

Senza Sordino

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Arts Advocacy Centerpiece of 2014 Conference by Laura Ross, ICSOM Secretary

The Westin Bonaventure Hotel in downtown Los Angeles, CA was the location for the 2014 ICSOM Conference, hosted by the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Local 47 from August 25 to 28. The emphasis of the conference was on the Art of Advocacy and a number of presenters focused on this subject, including Americans for the Arts (AFTA) Vice President of Research and Policy Randy Cohen, and Randy Whatley, President of Cypress Media.

Americans for the Arts (AFTA) has been a wonderful resource for data about how the arts contribute to the economy and enhance education. Randy Cohen, who first presented in 2008 at the San Francisco ICSOM conference, returned with a wealth of accessible information to help our orchestras craft their message about the importance of the arts to our communities. ICSOM has also renewed its partnership with AFTA to allow our members to become free members of their Action Fund, which helps direct information and letters to Congress when certain legislation and funding issues arise. ICSOM members



Photo by Leslie Shank
Randy Cohen

are encouraged to sign up for the Action Fund to receive legislative progress notices and easily contact their congressional representatives when necessary.

Randy Whatley, one of the 2013 ICSOM conference presenters, has become a great friend to ICSOM, especially through his willingness to provide something ICSOM and its members have been clamoring for—public relations training and assistance. Whatley discussed the logistics of advocacy while continuing to build upon



Photo by Leslie Shank
Randy Whatley

last year's presentation in Kansas City. Over the past season, he has helped numerous orchestras focus their attention on becoming their own best advocates by using both traditional and social media to reach the widest audiences. Newsletters in particular are a wonderful way to deliver an orchestra's message to the public. Whatley worked closely with the Utah Symphony and with their Alternate Delegate George Brown, who spoke about organizing his orchestra to bring Whatley's recommendations to completion. Brown discussed how he was able to identify and recruit musicians to build a website and produce a newsletter. In addition, Brown and his colleagues produced a video history of Local 104 that was exhibited during the session.

In a brief address, Mark Lindsay, board chairman of the American Symphonic Advocacy Project (ASAP), announced his intent, again this season, to donate his services and those of his staff. He also reported that one of the most effective programs produced thus far has been a series of advocacy training conference calls throughout the season with various orchestra members.



Photo by Leslie Shank
Mark Lindsay

The Chairman's address sets the tone at the beginning of the conference, and ICSOM Chairman Bruce Ridge spoke to the unity and advocacy that are at the heart of ICSOM's activities through its Calls to Action, the use of social media, and spreading a positive message about the importance of our orchestras, music and culture within our communities.

Every conference begins with a bit of excitement as delegates and guests are busy getting reacquainted or meeting for the first time, the Governing Board has just had breakfast with first time delegates to give them a peek into what to expect at the conference, and then suddenly a year of planning comes to fruition as the Chairperson calls the conference to order, the Secretary (that would be me) reads the first roll call, and introductions are made. In Los Angeles, even before the conference began, delegates were participating in a negotiating workshop moderated by ICSOM Counsel Susan Martin and former executive director of the San Francisco and St. Louis Symphonies, Peter Pastreich, who has also served as consultant for a number of orchestras.

Then our hosts – the Local and orchestra(s) – greet delegates and

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Chairperson's Report by Bruce Ridge



One of my most moving moments of last season came on January 14, while in Tampa. I walked into a meeting of the committees of the Florida Orchestra, and they handed me a check for \$800 to send to the Minnesota Orchestra musicians. What I knew at that time, but couldn't quite reveal for another hour or so, was on that day the most egregious lockout in the history of orchestras had finally ended. The response to our Call to Action to support the Locked Out Musicians of the Minnesota Orchestra gave tremendous and

tangible support to their effort, and their efforts were indeed made on behalf of all us.

When we act together our voices will be heard as clearly as our music. I have been reading a book this summer on how the internet and tools such as Twitter have changed how we all communicate and organize. The impact on world events has been immeasurable. In the revolution that overthrew Hosni Mubarak, Egyptians armed with little more than smartphones in their pocket rose up together through communications on Twitter, and they accomplished a revolution in a country where you needed a permit from the government to gather in groups larger than five.

Authoritarian governments use three techniques to suppress the spirits of the people they attempt to control. They use isolation, fear, and apathy.

Through isolation they intend to keep the like-minded citizens of the world from organizing.

Through fear they intend to suppress the actions of the people through the knowledge of what might happen to them should they dare to rise.

And apathy is really futility. Through apathy they create a sense of "what can I do? I am just one person."

By no means do I intend to compare recent horrific world events with the plight of the artist in North America, but it occurs to me that these same techniques are used by less nefarious factions to control the thinking of a people. In the battle for advocacy of our place as artists and musicians in society, there is an attempt to keep us isolated, to keep us fearful, and to keep us apathetic.

As the current border crisis expands, there are many who have responded by carrying accusatory signs and shouting epithets of hatred and division. But the musicians of the San Diego Symphony responded by joining with the musicians of the Orquesta Baja California to play Bach on opposite sides of a border fence in a profound demonstration of peace in a very noisy world.

We will not be isolated. We will not be fearful. We will not be apathetic.

