades
(2024) Grade 2.5
Midnight Train in the Rain
(2019) Grade 2.5
Wildhorse Canyon Adventure
(2025) Grade 2.5
-
Beneath the Digital Sky
(2024) Grade 3
Dampen and Shine
(2019) Grade 3
Grandma's Coat
(2024) Grade 3
SMACK
(2025) Grade 3
-
One Life to Make a Difference (Band/Sym. Orchestra)
(2025) Grade 3.5
-
Standhope Peak
(2022) Grade 4.5
-
Loss (Band/Sym. Orchestra)
(2024) Grade 5

Wilson Creek Winds

BEN BLESSING (ASCAP)

Andante ♩ = 108

Flute 1

Flute 2

Oboe (opt. Flute 3)

Bassoon

Clarinet 1 in Bb

Clarinet 2 in Bb

Bass Clarinet in Bb

Alto Saxophone in Eb

Tenor Saxophone in Bb

Baritone Saxophone

Trumpet 1 in Bb

Trumpet 2 in Bb

Horn in F

Trombone 1

Trombone 2

Euphonium

Tuba

Timpani

Glockenspiel

Vibraphone

Percussion 1 Drumset

Percussion 2 egg shaker, suspended cymbal, tam-tam

very soft mallets G, A, C, D

hard plastic mallets

very soft yarn

tom-toms very soft mallets

egg shaker

sus. cym.

mf

mf

p

mp

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

37

Fl. 1 *p* *f* *ff*

Fl. 2 *p* *f* *ff*

Ob. (Fl. 3) *p* *f* *ff*

Bsn. *p* *f* *ff*

Cl. 1 in Bb *p* *f* *ff*

Cl. 2 in Bb *p* *f* *ff*

Bs. Cl. in Bb *p* *f* *ff*

A. Sax. in Eb *p* *f* *ff*

T. Sax. in Bb *p* *f* *ff*

Bari. Sax. *p* *f* *ff*

Tpt. 1 in Bb *p* *f* *ff* bells up

Tpt. 2 in Bb *p* *f* *ff* bells up

Hn. in F *p* *f* *ff* con forza

Tbn. 1 *p* *f* *ff* bells up

Tbn. 2 *p* *f* *ff* bells up

Euph. *p* *f* *ff*

Tba. *p* *f* *ff*

Timp. DGAC *p* *f* *p* *ff*

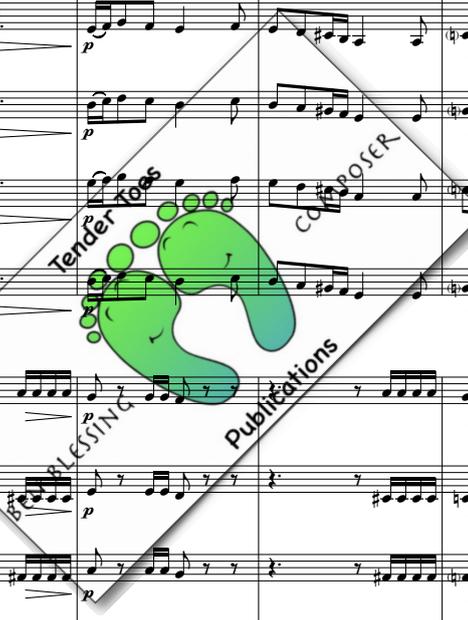
Glock. *p*

Vib. *p* ch.

Perc. 1 *p* *ff* T T T R L R

Perc. 2 *mp* *ff* tam-tam

31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 *ff*



The image shows a page of a musical score, page 10, for percussion and woodwinds. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral layout with multiple staves. The instruments listed on the left are: Fl. 1, Fl. 2, Ob. (Fl. 3), Bsn., Cl. 1 in Bb, Cl. 2 in Bb, Bs. Cl. in Bb, A. Sax. in Eb, T. Sax. in Bb, Bari. Sax., Tpt. 1 in Bb, Tpt. 2 in Bb, Hn. in F, Tbn. 1, Tbn. 2, Euph., Tba., Timp. DGAC, Glock., Vib., Perc. 1, and Perc. 2. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (p, ff, mf), articulation (accents, slurs), and performance instructions like 'bells down' and 'egg shaker'. A large, semi-transparent watermark is overlaid on the score, featuring a green footprint graphic and the text 'Tender Toes Publications' and 'COMPOSED BY BEN BLESSING'. At the bottom of the page, there are measure numbers 39 through 46, with corresponding dynamic markings: 39 (p), 40 (ff), 41, 42 (p), 43 (ff), 44, 45 (mf), and 46.

rit.

The image shows a page of a musical score for percussion and woodwinds. The score is arranged in a vertical stack of staves. The instruments listed on the left are: Fl. 1, Fl. 2, Ob. (Fl. 3), Bsn., Cl. 1 in Bb, Cl. 2 in Bb, Bs. Cl. in Bb, A. Sax. in Eb, T. Sax. in Bb, Bari. Sax., Tpt. 1 in Bb, Tpt. 2 in Bb, Hn. in F, Tbn. 1, Tbn. 2, Euph., Tba., Timp. DGAC, Glock., Vib., Perc. 1, and Perc. 2. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *mf* and *p*. A large, semi-transparent watermark is overlaid on the score, featuring a green footprint and the text "Tender Toes Publications" and "BEN BLESSING COMPOSER".

47 48 49 50 51 52