

Continental Harmony **Music Bringing Communities Together**

ST. PAUL, MINN. – Communities in a half a dozen states will soon be poring over hundreds of composer applications, as participants in *Continental Harmony*, a celebration of communities through new music, organized by the American Composers Forum. This latest round of projects follows on the successful heels of Continental Harmony’s first season, which marked the nationwide millennial celebration. Over the next two years, communities in all 50 states will join the program.

“This program offers communities — from rural towns to metropolitan areas — the unique opportunity to be a part of new musical works which celebrate their history and culture,” says John Nuechterlein, President and C.E.O. of American Composers Forum. “These exceptional musical celebrations strengthen social bonds and renew the collective spirit.”

Small towns and big cities all across the nation recognize the community-building potential of *Continental Harmony*. Each community host selects its own composer, assuring that the artist’s skill and artistic style match the community’s needs. During the residency that follows, the composer interacts with people of all ages to learn about their community and share their experiences through the creative process. As the composer spends time getting to know the people and places, rich and meaningful relationships develop. The composer then writes music inspired by these experiences and helps local musicians prepare the composition for performance.

The program’s millennial celebration elicited responses from hundreds of communities across the nation, and nearly 1,000 composers applied for residencies in the 58 selected communities. The National Endowment for the Arts provided funding and the White House Millennium Council designated it as a White House Millennium Partner. Materials from the program — recordings, scores, publicity, and memorabilia — are now archived at the Library of Congress.

Based on the popularity and overwhelming success of the program’s first season, *Continental Harmony* will continue to touch the lives of people from all walks of life.

Community Selections

The following communities have already been selected to participate in the latest round of Continental Harmony projects:

- Dothan, Ala.
- Alexandria, La.
- Carson City, Nev.
- South Orange/Maplewood, N.J.
- Wise, Va.

About American Composers Forum

The American Composers Forum pioneers projects that actively involve communities and composers. It facilitates residencies and new musical works that renew and fortify relationships between artists and the public. Headquartered in St. Paul, Minn., the Forum has regional chapters in the San Francisco Bay Area, Boston, New York City, Chicago, Philadelphia, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Los Angeles, Atlanta, and the Washington D.C. area. Membership in the American Composers Forum is open to all.

Continental Harmony is a leadership initiative of the American Composers Forum and the National Endowment for the Arts, with additional funding provided by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and Marshall Field’s Project Imagine with support from the Target Foundation.

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Editors Note: Interviews with American Composers Forum President and C.E.O. John Nuechterlein, or Continental Harmony Project Director Patricia Shifferd may be arranged by calling (651) 228-1407.

Continental Harmony

Celebrating Communities Through Music



Continental Harmony brings composers and communities together in the creation of new music reflecting local history and culture.

- **Dothan, Alabama**

15 to 20 minute multi movement work for orchestra, possibly with chorus and/or local folk musicians reflecting the city's many murals depicting regional history and a celebration of the orchestras 10th season.
Hosts: Tri-State Community Orchestra, Wiregrass Festival of Murals sponsored by the Downtown Group
Performers: Tri-State Community Orchestra

- **Alexandria, Louisiana**

Orchestra and choral work in honor of native son and author Arna Bontemps.
Hosts: Arna Bontemps African American Museum, Arts Council of Central Louisiana, Rapides Symphony Orchestra, and Peabody Magnet High School Choral Department.
Performers: Rapides Symphony, Peabody High School Chorus, community children's choir, and church gospel chorus

- **Carson City, Nevada**

15-20 minute multi-section work for jazz band and women's chorus celebrating the theme "Building from the Past: A Celebration of Revitalized Performance Spaces in Northern Nevada"
Hosts: Mile High Jazz Band, Bella Voce, Brewery Arts Center, The Theater Coalition, Churchill Arts Council, Jeanne Dini Cultural Center, Piper's Opera House
Performers: Mile High Jazz Band and Bella Voce

- **South Orange/Maplewood, New Jersey**

30-40 minute suite for instruments and voices as part of "Celebrating the Vision," the annual community interfaith gathering celebrating the vision of founding fathers for a nation of free people in the South Orange/Maplewood community.
Hosts: Maplewood/South Orange Coalition on Race, Opera for the Young, Maplewood Community Bands, Youth Orchestras of Essex County, Stirling Chamber Orchestra, Voices in Harmony, South Orange/Maplewood School District Fine Arts Department along with district music teachers and school bands, orchestras and choirs, Maplewood/South Orange Adult School, and SOMAcom (South Orange/Maplewood community cable station)
Performers: Professional and amateur musicians from Maplewood and South Orange including classical, jazz, gospel, and youth performers

- **Wise, Virginia**

Score for a musical theater work, tentatively titled "A Ballad for the Future" celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the University of Virginia at Wise.
Host: University of Virginia's College at Wise including the Visual and Performing Arts, Music Department, and Theater Department, and Roadside Theater.
Performers: Voices and instrumentalists from the community including the University of Virginia at Wise Concert Band

Community Host Contact Information

Dothan, Alabama

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Alexandria, Louisiana

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or
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Carson City, Nevada

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Maplewood/South Orange, New Jersey

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Wise, Virginia

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