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF
SYMPHONY AND OPERA MUSICIANS

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Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra
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Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra
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Minnesota Orchestra
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National Symphony Orchestra
New Jersey Symphony Orchestra
New York City Ballet Orchestra
New York City Opera Orchestra
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Oregon Symphony Orchestra
Orquesta Sinfónica de Puerto Rico
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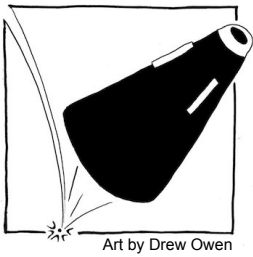
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Art by Drew Owen

Dropping the Mute by Peter de Boor, Editor

This issue I take over as Editor from Richard Levine, who has provided a decade of exemplary leadership and service.

Senza Sordino has as its founding principle the importance of communication. While initially this communication was largely between orchestras, a sharing of important information such as negotiating strategies and common issues, it has become increasingly important to communicate with the larger world—with our Locals and our Federation, with our audiences, with our communities. This periodical has published repeated efforts to combat the storm of negative rhetoric about our industry in the wider media. The rest of us also need to remove our mutes so that our positive message of the importance of orchestral music to our communities, and the message of the vibrancy of our orchestras, can be heard loud and clear.

But the transition from *con* to *senza sordino* can be clumsy (especially for horn players). Sometimes one can misspeak and inadvertently cause offense. More significantly, one can speak honestly about a controversial topic and cause similar offense. While the first type of offense might require an apology, we should not shrink from open debate about important issues of the day. For, as Richard said at the 2014 conference in Los Angeles, “Unity and consensus cannot be imposed, but must be developed.” The only way to develop consensus is through an uncensored, civil dialogue about the issues. I hope that *Senza Sordino* will inspire you to drop your mutes, discuss issues with your colleagues, and speak to your communities about the importance of your art.

Chairperson’s Report

(continued from page 2)

Currently ICSOM is building what we believe is the most important Twitter feed in classical music. We have over 6000 followers, and that allows us to spread our message instantly around the world, but we need 10,000 followers, we need 15,000. We must use this tool to spread the importance of the arts in education, in health, in financial impact, and in the elevation of the human spirit at a time when inspiration is harder and harder to find. Musicians must deliver that inspiration to a slumping world, and we will.

Our friendships with each other have never been closer or more needed. Those of us in this network of friends have a shared legacy, a shared childhood, a shared present, and a shared future. Whether we realize it or not, we have never been more powerful than we are right now.

And while it is a dark world, it is also a beautiful world. And we add beauty to this world every time we walk on stage with our colleagues, knowing that our friends across North America and the world are walking on to their stages as well at the very same time to spread the very same message of hope.

Our Conference theme was The Art of Advocacy, and this coming

year we will pursue that art as vigorously as we pursue the art of music. It will only be through the art of advocacy that we will achieve our expectation of a thriving musical and cultural society across North America and throughout the world. When others merely talk about what is sustainable, we will talk about what is achievable. When others say what can’t be done, musicians will demonstrate what is possible by joining together through our united network of friends to spread our message of hope.

We will not be isolated. We will not be fearful. We will not be apathetic.

This is not a time to feel darkness for the world. This is a time for all of us to bring light to the souls that we know are burdened. It is not too trite to say “We are the music makers and we are the dreamers of dreams.” We must not doubt ourselves, or allow negative voices to influence us.

We will greet any doubts with a unified message of hope. We will stand in favor of any positive message, and we will continue to care for each other as the united network of friends that we are.

Four days after the conclusion of the 2014 ICSOM Conference in Los Angeles, my mother died. She would want me to use that word “died,” as through her singular sense of humor she always remarked on obituaries that sought to find gentle euphemisms for death. I am heartbroken, but that will subside as I remember again the joy I always felt with her and through her.

My mother was a teacher. Einstein once said “It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge.” That was what my mother did for me, and for countless children. She was especially skilled at reaching those children in need that could not be reached by others. She positively changed the lives of many, and those she assisted through childhood difficulties are now raising their own families having benefited from the love she gave them, and the trust she earned.

From her example I learned that we are always at our best when assisting others, and that the world is a community in need of support, inspiration, love, kindness, education, and forgiveness.

Much has happened in these two weeks since she died. I have been so touched by the support and love I have received from so many musicians across the world. It is really a tribute to my mother, because whatever I’ve been able to accomplish in my life would have been inconceivable without her.

ICSOM is a united network of friends, and I have never felt that more than in these two weeks. But it is not just the support shown to me at this difficult time, but also the love and support shown to the locked out musicians of the Atlanta Symphony. The musicians of that great orchestra now face an unprecedented second lockout in two years after their management inexplicably chose to drink once again from this punitive well.

ICSOM has issued a Call to Action to raise funds to support the musicians, and in the first days of the Call the response has been
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The MET Orchestra Averts a Lockout

by Jessica Phillips Rieske

I have a confession. One year ago, I had no idea what Twitter was supposed to be used for. Back then, as Vice Chair of the MET Orchestra Committee, I had taken it upon myself to create a better online presence for the MET Orchestra in preparation for our upcoming negotiations. Unfortunately, I soon realized that I had no idea how to do so. Luckily, a tech-savvy percussionist came to my rescue. He assured me that he could build a website very cheaply. We purchased the URL (www.metorchestramusicians.org), and we were off and running.

