



Daniel Pearl
WORLD MUSIC DAYS

NEWS RELEASE

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IE Music Festival Gains National Attention

4th Annual New Thought Music Festival takes place March 8th

Riverside's New Thought Music Festival, which will make its 4th appearance on March 8th at the Community Center for Spiritual Living adjacent to Fairmount Park, is garnering attention from around the country. "It's the premier West Coast event featuring Positive Music" says festival founder and producer Al Yankee, "and we're getting attention from national media and attendees from as far away as Florida." On the east coast, they call it 'Posi Music' and there are festivals and tours throughout the year. Here on the west coast, there are many talented performers doing this music, but performance opportunities have been limited to homes and other small venues. "Before this festival was founded, there was never a place for them to come together and showcase this wonderful and optimistic music to a larger audience."

The music is serious about its positivity, an attitude that has no musical boundaries, and this year's festival will feature artists performing in pop, country, folk, and jazz styles. The only unifying characteristic is a sunny attitude. "We're not airy-fairy Pollyannas" says Yankee. "Many of these songs deal with the hard issues that people face. The difference is that there is always an element of hope, forgiveness, reconciliation, or surrender that allows for constructive growth and change." "Listening to positive music can have a profoundly beneficial effect. We're offering an alternative to the negativity and helplessness portrayed in so much popular music." Yankee is no stranger to the power of music to stir the emotions, having composed music for sixteen years for the Air Force Band at March Air Force Base and for another thirteen years managing the orchestras for the musicals presented at Performance Riverside.

Eddie Watkins, Jr. is headlining this year. One of the original Motown "Funk Brothers," he is heard on many classic recordings including Patti Austin's "Come to Me" and Gloria Gaynor's disco anthem "I Will Survive." In addition to performing at the 7 PM concert, Eddie will offer an afternoon workshop starting at 2:30. Also featured at the festival will be award-winning singer/songwriter Harold Payne (who co-wrote the latest album from Bobby Womack), Japanese-

American songstress Denise Rosier, and Texas Troubador Gary Lynn Floyd. "We'll definitely have something for everyone" says Yankee.

This year's festival is especially dedicated to the spirit and memory of Daniel Pearl. Pearl, who grew up in southern California, was on assignment in Pakistan for the Wall Street Journal in 2002 when he was abducted and killed by terrorists. Daniel's executioner was the highly-placed Al-Qaeda operative Khalid Sheik Mohammed, now imprisoned at Guantanamo. Shocked by the senseless loss of Pearl, an accomplished musician who had a profound belief in the universal power of music, his family was moved to inspire hope and unity by inviting people everywhere to hold musical events in his memory. The Daniel Pearl World Music Days has grown over the last decade into a series of more than 2000 annual "Harmony for Humanity" concerts, taking place in more than 80 countries, many featuring internationally known artists such as Sir Elton John, Yo-Yo Ma, and Herbie Hancock.

The *New Thought Music Festival* takes place at the Community Center for Spiritual Living at the corner of Fairmount Boulevard and Ridge Road in Riverside. The evening concert begins at 7 PM. More information at NewThoughtMusicFestival.com and DanielPearlMusicDays.org