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## *Pelusi Composition Commemorates 9/11*

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — When Mario Pelusi, associate professor of composition and theory and director of the Illinois Wesleyan University School of Music, was asked to reflect on September 11, he chose the language he knows best: music.

Pelusi's original score, *9.11.2001: Symbols and Reflections (In Memory of the Victims of 9.11.2001)* will be premiered at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 11, when the Illinois Wesleyan community gathers on the McPherson Beach (located on the Eckley Quadrangle) to commemorate the tragic events of that day.

"Like everyone," said Pelusi, "I've experienced an enormous range of emotional responses to the 9/11 tragedy. Music is a very powerful language with which to express both ideas and emotions, and what I wanted to do, above all else, with this music was to combine these two notions into a successful whole that would honor and call to memory the victims of this atrocity."

However, something quite strange happened to him while composing the piece. "I began reliving and dreaming the feelings that I had experienced on the day of the tragedy, but this time, some of those feelings were more intense than I remember," said Pelusi. "Perhaps this is because I was able to reflect on these emotions and thoughts rather than experience them in a surreal way or in a state of shock."

Rather than writing a melancholy or slow-moving musical piece, Pelusi decided that the music would address two goals. First, he would create a composition that depicts the chronology of 9/11 using musical techniques. And, second, he would use symbolic images within the actual score of the music to represent the destruction of the twin towers.

Commissioned by the university's Chaplain, the piece, which is written for brass and percussion, actually takes the audience through the events of the day. Pelusi wanted the music to be both intellectual and emotional. The work begins with music fitting of a sunrise, then the hustle and bustle of city life. Eventually, the ominous sound of jet engines (first heard in the second, third, and fourth trombones underneath the "commuter music") intrudes on the scene. The composition goes on to create four explosions along with the sounds of diving aircraft and the destruction of each of the towers.

The piece also features dirge-like rhythms, a four-part hymn scored for trumpet, French horn, and two trombones, and martial-like music to signify the military response to the attacks.

"The composition also is intended to express the idea that as of September 11, 2002, "we are still mourning, still engaged in a 'war on terrorism,' and still quite uncertain as to what the future may bring."