Several months later, I suddenly found myself Chair of the Orchestra Committee, and Met management presented us with proposals for the most devastating cuts to our members in recent history. The next day, management presented their view of these cuts in *The New York Times*—an occurrence that would repeat itself again and again. We realized that we would be fighting a war on two fronts—at the table and in the press.

We decided that our strategy would be to get as much data from management as possible, and then to back up all statements in the press with this data. Everyone in the orchestra was warned that anything they said on social media could be quoted in the press. We asked everyone to sign a pledge of solidarity and save money for what seemed to be an impending lockout. We began to create a packet of information entitled “How to Survive a Job Action,” and we advised our members to get their medical and financial affairs in order.

One of the most important components of our battle plan was our Public Relations Team. This was officially formed in February, immediately following management’s proposals. Our positive web presence was very helpful in maintaining our rational, professional image. Our fantastic team consists of people who update the website, authors, “journalists” who conduct interviews, photographers, a documentary filmmaker who is married to one of our violists, researchers, and news analysts.

All this preparation was happening while we waited for the Met to provide financial information. We didn’t get the majority of it for months, but in the meantime, another extraordinary team emerged who, together with the vast wealth of experience of our current committee and Local 802, started the process of combing through the data that began to trickle in as a result of our requests.

As we went through the Met’s 990s and other financials, we started to see a pattern emerge of budget increases that were definitely not due to our base salary. Furthermore, we discovered that management’s proposed cuts would be far more devastating than they would admit, and would be achieved through slashing virtually every aspect of our current contract. We could never agree to these cuts, and they were all the more inappropriate given how the Met was spending its money. In addition, we embarked on a project that researched major reviews of new productions that have premiered under Peter Gelb. We discovered that the reviews were overwhelmingly positive for the orchestra and overwhelmingly negative for the productions.

These statistics called into question decisions that were being made to spend an enormous amount of money on productions that were not delivering at the box office. Yet we were providing artistic excellence each and every night. We expanded our team and began collaborating with members of IATSE Local 1 and AGMA, and a unique alliance emerged, representing the artistic backbone of the Met.

Slowly, armed with our data-driven arguments, we started winning the public relations battle. Jennifer Maloney of *The Wall Street Journal* was one of the first major reporters to publish our interpretation of the box office numbers. As the lockout deadline approached, it was our understanding that city government officials were calling Peter personally asking him not to lock us out, as he had publicly said he intended to do if we did not agree to these drastic cuts. We began to put together our final presentation that outlined our own cost saving proposals. Instead of cutting the livelihoods of the artists, we proposed cuts to the new productions and other excessive expenditures, but also understood that some of these cuts would reduce labor costs as well.

When we made our cost saving presentation to management, immediately afterwards, we sent it to the press and the Met Opera Board of Directors. We felt we had made a significant impression in the press and that the Met management began to understand the outrage a lockout would cause. We kept repeating that we would continue to negotiate until we reached a deal, but the threat of a lockout was not helping, and management had not changed its position since February. On the day before the lockout, the Met suggested bringing in a mediator. This was a huge shift, and we felt that the pressure that had been created by our ability to challenge the Met’s financial assertions was one of the major reasons behind this change in course.

The mediators were able to postpone the lockout for seventy-two hours. Every Met employee would therefore receive another month of health insurance and a paycheck that week, which we considered a huge win. During the weekend, we gave the mediators a copy of our presentation. The idea of an independent financial analyst was broached. Thirty-six hours later, Eugene Keilin was on board, and a lockout was staved off for another seven to ten days. Both sides were able to present their arguments to Mr. Keilin. Our presentation was over three hours, this time with the help of AGMA, which gave him a powerful and thorough understanding of our perception of the Met’s financial situation.

Without going into the finer details, the concessions that we agreed to came at a steep price for the Met. The contract calls for a 3.5% reduction of our total compensation. How the subsequent 3.5% reduction, effective in six months, will be felt is to be negotiated this fall. Then there is a 3% increase in the final year of the 4-year term. There are no changes to our healthcare or pension, unless mutually agreed upon this fall. However, due to the Equality of Sacrifice language in the Memorandum of Agreement, the Met administration must match this wage reduction, and additionally, the Met must reduce its own budget by \$11.25 million annually. This can come

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Orchestra Newslets

Atlanta Locked Out

At midnight, September 6, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra musicians found themselves locked out for the second time in two years. Management of the ASO/WAC (Woodruff Art Center, the parent corporation) issued a Last, Best and Final proposal to the negotiating committee by email on September 5, and a subsequent counterproposal was dismissed as “inadequate.” Health insurance is paid only through September 30, and at this writing the orchestra is in its third week of being locked out. Management has now “postponed” all concerts through November 8.

The lockout comes after the indignity of ten weeks of furlough agreed to in the contentious 2012 contract. Besides compensation, remaining issues involve the complement (and who determines it) and the quality and cost sharing of health benefits. On these issues, management proposes to listen to input, but retain the sole final authority to make decisions.

