

## Instrumentation:

Flute  
Oboe  
Clarinet in Bb  
Bassoon

Horn  
Trumpet in C  
Tenor trombone

Percussion: 3 suspended cymbals, tam tam, glockenspiel  
Piano

Strings

Duration 18'

*SALVATION CREEK with eagle* was composed in June 1974. The title refers to a scrub-surrounded declivity on the plateau of the Lambert Peninsula in Ku-ringai Chase, NSW. Bright sun on the rippling water, baking air, the intermittent calls of spotted pardalote, grey shrike-thrush, whipbird and fan-tailed cuckoo; and overhead, a solitary wedge-tailed eagle, lazily riding the blue sky.

The music is not about these things; they are where the music came from. The piece opens with an antiphony between suspended cymbals and a great quiet chord played by the whole orchestra. The chord dissolves into a series of long arches of melody which also dissolve, form and re-form. Halfway through, the texture opens out and solo instruments interweave their litanies in the clearing. Their polyphonies grow in density until a solo piano — quoting the end of Charles Ives' Concord Sonata — leads the orchestra into the final melodic arch which returns the music to the stillness of the opening.

The piece was dedicated to my students at Durham, in particular, the University New Music Ensemble and Peter Wiegold, its director, who gave its first performance a week after it was finished. The first professional performance was given the following year at the Camden Festival, London, by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Elgar Howarth.