



A M E R I C A N C O M P O S E R S F O R U M

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Continental Harmony Premiere in Macon, Ga.,
New Composition is a Dedication to the Opening of the
Harriet Tubman African American Museum

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For Immediate Release

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St. PAUL, Minn., January 20, 2003—Composer Scott Ethier's original composition for The Macon Symphony Orchestra will be premiered as a celebration of African American musical heritage and a dedication to the opening of the new Harriet Tubman African American Museum. The piece was commissioned by the Georgia Music Hall of Fame in partnership with the Macon Symphony Orchestra, Mercer University, and the Harriet Tubman African American Museum as part of *Continental Harmony*, the nation-wide community-based composer residency program of American Composers Forum, St. Paul, Minn. The premiere of the piece, titled "Spirit Jug," is Saturday, February 8 at 8:00 pm at the Grand Opera House in Macon, Ga.

The work honors African American musicians from Georgia who have contributed to the state's musical history, and consequently that of the nation, despite social and cultural obstacles. Not only does this work celebrate African American musical heritage but it also encourages the cultivation of future generations of musicians.

The title, "Spirit Jug," comes from a painting in the collection of the Harriet Tubman African American Museum. This museum will be the largest African American museum in the Southeast. The institution has an impressive and growing collection of art and artifacts, and provides classes for young people in the visual arts, drama, dance, drumming, photography, and music. This piece celebrates the dedication of the new building as well as the art, history and culture of African Americans.

(more)

The Macon Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1976. Adrian Gnam has served as conductor and music director since 1983. The Orchestra draws from a roster of over 200 musicians and produced its first CD, **Bravo! Macon Symphony Orchestra** in 2001.

The Georgia Music Hall of Fame is Georgia's official music museum housing permanent and changing exhibits that feature music, video, memorabilia, instruments, performance costumes and more. Over 450 artists are represented in the exhibits. Additionally, the museum's Zell Miller Center for Georgia Music Studies houses the museum's library and archives. There is also a special wing for children, The Billy Watson Music Factory, which offers hands-on and interactive exhibits to encourage exploration into the world of music.

Continental Harmony has been recognized as a model of local community artistic initiative. The initiative has been launched by the American Composers Forum in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts as a way of bringing composers and communities together for the creation of original musical works reflecting the unique history, culture and spirit of each community. Each host site identifies a theme, an occasion, and local performers for a musical work that will be meaningful to its citizens. With the assistance of American Composers Forum, the community group then selects the composer best able to write the music and carry out the residency.

During the inaugural round of the program in the year 2000, American Composers Forum discovered that *Continental Harmony* projects bring people together, heighten community feeling and sense of place, and encourage the formation of collaborations among groups. At the same time the artistic resources of the area are often strengthened and validated. As a result of this inaugural round, Twin Cities Public Television created an award-winning documentary and website.

To learn more about *Continental Harmony*, visit www.continentalharmony.org. To contact the composer, call 917-804-8359 or email saethier@aol.com.

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