The orchestra is united in this effort, with the public also extremely supportive. Music Director Robert Spano and Principal Guest Donald Runnicles composed an open letter in support of a resolution. The musicians are extremely grateful to their ICSOM colleagues, for their outpouring of moral and financial support; to the AFM, for promptly placing the ASO, ASO Presents and the WAC on the Unfair List; and to the AFM Strike Fund and Local 148-462, for getting the first checks to ASO musicians quickly. For more information about this lockout, please visit the musicians’ website at www.ATLSymphonymusicians.com or visit them on Facebook at [ATLSymphonyMusicians](https://www.facebook.com/ATLSymMusicians), or tweet @ATLSymMusicians.

Banner Bicentennial in Baltimore

On Saturday evening, September 13th, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of its Music Director Marin Alsop, participated in Baltimore’s “Star Spangled Spectacular,” a celebration of the 200th anniversary of the writing of the poem “The Star Spangled Banner,” by Francis Scott Key. Key, an attorney from Maryland, watched the bombardment of Ft. McHenry from a British ship, where he had been sent to negotiate the release of an American prisoner. Key penned The Star Spangled Banner, later set to music—a British drinking song!—on the morning of September 14, 1814, upon seeing the gigantic American flag still flying at the fort after the night’s battle.

The two hour concert, broadcast live to 92% of all PBS stations, was part of a weekend-long celebration of the occasion. The BSO performed in the concert tent at Pier Six, part of Baltimore’s Inner Harbor, just across from Ft. McHenry. The PBS show was hosted by Jordin Sparks and John Lithgow, and an impressive number of pops and classical celebrities performed, most of them with the BSO: Denyce Graves, Paulo Szot, Smokey Robinson, Melissa Etheridge, Kristin Chenoweth, Kenny Rogers, Pentatonix, the US Navy Band Sea Chanters, Train, and Little Big Town.

Composer/arranger James Kessler composed some original pieces that accompanied the narration to the story of the battle, which was a turning point in the War of 1812. He, the library staff, and other BSO staff helped keep things running smoothly for this elaborate Dick Clark production.

San Francisco Opera Orchestra Musicians Ratify Four Year Contract

On September 2, 2014, after almost four months of bargaining and a one-month contract extension, the San Francisco Opera Orchestra ratified a new agreement that creates a stable working framework through July 31, 2018. The orchestra made major concessions in each of the three previous contracts, including a 7.4% reduction in the annual compensation guarantee in 2011-12. This time, the musicians were galvanized and steadfast in their resolve to halt the endless parade of concessionary contracts and set a course toward recovery.

With the addition of a new Supplemental Fee, the agreement calls for an effective increase of 5% in the annual compensation guarantee in the first year, followed by 3% increases in each of the next three years. Wages will increase 14.8% over the four years of the new agreement, from \$81,179 in the expiring agreement to \$85,280 in the first year, then increasing to \$93,187.75 in the fourth year. The new contract also provides for improvements in many other areas, including pit environment, long-term disability, seniority, retirement bonus, retiree medical, and parking.

In anticipation of the Company’s upcoming expansion into the adjacent Veterans Building/Wilsey Center for Opera, a new provision for Wilsey Center work anticipates different programming possibilities in that venue.

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Met Averts Lockout

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in the form of cutting a new production, using less rehearsal time, or simply by making less excessive choices in costumes or other materials. The continued involvement of the independent financial advisor is key. There will be monthly meetings, and he can request to meet with select board members or any employee at the Met. There will also be an “Efficiency Task Force Committee” enacted to help further identify the cost savings reductions that we had been proposing all along.

The final step in our process was to take the idea of these mutual concessions public, so that the Met management would be held accountable in the public eye. It is our hope that this unprecedented agreement to oversight will assure a brighter future for the Met.

It’s been a crazy ride, but at least now I know what Twitter is good for!

Editor’s note: This is adapted from a presentation at the ICSOM conference in Los Angeles

Fresh Eyes on an ICSOM Conference

Editor's note: There are more than 4000 active ICSOM members, and about 90% of them have never attended an ICSOM conference. To help convey what the experience is like, I've asked some of our more recent delegates to write about it.

Kevin Kozak, Alabama Symphony

When I took over as ICSOM delegate from long-time delegate Jeff Solomon last year, I asked him what I should expect from the conference. He said "It is a real brain trust. You will be interacting with the finest minds in the industry". Shortly after the start of the 2013 conference in Kansas City, I realized I completely agreed with Jeff's statement.

The ICSOM conference is inspiration and information—in equal measure, delivered powerfully and abundantly. It is soaring, eloquent rhetoric, full of passion and optimism that reminds us of our shared ideals and energizes us for the challenges we all face. It is statistics and facts that refute the negative pronouncements about our industry (and the arts in general), so frequently promulgated by the press. It is the various experts who can explain the most Byzantine matters of law or finance in a manner that can be clearly understood by all. It is the first-hand accounts from the orchestras who have been on the front lines of lockouts, work stoppages, threats and shutdowns. It is the impromptu hallway caucuses that sometimes yield as much important information as a formal presentation. It is the availability and willingness of every participant in the conference to share ideas, show support, answer questions and address concerns.

