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**COMPOSER PAUL HALLEY SELECTED FOR CHARLESTON, W.Va.,
CONTINENTAL HARMONY PROJECT
Artist Will Collaborate With Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences to
Celebrate the First Year in its New Facility**

St. PAUL, Minn., January 31, 2003— The American Composers Forum announced today the next phase of Clay Center for the Arts and Science's participation as West Virginia's representative in the Forum's nationwide *Continental Harmony* program. The Forum announced that Clay Center for the Arts and Science's selection for the residency – Paul Halley – will write a piece for an assemblage of choirs and voices from various local choirs, blended with possible ensembles from the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra as well as local jazz and traditional ensembles as a celebration of the theme of the center: creativity, exploration, discovery and celebration. The performance of Charleston music will be October 2-4, 2003.

The *Continental Harmony* 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 across the country together for the creation of original musical works reflecting the unique history, culture and spirit of each community. The Clay Center has put together a coalition of community groups, including The West Virginia Symphony, West Virginia University at Parkersburg, and the communities of Charleston, Parkersburg, Lewisburg, Buckhannon, and Morgantown to carry out the residency and have the music performed. Halley will begin his residency in Charleston by getting to know people, researching local history and culture, working with students, and making presentations to community groups of all sorts.

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Paul Halley, of Norfolk, CT brings a strong background in composition and community engagement to Charleston's Continental Harmony project. Born in Romford, Essex in 1952, raised in Ottawa, Ontario and educated at Cambridge University, Halley is an internationally known composer, conductor, and keyboardist who has earned four Grammy Awards to date for his contributions as featured writer and performer on many Paul Winter Consort recordings. Halley's new keyboard works and choral compositions are recorded and distributed by Pelagos Incorporated, the independent music publishing and recording company for which Halley serves as Creative Director. Commissioning organizations for Halley's compositions include The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, The New Jersey Symphony, Juniata College, Taft School, The City Mission Society of Boston, The Ottawa Choral Society, baritone Gerald Finley, The Ottawa Chamber Music Festival, Pete Seeger, and The Canadian Brass.

Halley's professional resume includes eighteen years as featured performer with The Paul Winter Consort and thirteen years as Director of Music at The Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City where he transformed the Cathedral's music program into a rich combination of classical and contemporary music. Halley serves as Director of Music at Trinity Episcopal Church, Torrington, CT and, for the past eleven years, he has been the Artistic Director of Joyful Noise, Inc., the non-profit organization that administers the children's choir Chorus Angelicus, and the adult choir Gaudeamus.

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. 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.

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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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