RAIN DANCE FOR CONCERT BAND

Program Note
(by the composer)

This is a bitter slow-dance ritual piece, dry and dissonant almost throughout, with a few moments of moist semi-sweetness near the end.

SCENARIO: It is dry. No rain. Crops will wither. The people gather: dancers, chanters, drummers. They beat the air with a bull-roarer. The big low whistle moans for a breeze, the small flutes answer with wet drop noises. Nothing. All sigh. They call the breeze up to pull rain down, again and again. No rain. They make a falling-drops tune in harmonized groups. No rain. They build up an intense slow heavy dance rhythm, drumming, stamping, and the tiny whistles scream for the rain, then all join in. Stop. Wait. Now a little rain comes, gently; it falls and rolls in rivulets and soaks into the parched Earth. The sky wipes clear and all thank the breeze and sun, the big whistle last.

(This score is a transcription/expansion of the original version for flute orchestra—all sizes.)