But perhaps what defines ICSOM the most is its message and exhortation: We are stronger together than individually. Information is power. Our greatest power is drawn from within our ranks, from within ICSOM, and from within each individual orchestra. We need to identify and mobilize those within our orchestras with extra-musical talents that are essential to our survival in these challenging times: editing, PR, photography, videography, web and social media skills, accounting, excel and flow charts, public speaking and press relations.

We must show the public who we are, and what we do, and not allow ourselves to be defined by others. We need to do this now. BEFORE THERE IS A CRISIS.

The days of "just playing our part" are gone. We need to be activists.

The beauty and the power of the music that we are so privileged to play must survive and thrive.

That, I believe, is ICSOM.

Doug Rosenthal, Kennedy Center

You don't get what you wish for; you get what you work for. Those words rang in my ears *con tutta forza* throughout the entire 2014 ICSOM Conference, "The Art of Advocacy". They were originally spoken by Vince Trombetta (President, Local 47) in his welcoming remarks, and they were manifested in so many ways through-

out the whole week. For instance, delegates participated in a "Mock Negotiation", in which we divided into the different teams involved in a typical negotiation and carried out a scenario. During this exercise, it was fascinating to see the various ways people use their knowledge and values to approach the bargaining table and communicate with their respective team. As the title of the conference suggests, there were

several presentations on how we can effectively get our music and our message into our communities. Guest speaker Randy Whatley (Cypress Media Group) showed us how to size an entire paragraph-long statement down to one concise, relatable sound-byte. He also provided insight on how we can use the delivery of our message to invoke emotions in others. Guest speaker Randy Cohen (Americans for the Arts) spoke of the many facets in which our business brings billions of dollars of prosperity into the economy every year.

While certain situations can make us feel bleak and hopeless about our industry, it was refreshing to hear the Opening Address of ICSOM Chairman Bruce Ridge. He pointed out that if success is a fluke, then there have been many flukes over the past year. He highlighted many orchestras' accomplishments: increased ticket sales and concert attendance, growing endow-

ments, incredible gifts and grants, new facilities, and stronger ties to communities.

As a newcomer, attending this conference opened my eyes in so many ways, and it was an absolute joy to meet the many delegates and leaders who attended from all over the continent. I wish the greatest of success for us all; or rather, I am more energized than ever to be working for it.

Paul Austin, Grand Rapids Symphony

"Hmmm ... what is an ICSOM conference like? I can sum it up in one sentence. Imagine attending a gathering of the movers and shakers from peer orchestras, sharing information about what is happening in your area, and gathering key information about the latest trends as a take away, while hearing experts in our field discuss major issues and making key personal contacts, all in less than 100 hours."

Christopher Neal, Houston Symphony

My first ICSOM conference went very quickly, and not just because I had to leave two days early.

The sheer volume of useful information came so rapidly that the days seemed compressed. I returned to Houston with pages of notes and great ideas. But another real benefit was the energizing sense of unity and shared purpose that I immediately felt when I arrived. Sometimes fighting the good fight at home can feel a bit like being in the trenches—never-ending, scarce progress. I left LA feeling that the heart of the symphony is alive and well—and smart and determined.

Mary Anne Dell'Aquila, Indianapolis Symphony

I agreed to accept the nomination for ICSOM Delegate a couple of years ago after experiencing my first work stoppage. I was reluctant to serve but after my first convention in Kansas City my attitude completely changed and that was due to the people at the conference. I was impressed by the intelligent and creative make up of the Governing Board. They were truly inspiring. The guest speakers were insightful and constructive in addressing problems many of us faced. But I was most impressed by the musicians who attended the conference. They were creative and bright individuals who were supportive and welcoming. I found the same qualities present in those attending the annual conference last August in Los Angeles and I felt lucky to be part of it.

Greg Mulligan, Baltimore Symphony

I have to admit that when I arrived in LA for my third conference, I was feeling a little burned out from all the committee work I have been doing now in Baltimore for many years. As much as I enjoyed the first day's events at this year's ICSOM conference, I still was quite fatigued. Amazingly to me, though, even with the full schedule of meetings and events that is part of every ICSOM conference, I actually was more energized and inspired by day three of the conference than I had been when I arrived. Hearing the remarkable story from Minnesota Orchestra musicians of the settlement of their sixteen month lockout, and the story of how Metropolitan Opera Orchestra musicians used a lot of tools in order to avoid a work stoppage there, inspires me to come back to Baltimore and continue our own work here.

Best of all, even better than the amazing presentations and discussions, is gaining the sense that ICSOM really is a family. This is how Governing Board members describe their feelings for each other, and this is how I now feel with my wonderful ICSOM colleagues from around the country. It is truly inspiring to learn of the work they all, along with musicians serving on committees, do in their orchestras. Where would be all be without ICSOM? Playing in less accomplished orchestras for a lot less compensation, that's where!

Mark Drury, San Francisco Opera

At 62 years old I'm probably one of the oldest "new" delegates to the ICSOM Conference. However, my experience of ICSOM goes way back to 1986 when I attended the ICSOM Conference in Atlanta as a member of the negotiation committee for the Oakland Symphony.

