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For Immediate Release,

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**COMPOSER THOMAS OBOE LEE SELECTED FOR BANGOR, ME.,
CONTINENTAL HARMONY PROJECT
Artist Will Collaborate With The Bangor Symphony Orchestra to
Celebrate Bangor's Roots on the Penobscot River**

St. PAUL, Minn., February 28, 2003— The American Composers Forum announced today the next phase of The Bangor Symphony Orchestra participation as Maine's representative in the Forum's nationwide *Continental Harmony* program. The Bangor Symphony Orchestra put together a coalition of community groups, including Maine Folklife Center, University of Maine Oratorio Society, Bangor Area Children's Choir, Bangor Public Library, Bangor Region Arts and Culture Council, Robinson Ballet Company and Thomas School of Dance, University of Maine Museum of Art, Hudson Museum, and Maine Discovery Museum to carry out the residency and have the music performed. Representatives from each of these organizations formed a committee that selected Thomas Oboe Lee to write a piece to be performed by The Bangor Symphony Orchestra with choral and dance groups from the community as a celebration of the Penobscot River and its role in the community. The performance of Bangor's music will be September 2004 in a brand new amphitheatre being built on the waterfront of the river.

Continental Harmony 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. Lee will begin his residency in Bangor by getting to know people, researching local history and culture, working with students, and making presentations to community groups of all sorts.

Thomas Oboe Lee, of Cambridge, MA, brings a strong background in composition and community engagement to Bangor's Continental Harmony project. Lee was born in China in 1945 and lived in Sao

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Paulo, Brazil, for six years before coming to the United States in 1966. After graduating from the University of Pittsburgh, he studied composition at the New England Conservatory and Harvard University. He has been a member of the faculty at Boston College since 1990.

Lee has received many awards for his work: among them the Rome Prize, two Guggenheim Fellowships, two National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships, and First Prize at the Kennedy Center Friedheim Awards. In 1984, Esquire magazine selected him as one of two composers for "The Best Of The New Generation: Men and Women Under 40 Who Are Changing America." He has received commissions from Amnesty International USA, the Thoreau Society, the Fromm Music Foundation, the Koussevitzky Music Foundation, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, and the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra among others. His music is published by G. Schirmer/AMP and Departed Feathers Music; and has been recorded on GM, MCA Classics, Northeastern, Koch International, and Nonesuch Records. This is Lee's second *Continental Harmony* commission; for the first he wrote Symphony #3: Portraits in Jazz for the American Jazz Philharmonic in Culver City, CA.

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.

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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