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Continental Harmony Premiere in Newport, Wash., New Composition Celebrates Explorer David Thompson

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St. PAUL, Minn., June 7, 2004—Composer Charlie Maguire's original composition for Pend Oreille County, Washington entitled "DownRiver!!" will be premiered July 10 at 7 p.m. and July 11 at 3 p.m. at Sadie Halstead Middle School, 331 S Calispel Ave, Newport, WA. Tickets for the performance are \$8, and reservations are suggested. Call CREATE at 509-447-9277 for information or go to www.createarts.org The musical with book by Kim Hinton Gannon was commissioned by CREATE as part of *Continental Harmony*, the national community-based composer residency program of American Composers Forum, St. Paul, Minn. Additional performances will be:

- July 14 at 6 p.m. at the Pow Wow Grounds on the Kalispel Reservation, Usk, WA;
- July 17 at 6 p.m. at the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture, 2316 W. First, Spokane, WA; and
- July 23 at 7:30 p.m., July 24 at 7:30 p.m., and July 25 at 2 p.m. at The Cutter Theatre, 302 Park, Metaline Falls, WA.

Newport's *Continental Harmony* project brings together the citizens of Pend Oreille County through a production of "DownRiver!!" —a fictionalized drama based on the life of David Thompson, the first European to visit the area. The musical, directed by Sara Edlin Marlowe, choreographed by Lois Ernst, with musical direction and arrangements by Donovan Johnson, celebrates David Thompson and the Native Americans he met as he expanded the fur trading territory of the Northwest Fur Company. After 27 years trading, exploring and mapping Canada and the Northwestern United States from Hudson to the Pacific Ocean, Thompson produced a map measuring 6 by 10 feet that was used as the definitive geographic reference for the area for over fifty years.

The musical performance will include participants from all sectors of the population along the Pend Oreille River including the Frog Island Singers of the Kalispel Tribe of Indians. In addition to creating the songs for the musical, Maguire has served as composer-in-residence to area schools involving the four towns and three school districts along a 75-mile-long stretch of the Pend Oreille River from Newport in the south, to Metaline Falls in the north near the U.S.-Canadian border. At these sites Charlie has demonstrated the process of folk-style music composition, using his own compositions as examples, especially the songs to be used in the musical.

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DownRiver!! and the story of David Thompson has lent itself to a variety of community activities. Charlie Maguire's Forth Grade students from all three school districts have formed the DownRiver!! Chorus and will perform all the school songs Maguire composed for audiences this summer. The Washington State University Pend Oreille County Extension Office and The Kalispel Tribe's Department of Natural Resources sponsored eight "Sense of Place" workshops focused on the environment, science and historical resources of David Thompson's time. CREATE's after-school drama and music program created a program based on the songs and script of DownRiver!! and music of the period and performed for all local area schools. The Pend Oreille County Library honored David Thompson's birthday, April 30, 1770, the week of April 24 to May 1 with special displays, book club readings and even birthday cake. The Pend Oreille County Historical Society presented a slide show on David Thompson in Pend Oreille County. This program has been shown to over 500 people in schools and at meetings of civic organizations. The Museum in Newport also carries a variety of books for sale about David Thompson.

In telling the stories of America, Maguire (www.charliemaguire.com) has lived an exciting and varied musical career that spans twenty-five years of songwriting, recording, and performing. Completely self-taught on guitar and harmonica, but learning from the best musicians of his generation, his reputation is national and international with appearances from "Good Morning America" to "A Prairie Home Companion" to "As It Happens" and "All Things Considered". He is equally at home on the concert stage and in the classroom, and specializes in world premiere musicals and songs that make a difference to the environment, to society, and to the hearts of the people of the United States.

CREATE's mission is to provide opportunities for expression, enjoyment, and appreciation of the arts and humanities in the Pend Oreille Valley through individual and community participation. The vision is a dynamic community in which the energy of the arts promotes a quality of life rich in color, texture and depth.

Continental Harmony has been recognized as a model of local community artistic initiative. 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. 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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