Ted Botsford, Oregon Symphony

Coming away from this year's conference, I was incredibly inspired by the energy and enthusiasm that pervaded every moment of the event. From sessions on healthcare law to crafting a concise media message, it was clear that everyone at ICSOM passionately believes in what we do both on and off the stage – and is willing to fight for it. Reflecting on the tumultuous state of our industry right now, I am encouraged by witnessing this amazing network of friends and colleagues that we can all count on for support and inspiration.

Though this was a tumultuous time for the Oakland Symphony musicians, we found solace among our colleagues at ICSOM and received a great deal of guidance and moral support, both in the Conference itself and via meetings with individual representatives attending.

My first Conference as a bona fide representative was representing the San Francisco Opera Orchestra at the 2013 Kansas City ICSOM Conference, graciously hosted by Brian Rood. I found, as I did so many years ago, that the ICSOM Conference is not only a place to learn and exchange ideas, but is also a caring and supportive environment. People always seem to want to take time to answer questions and will go out of their way for you.

Julie Edwards, Utah Symphony

I've always known that musicians were a smart bunch of people but the level of intelligence that was in the conference room

at any given time was just astounding to me. I really felt so honored to be there. But mostly I didn't expect that level of solidarity. I'd heard our reps talk about it but never could have imagined what it really felt like. I think that in society we are used to ranking things, I expected to feel that I was in a rank somewhere. But amazingly the feeling in the room was that we were all equal, and all part of the same experience, and all unified, no matter how long our orchestra's season, regardless of whether we held a titled or section position.

Chairperson's Report

(continued from page 3)

inspiring, raising almost \$125,000 in just two weeks. But we all must endeavor to find ways to support these great musicians. This destructive tactic of locking out musicians must end, and it is up to all of us to stand in unity with Atlanta Symphony players as they work to save their institution and the historic legacy of Robert Shaw.

It is fatiguing to always feel that we are working against something, or trying to prevent something. As we go forward, we will talk about things to work for and positive visions that we can imagine and achieve.

We will not be isolated. We will not be fearful. We will not be apathetic. The world will hear our voices just as they have always heard our music. I look forward to continuing our work together in this cause.

Editor's note: This is adapted from the Opening Address to the 2014 ICSOM Conference. The text of the entire address can be found at http://www.icsom.org/conferences/docs/2014_Chairman-Ridge_ICSOM_Address.pdf

Adopted Resolutions of the 2014 ICSOM Conference

The following resolutions were adopted at the 2014 ICSOM Conference at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel in downtown Los Angeles, CA, on August 28, 2014. Both Richard Levine's and Gail Kruvand's resolutions were adopted by unanimous consent. Unless noted, resolutions were submitted by the ICSOM Governing Board.

Richard Levine

Whereas, As a member of the San Diego Symphony since 1973, Richard Levine has served as a dedicated member and leader of that orchestra's negotiating and orchestra committees, and helped guide the San Diego Symphony through bankruptcy in the early 1990s; and

Whereas, Richard Levine has been an active ICSOM delegate for the San Diego Symphony, serving in 1979 to 1981, 1987 to 1989, 1993 to 2000 and in 2006; and

Whereas, When needed most, Levine agreed to join the ICSOM governing board in 2002 as member-at-large, followed in 2004 by his election to the position of Editor of Senza Sordino; and

Whereas, Being an individual always willing to assist when a need is identified, Levine, along with his wife Jean Lim, designed the program currently utilized by delegates to update the ICSOM Directory each season; and

Whereas, Levine's 10-year tenure as Editor — equivalent to that of the longest serving Editor Henry Shaw—will conclude when he steps down from the position at the 2014 conference; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Delegates and Officers to the 2014 ICSOM Conference offer their gratitude and thanks to Richard Levine for his tireless work on behalf of orchestras worldwide, and extend their best wishes in all his future endeavors.



Gail Kruvand

Whereas, Gail Kruvand has been a member of the New York City Opera Orchestra for many years, and has held a number of leadership roles, including as ICSOM Delegate; and

Whereas, Gail Kruvand also serves in a number of leadership positions within the AFM as an AFM convention delegate and member of the executive board of Local 802, and secretary-treasurer of the New York chapter of the Recording Musicians Association (RMA); and

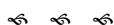
Whereas, Last summer she was elected to serve as Member-at-Large on the ICSOM Governing Board; and

Whereas, Not long after the 2013 conference ended, the New York City Opera shut down "The People's Opera" and filed for bankruptcy; and

Whereas, Gail Kruvand's leadership skills have been in demand these past two years assisting her Opera constituents' attempts to keep the company alive and rise again under new leadership, and to show her support of the "Listen Up" campaign to protest the practice within the film industry to obtain state tax credits to film in the U.S. but record soundtracks outside the U.S. using foreign musicians; and

Whereas, She has recently submitted her resignation from the ICSOM Governing Board; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Delegates and Officers to the 2014 ICSOM Conference express their appreciation to Gail Kruvand for her work on behalf of the members of ICSOM, and to offer their support and best wishes for success in all her future activities.



