



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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For Immediate Release,

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**COMPOSER JOSEPH JULIAN GONZALEZ SELECTED FOR VISALIA,
Calif. CONTINENTAL HARMONY PROJECT**

Artist Will Collaborate with the Alliance for the Preservation of Mariachi to
Compose Piece Weaving Together Orchestral and Mariachi Music

St. PAUL, Minn., June 4, 2004— The American Composers Forum, St. Paul, Minn, announced today the next phase of the Central California Alliance for the Preservation of Mariachi's (CCAPM) participation in the Forum's nationwide *Continental Harmony* program. Representatives of community groups in Visalia have selected composer Joseph Julian Gonzalez, Los Angeles, Calif, to serve a residency culminating in an original musical work to be performed by the Tulare County Symphony and mariachi. Gonzalez will begin his residency in Visalia by getting to know people, researching local history and culture, working with students, and making presentations to community groups of all sorts. The new music will premiere October 2004.

The mission of the CCAPM is multipurpose. The central concern is to teach young people to perform mariachi authentically and with the highest degree of artistry; at the same time, the students are taught music theory and history, and life skills such as discipline, responsibility and family values. Parents actively support their children in the program. At present there are 17 youth mariachi groups throughout the southern part of California's Central Valley. The purpose of this project is to continue to raise the artistic level of the young musicians and to encourage cross-cultural exchange through the creation of a work for mariachi ensemble and classical orchestra that will combine the two musical traditions.

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Continental Harmony is an initiative of the American Composers Forum in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts as a way of bringing composers and communities across the country together for the creation of original musical works reflecting the unique history, culture and spirit of each community. CCAPM and its community partners, which include the Tulare County Symphony, were selected through a competitive process to be one of California's representatives in the *Continental Harmony* program.

For more information about how to help this community effort with your donations, inquiries may be sent via email to: contact@ccapm.net, or by calling Eva Camacho at (661) 387-6732.

Gonzalez has had a dynamic career as a music composer for film, television and the concert music stage. He has composed music for academy award nominated documentaries to feature films to critically acclaimed television shows. He has worked with artists as diverse as the avant-garde string quartet Kronos to Britney Spears and Quentin Tarantino.

Hailing from Bakersfield in California's Southern San Joaquin Valley, Gonzalez studied classical guitar from Theodore Norman and composition for motion picture and television from famed film composer David Raksin (*Laura, Forever Amber*) at UCLA. After touring with several groups including The New Christy Minstrels, Gonzalez became music director of Luis Valdez's (*La Bamba, Zoot Suit*) much heralded theater company El Teatro Campesino. There he composed the music score for *La Pastorela*, a PBS Great Performance Christmas special and worked with such artists as Linda Rondstadt, Freddy Fender and Los Lobos.

Since then he has composed the music scores for several films, television shows and documentaries including the academy award nominated feature documentary *Colors Straight Up*, the New Line Cinema feature film *Price of Glory*, and Miramax's *Curdled*. He even composed the underscore for Britney Spear's music video "Oops, I Did It Again." Gonzalez most recently completed scoring three seasons of Showtime's award winning *Resurrection Blvd*.

In 1995 Gonzalez embarked on a path that stretched the bounds of creativity in music and art. The Grammy award-winning group, the Kronos Quartet, performed a piece composed by Gonzalez, *Tormenta Cantata*, for string quartet, soprano and amplified paint brush.

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Collaborating with artist and friend, Gronk, this multi-movement piece incorporated an onstage wall that had the artist “interpreting” brushstrokes written into the score. At times the brush strokes acted as a conductor’s baton, other times Gronk painted in tempo to the music performed by Kronos and the soprano.

Gonzalez enjoys time with his family and providing music for his church. He is presently working with famed documentarian Hector Galan in a three part miniseries for PBS, *Visiones*, about Latino Art and Culture.

Continental Harmony has been recognized as a model of local community artistic initiative. Each host site identifies a theme, an occasion, and local performers for a musical work that will be meaningful to its citizens.

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.

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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