



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

NATIONAL OFFICE:

332 Minnesota Street, Suite E-145 • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101-1300 USA

Telephone:[651] 228-1407 • Fax: [651] 291-7978

E-mail: mail@composersforum.org • Web site:www.composersforum.org

July 22, 2002

For Immediate Release

For more information, contact:

Pat Shifferd at American Composers Forum, (651) 251-2818

harmony@composersforum.org

Robert Robinson at Twin Cities Gospel Choir, (651) 224-1718

info@tccgospel.org

**COMPOSER GEOFFREY STANTON SELECTED FOR ST. PAUL, MINN.,
CONTINENTAL HARMONY PROJECT
Artist Will Collaborate With Twin Cities Community Gospel Choir**

Artist/Choir participate in award-winning national commissioning program *Continental Harmony*; piece will celebrate hope, reconciliation and joy and will premiere Mother's Day 2003 St. PAUL, Minn., July 22, 2002—The American Composers Forum announced today the next phase of Twin Cities Community Gospel Choir participation as Minnesota's representative in the Forum's nationwide music program, *Continental Harmony*. In the program, which has been widely recognized as a model of local community artistic initiative, each host site identifies a theme, an occasion, and local performers for an original 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.

Geoffrey Stanton, of Ann Arbor, Michigan has been selected by the Twin Cities Community Gospel Choir to write a piece for the choir and an instrumental ensemble as a celebration of hope, reconciliation and joy. The performance of Saint Paul's music will be Mother's Day 2003. Mr. Stanton will begin his residency in Saint Paul by getting to know people, researching local history and culture, working with students, and making presentations to community groups of all sorts.

Mr. Stanton brings a strong background in composition and community engagement to Saint Paul's *Continental Harmony* project. He received his doctorate in composition in 1991 from the University of Michigan in conjunction with a Master's degree in church music (organ performance). Like so many in his generation, he has played professionally in jazz/rock bands in the past, and maintains interest in electronic music, theater, and multimedia work. He teaches theory, composition, and electronic music at Marygrove College in Detroit and works as Director of Music at a large downtown church in Ann Arbor. In his spare time, he tunes pianos and maintains a healthy interest in amateur astronomy.

(more)

Composer Geoffrey Stanton Selected For Continental Harmony Project ... page 2

He is best described as a high-energy eclectic, emphasizing musicality and free expression within the discipline of musical art. Press descriptions range from “Kurt Weill on acid” to “a composer of formidable talent, skill, and versatility who can conjure up, with rich orchestral color, a sunrise of almost hallucinatory grandeur”. Yet, he can also balance the intimate discourse of solo instruments in chamber music so as to project a haunting and satisfying dramatic form”, writes the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Mr. Stanton has been in residence at Aspen, Tanglewood, the Atlantic Center for the Arts, and has received grants from the American Academy of Arts and Letters in New York, Meet-the-Composer, and the U.S Department of Education.

He loves getting involved in “hands-on” musical projects, which often involve varied instruments, performers, and styles. “The tricky part,” he says, “is to internalize any disparate elements to produce organic structure and flow.” The language which results is unique and engaging.

The Twin Cities Community Gospel Choir, under the direction of its artistic director, Robert Robinson, is known both for its preservation and development of the gospel music tradition, and for serving as a model of community engagement through its frequent workshops in which the art is widely disseminated. They have issued several award-winning recordings.

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.

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. Additional funds are provided by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Target Foundation.

For an electronic version of Geoffrey Stanton's picture, contact Patricia Shifferd, harmony@composersforum.org. To interview Geoffrey Stanton, contact him at (734) 996-5508.

###