

Rive (2002)

Douglas Knehans

"*Rive* literally means a ripping or tearing apart. When the Verdehr Trio visited Tasmania in 2001, they were taken with the severity of such primal ripping and tearing as expressed in the feeding habits of the Tasmanian Devil. We had toyed with the idea of a piece about this and what it distilled to in my mind was a structural approach to musical material which was based on such muscular dismemberment of materials. In my approach to this work, the whole of it is formed from a dramatic disaggregation of the materials unfolded in the opening ten or so measures. All of this material is recycled, recombined, reharmonized, and variously reconfigured such that it morphs from one idea to the next while always relating back to the central initial ideas. This holds true also of the broader formal harmonic structure, which reflects the same harmonic underpinnings of the initial closural arc of the first large phrase group.

This work represents somewhat of a departure from previous works of mine in its immediacy of expression and clarity, even its traditionalism in many ways. *Rive* was written over a period of nine days at the Arthur Boyd property Bundanon, now the Bundanon Artists Centre on the Shoalhaven river in New South Wales. It is dedicated with affection to the Verdehr Trio."

—Douglas Knehans

The world premiere of *Rive* was on March 19, 2003 at the Queensland Conservatorium in Brisbane, Australia.

Douglas Knehans (born 1957, St. Louis, Missouri) grew up in Australia and received his initial music education at the Australian National University's Canberra, School of Music. After several years of free-lancing as a professional flutist, he transitioned to living from commissions as a composer in Melbourne. Later, he was invited to the MacDowell Colony and thereafter continued his education in the United States, first at Queens College where he studied with Thea Musgrave and then at Yale University where he studied with Jacob Druckman. He earned a doctorate from Yale in 1996 and received the Woods Chandler Memorial Prize for best composition in a larger form.

Knehans' music has been commissioned and performed internationally in Italy, Poland, the Czech Republic, Ukraine, Austria, and Australia. In 1999, he won the National Symphony Orchestra (Washington, D.C.) Composition Competition Commission Prize for a new work premiered at the Kennedy Center by National Symphony musicians. His works have been broadcast on Australian National Radio and TV; NPR and PBS; Ukraine National Radio and TV; and RAI (Italy).

Knehans has been featured in three books on Australian music (*A Handbook of Australian Music, Directory of Australian Composers, Sound Ideas: Australian Composers Born Since 1950*) and the *International Who's Who in Music and Musicians Directory* (U.K.). He has been the guest of international festivals in Poland and Ukraine and has been a visiting lecturer in Composition at Krakow Academy of Music, National University of Singapore, Australian National University, and Jagiellonian University among others.

In 1993, Knehans was appointed to the University of Alabama School of Music, where he was Chair of the Composition, Theory and Electronic Music area and the Director of the SCREAM (Southern Center for Research into ElectroAcoustic Music) Studio. From 2000-2008, he was Professor and Head of School of the Conservatorium of Music at the University of Tasmania. He then accepted the position of Dean of the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music, later moving into the position as the Norman Dinerstein Professor of Composition Scholar.

Additional information is available at www.douglasknehans.com.