Bill Foster

Whereas, Bill Foster's tenure since 1968 as a leader in the National Symphony extends from service on the orchestra's negotiating and orchestra committees to holding the title of Assistant Principal Viola from 1980 to 2006; and

Whereas, Foster spent decades in service to ICSOM as a member of ICSOM's electronic media committee; and

Whereas, In 2003 Foster agreed to share his knowledge and expertise by serving as chairman of the ICSOM electronic media committee, which resulted in renegotiation of multiple Symphony-Opera-Ballet Audio-Visual Agreements, as well as two new symphonic agreements — the Symphony-Opera-Ballet Live Recording Agreement and the Integrated Media Agreement; and

Whereas, Foster announced he was stepping down as chair of the ICSOM electronic media committee at the beginning of the 2013-2014 season; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Delegates and Officers to the 2014 ICSOM Conference offer their gratitude and admiration to Bill Foster for his service and dedication on behalf of American recording orchestras; and be it further

Resolved, That the Delegates add their great appreciation and gratitude for Bill Foster's service to orchestral musicians as one of the rank-and-file trustees for the American Federation of Musicians and Employers' Pension Fund from 2003 to 2010.



Eric Arbiter

Whereas, Eric Arbiter served as ICSOM delegate for the Houston Symphony from 2006 to 2013 and as co-host of the 2010 ICSOM Conference in Houston; and

Whereas, During the 2010 Conference he volunteered his services as photographer to ICSOM, and to the AFM International Executive Board that held their first quarterly meeting concurrently with the 2010 ICSOM conference; and

Whereas, Arbiter continued to volunteer to serve as ICSOM's official photographer during the Detroit (2011), Chicago (2012) and Kansas City (2013) conferences, which his photos document so beautifully in Senza Sordino and on the ICSOM website; and

Whereas, When the Houston Symphony celebrated its 100th anniversary during the 2013-14 season, the orchestra engaged Arbiter to serve as

official photographer of the musicians and conducting staff of the orchestra for a permanent lobby display in Jones Hall, thus providing the public recognition he so richly deserved; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Delegates and Officers to the 2014 ICSOM Conference offer their gratitude and recognition to Eric Arbiter for the incredible gift he so generously shared with the members of ICSOM, and wish him every future success in his music and photography careers.



Personal Instruments Containing Ivory and Other Protected Materials

Whereas, Musicians depend on their instruments and bows as essential tools of the trade that give voice to their artistic expression and as such, are extensions of their very selves; and

Whereas, Professional musicians' choice of their musical instruments and bows is extremely personal, and their decisions are based upon musical criteria having nothing to do with any ivory or other protected material instruments and bows may contain; and

Whereas, Musical instruments and bows made before restrictions were placed on ivory and other materials have historically contained small amounts of ivory and other materials that are now either endangered or protected; and

Whereas, Musical instrument and bow makers have conscientiously supported



Photo by Scott Suchman



Photo by Leslie Shank



Photo by Leslie Shank

and adhered to restrictions on materials used to make instruments and bows as such restrictions have been adopted; and

Whereas, Musicians wholeheartedly support restrictions that actually protect endangered species and actually reduce illegal trade in ivory and other protected materials; and

Whereas, The sale, use, or importation of musical instruments and bows that were legally fashioned with ivory or other protected materials when they were made have no influence on illegal ivory trade or on the illegal trade of other protected materials; and

Whereas, Restrictions on the sale, use, or importation of musical instruments and bows that were legally fashioned with ivory or other protected materials when they were made do not serve to reduce illegal ivory trade or the illegal trade of other banned materials and thus do not protect endangered species; and

Whereas, Professional musicians must travel with their instruments and bows that may contain ivory and other protected materials when concertizing, teaching, and participating in musical events; and

Whereas, The current restrictions on musical instruments and bows containing ivory and other protected materials create a great hardship on musicians who perform in and travel to all parts of the world; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Delegates and Officers at the 2014 ICSOM Conference, on behalf of all ICSOM musicians, express their support for the efforts of the AFM and others to reduce or eliminate all restrictions on the sale, use, or travel with musical instruments and bows containing ivory or other protected materials; and, be it further

Resolved, That ICSOM urges the White House, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and all other governmental agencies to do everything possible to support musicians' travel with their instruments and bows across our borders by reducing or eliminating all restrictions on such travel.



ICSOM Treasury Investment Authority

Whereas, Under Article V Section 4 of the ICSOM Bylaws, the ICSOM Treasurer is charged to keep account of all funds and disbursements and cause them to be deposited into bank accounts in his or her name as Treasurer of ICSOM; and

Whereas, Under Article V, Section 7 of the ICSOM Bylaws the Governing Board has full power to draw on the ICSOM treasury to further the interests of ICSOM; and

Whereas, The Governing Board has unanimously determined that prudent investment of ICSOM funds would further ICSOM's interests; and

Whereas, Counsel has reviewed the Bylaws and agrees that Article V, Section 7 permits such action; and

Whereas, The Governing Board, after careful research and review, has adopted Investment Guidelines designed to prudently invest a portion of ICSOM's assets in a diversified portfolio so as to enable ICSOM to earn reasonable returns on assets while minimizing the risk of loss; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Delegates hereby endorse the Governing Board's determination to further the interests of ICSOM through their adoption of an Investment Policy Statement and diversifying the investment of ICSOM's assets; and,

2, The Treasurer shall include in his annual report information concerning the results of the funds so invested.



