



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](mailto:mail@composersforum.org) • Web site: [www.composersforum.org](http://www.composersforum.org)

## *Continental Harmony* Premiere in Roswell, N.M. New Composition Commemorates Bataan Death March Survivors

March 1, 2004  
For Immediate Release

For more information, contact: Pat Shifferd at American Composers Forum,  
651-251-2818, [harmony@composersforum.org](mailto:harmony@composersforum.org), or  
Jane Batson at REACH2000,  
505-623-8637, [reach2000@dfn.com](mailto:reach2000@dfn.com)

St. PAUL, Minn., March 1, 2004—Composer Stephen Melillo's original composition entitled "Beyond Courage," will be premiered April 3, 2004 at 2:00 p.m. and April 4, 2004 at 2:00 p.m. at the Roswell Civic Center. The performance will feature the Roswell Independent School District High School Honor Band and former students from Goddard and Roswell High Schools under the direction of Mike Lee and Kent Jordan along with a choir from the Roswell area. The piece was commissioned by REACH 2000, the N.O.T.E. (Nothing Other Than Excellence) Council and their community partners, the Roswell Independent School District and Roswell Museum and Art Center, as part of *Continental Harmony*, the national community-based composer residency program of American Composers Forum, St. Paul, Minn. Survivors and families of Bataan veterans will be the honored guests at the first performance. Admission to both performances is free.

Roswell's *Continental Harmony* project pays tribute to the sacrifices made by New Mexicans during World War II. Many New Mexicans were among the American troops forced to surrender in the Philippines in 1942 and to endure the subsequent movement to prison camp that has become known as the Bataan Death March. Their heroism has become legendary, and many of the survivors became community leaders throughout Southeastern New Mexico.

The work for high school band and choir is being based on "Beyond Courage," Dorothy Cave's book about the Bataan Death March. In addition to Cave's input, Melillo contacted local survivors of the event for their participation. In his program notes, the composer writes, "The goal of the work is to encapsulate a worthy memento, a time-capsule that will carry into future generations the oft-times hard to accept legacy of the valiant Souls who endured more than can be summed with words alone. Within them, we find something **beyond** courage. If a single work spanning 64:33 seems long, reconsider. It represents only **1/31, 385th** of the Time given by the POW's... *before* they got home."

(more)

Melillo has composed more than 900 works which include interactive video scores, three symphonies commissioned by Gerhardt Zimmerman and the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra, a Concerto for Violin & Orchestra composed for Anne Akiko Meyers, and over 11 hours of Music for Wind & Percussion Ensembles of the 3rd Millennium.

REACH 2000 is non-profit organization that has worked for years in the Roswell area to promote healthy communities and success for youth. The organization acts as the fiscal agent for the N.O.T.E. Council.

The N.O.T.E. (Nothing Other Than Excellence) Council is a youth-directed group of musicians from Roswell and Goddard High Schools. The students have led an initiative in the community during the past three years to heighten the importance of music in the lives of young people. They also work to assure that no student in the Roswell schools is denied participation in band due to the lack of funds or instruments. Through the N.O.T.E. Council, an honor band from both high schools has been formed to premiere new works and bring skilled clinicians into the community.

*Continental Harmony* has been recognized as a model of local community artistic initiative. A partnership between the American Composers Forum and the National Endowment for the Arts, the initiative is designed to bring 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.

*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.*