

THE WIND RISES

By Lorraine Viade, Psy.D.



“Le vent se lève, il faut tenter de vivre.” (“The wind is rising, we must try to live.”)
- Paul Valéry

The Wind Rises is the sentimental farewell from the master Japanese anime storyteller, Hayao Miyazaki. Set amidst two world wars, this is a tender love story about a couple whose paths cross intermittently and whose love surmounts all obstacles. *The Wind Rises* reminds us about the quality of our lives, the fragility of all life, of love and of having purpose and dreams, and sharing them with others. It is about mentorship and sacrifice. *The Wind Rises* uses the story of Japanese engineer Jiro Horikoshi to weave together a moving tribute to the Japanese survivors and their endurance over time of the ravages of war and fate. Miyazaki serves them to us in a beautifully crafted visual meld of fact and fantasy within a genre that is not fully known in American mainstream cinema. But it is not too late to get to know these great works. You can start at the end.

Be sure to bring some tissue if you are the emotional type like I am. I love good love stories and I love to be moved to tears by a good film. *The Wind Rises* moved me in so many ways. From the depiction of war and tragedy to the desolation and destruction that lives on in history, *The Wind Rises* soars high above others of its ilk.

If you are not familiar with the amazing work of Miyazaki, you should really check out the imagery and magic, and experience the range of emotions captured in his timeless tales. Just like *The Wind Rises*, these are life-affirming and beautiful renderings of the human condition. The partnership between Studio Ghibli and Disney has generated stories perfectly suited for modern adults and tweens. The themes are impermanence, loss and offer rich backdrops for life lesson discussions between the generations. Of all the films, *Ponyo* is perhaps the most well-known. If *The Wind Rises* is the last film, then it is indeed a fine one to end with. *Spirited Away* is another classic worthy of attention.

One thing that is common to these films is the similarity in the drawings, particularly the faces. This I believe creates the same sort of familiarity that we have become so

accustomed to with Disney classics. What is different, however, is the mature rendering of the stories without sugarcoating or watering down what is really happening to the heroes. Tragedy is ever present, but so are joy, hope and all of the wonderful things life has to offer. The message is clear. We must try to live. No matter what our lives bring us, we must catch the wind as it blows us toward our destiny. Thank you, Mr. Miyazaki for all the wonderful moments in your films and for leaving us this love letter.

I give *The Wind Rises* five planes.

