

Jasper Drag (2000)

Alvin Singleton

“*Jasper Drag* was commissioned by the Verdehr Trio and Michigan State University. The creation of this work was begun in early 1999 in Atlanta, Georgia, and with long interruptions during the process, was not completed until September 4, 2000 at the Civitella Ranieri Center in Umbertide, Italy. The title refers to the June 7, 1998 Jasper, Texas incident of three white men dragging a black to his death after chaining him to the back of a pick-up truck. This composition is not intended to tell the story nor to evoke images. *Jasper Drag* is a marker on the collective memory of a nation still growing. This score is inscribed to the memory of James Byrd, Jr., the victim of this racially motivated act.”

—Alvin Singleton

The world premiere of *Jasper Drag* was on October 15, 2000 at the University of Miami, Miami, Florida.

Alvin Singleton (born 1940, Brooklyn, New York) received a Bachelor of Arts degree from New York University and a Master of Music degree from Yale University. As a Fulbright scholar, he studied with Goffredo Petrassi at the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome, Italy. After living and working in Europe for fourteen years, Singleton returned to the United States to become the Composer-in-Residence with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (1985–1988). He subsequently served as Resident Composer at Spelman College in Atlanta (1988–1991) and as the UNISYS Composer-in-Residence with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra (1996–1997). In addition, he has served as Professor of Composition at the Yale University School of Music.

Singleton has composed music for theatre, orchestra, solo instruments, and a variety of chamber ensembles. He has received commissions from the League of Composers, the Koussevitsky Music Foundation, the American Composers Orchestra, the ASCAP Foundation, and the Boston-based Walden Chamber Players with support from Twentieth Century Unlimited and the Argosi Foundation. His music is published by European American Music Corporation. It is recorded on the Albany Records, Elektra/Nonesuch, First Edition, Tzadik, and Innova labels.

Singleton is the recipient of a 2003 Guggenheim Fellowship. Other awards include the Kranichsteiner Musikpreis by the city of Darmstadt, Germany, the Mayor’s Fellowship in the Arts Award by the city of Atlanta, and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Twice he received the Musikprotokoll Kompositionpreis from Austrian Radio. In 2004, Singleton joined the American Composers orchestra as Music Alive Composer-in-Residence and Artistic Advisor for the IMPROVISE! Festival. In 2008, he served as Composer-in-Residence in Tirana, Albania. In 2014, he was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Additional information is available at www.alvinsingleton.com.