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Jan. 3, 2003
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NEWS RELEASE

WORLD PREMIER OF NEW MUSIC WILL HIGHLIGHT CONCERT, 'GIFT TO DAYTON' FROM UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON AND WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY

DAYTON, Ohio — More than 400 musicians from the University of Dayton and Wright State University will take one stage Feb. 1 to make and mark history with a musical gift to the city of Dayton — a free concert featuring the world premier of a new composition commissioned in honor of the 100th anniversary of flight.

In Sunshine and In Shadow, created by award-winning composer Robert Jager around the text of three poems by Paul Laurence Dunbar, will serve as grand finale to the concert, which marks the first collaboration ever between the WSU and UD music departments. The concert is open to the public and will be at 7:30 p.m. at the Dayton Masonic Temple at 525 W. Riverview Drive in Dayton. For more information, call the UD music office at (937) 229-3936 or the Wright State music office at (937) 775-2346.

The concert will also include a guest appearance by Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra conductor Neal Gittleman and several numbers performed by student ensembles and faculty artists serving as soloists, section leaders and conductors. Approximately 200 students from UD will perform with the University's chorale, orchestra, choral union, symphonic wind ensemble and Ebony Heritage Singers gospel choir. Some 225 students will perform from Wright State's chorus, orchestra, wind symphony, chamber singers and Paul Laurence Dunbar Chorale.

Herbert Dregalla, chair of Wright State University's music department, said the department started thinking several years ago about helping Dayton celebrate its heritage as the birthplace of aviation. "The 2003 celebration will be a unique and historic event, so we started talking about a collaboration with UD — a unique and historic event in its own right," Dregalla said. "We met with (UD music chair) Donna Cox, who was equally excited about the idea. This concert is our gift to the city of Dayton in celebration of the anniversary of flight."

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"This collaboration is extremely important to me," Cox said. "I'm excited about the diversity of music we'll be able to deliver by bringing our ensembles together, and I love the idea of working together to create a synergy that just doesn't happen when you're doing the same material over and over."

The concert will begin with Beethoven's *Choral Fantasy*, conducted by Gittleman and featuring Eric Street, UD professor of music, on piano. The piece will be performed by the UD and WSU orchestras, the Wright State chamber singers and Dayton's chorale. Following numbers will feature the universities' combined wind ensembles, chorale and chamber singers, and gospel choirs.

Jager will travel from his home in Cookeville, Tenn., to rehearse with musicians and then take the stage to conduct the closing piece, *In Sunshine and In Shadow*. The composition was jointly commissioned by the universities and will feature combined wind ensembles and choruses with vocal solos by Wright State's Kimberly Warrick, associate professor of music, and Edward Payne, instructor of music.

Jager used Dunbar's *An Ante-Bellum Sermon, Sympathy* and *The Colored Band* to create the three-movement work.

The University of Dayton is a partner of Inventing Flight, which will draw visitors from around the world to Dayton July 3-20, 2003, for a world-class celebration. They will gather to celebrate not only the Wright brothers' invention, but also the entrepreneurial spirit, determination, creativity, innovation and dedication that is still part of the greater Dayton community today.

For more about UD's involvement in the anniversary year, visit <http://www.AviationExperts.org>.

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For media interviews, contact **Donna Cox** at (937) 229-3936 or via e-mail at Donna.Cox@notes.udayton.edu, and **Herbert Dregalla** at (937) 775-2346 or via e-mail at Herbert.Dregalla@wright.edu.