Recognizing Successor Orchestras

Whereas, The musicians of the former Honolulu Symphony have heroically and valiantly created the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra; and

Whereas, The musicians of the former Syracuse Symphony have heroically and valiantly created Symphoria; and

Whereas, The delegates attending the 2014 ICSOM Conference wish to show their enthusiastic support and solidarity for these colleagues and their orchestras; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Delegates of the 2014 ICSOM Conference hereby recognize the musicians of the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra and Symphoria as the successor ICSOM members of their former orchestras.

Submitted by Robert Wagner (New Jersey) and Jenny Mondie (National)

ICSOM Conference

(continued from page 1)

offer their best wishes for a successful conference. This year, Local 47 President and IEB member Vince Trombetta welcomed delegates and guests to Los Angeles. He shared his own ICSOM connection, his friendship with fellow Philadelphian and principal tuba with the Philadelphia Orchestra from 1949 to 1972, Abe Torchinsky, who established ICSOM's emeritus program that bears his name. Trombetta was joined at the conference by Local 47 Vice President John Acosta and Secretary-Treasurer Gary Lasley. Los Angeles



Photo by Leslie Shank

ICSOM Chair Bruce Ridge and LA Philharmonic delegate John Lofton, holding the proclamation by the LA County Board of Supervisors

Philharmonic ICSOM delegate John Lofton, also a member of Local 47's executive board, was instrumental in obtaining a Proclamation by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles naming August 25, 2014 as ICSOM Day.

A Local's chief responsibility during a conference is to provide funding for the mixer that normally occurs after the first day of meetings. The Bonaventure pool deck was a beautiful outdoor setting for the evening's mixer, complete with cool temperatures and excellent food. We extend our thanks to Local 47 for hosting this wonderful event, and for generously providing a bus to transport guests to the concert later in the week.

The conference coordinator is someone from the host orchestra who works with Tom Reel, the assistant conference coordinator from the Virginia Symphony, to deal with the logistics to assure everything runs smoothly during the week. This year's extremely impressive conference coordinator was Los Angeles Philharmonic librarian Nancy Neville.

Delegates and guests heard a follow up report from Norbert Nielubowski, chair of Minnesota's orchestra committee, and ICSOM Delegate Greg Milliren on the aftermath of their sixteen-month lockout, Michael Moore reported that after accepting major cuts two years ago the Atlanta Symphony will very likely be locked out again or forced to strike [Note: see page 5], and the San Francisco Opera Orchestra sent four of its five musician negotiators – negotiating committee chair Kevin Rivard, ICSOM Delegate Mark Drury,

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Newslets

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San Francisco Opera

Massive premium increases in the PPO medical plan over the past two years—to over \$45,000 per year for each family—was a major focus of the negotiations. Healthcare consultants for the Union, Ilene Levinson and Glenn Risso of NFP CA Insurance Services, helped design a suite of plan choices aimed at providing more cost-effective, yet flexible coverage that will yield savings to the organization without sacrificing the healthcare needs of the Orchestra.

Choices now include five plans: Kaiser HMO and Heath Net HMO, two PPO plans, and a High Deductible plan. Premium contributions for both HMO plans were decreased to zero. A \$4,000 Health Reimbursement Account was added to the Health Net HMO, and Chiropractic and Acupuncture riders were added to both the Kaiser and Health Net HMO plans. However, in recognition of the premium increases, the PPO plan design was modified and Employee premium contributions for all PPO plans were increased substantially. Nevertheless, all musicians, including those choosing the most expensive PPO plan, will experience net wage increases in the new CBA.

Columbus Hires New Music Director

Rossen Milanov, a forty-nine-year-old Bulgarian-born conductor, has been selected as the next music director of the Columbus Symphony. He will begin his tenure in the 2015-16 season and will appear on two programs with the orchestra in the coming 2014-15 season, during concerts January 30-31 and March 20-21.

Milanov replaces Jean-Marie Zeitouni, whose contract was not renewed by “mutual agreement”. The search process, lasting an unusually brief ten months, involved a search committee that included three musicians elected by the orchestra.

Milanov has indicated in interviews that he will live in Columbus, unlike his predecessor, a point of contention between Zeitouni and the Board. Milanov will retain his positions as Music Director of the Princeton Symphony and the Orquesta Sinfónica del Principado de Asturias in Spain.

Transition at the Kennedy Center

On September 1, Deborah Rutter officially took the helm of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, after twelve years as President of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Rutter succeeds the outgoing President of the Kennedy Center, Michael Kaiser, who in his fourteen years there oversaw major renovations of the Center’s theaters, the foundation of the DeVos Institute of Arts Management, and an increase in the annual budget from \$120 million to \$200 million. He will continue as Chairman of the DeVos Institute, now at the University of Maryland. Rutter takes over the extensive artistic programming of the Center as well as a \$100 million dollar expansion project of the Center’s facilities and a recent affiliation with the Washington National Opera. The National Symphony and the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra both look forward to contributing to another era of artistry and growth at the Kennedy Center.

Puerto Rico Begins Recording

The Puerto Rico Symphony recently completed work on their second recording, four pieces by Roberto Sierra, a well-known Puerto Rican composer currently at Cornell University who has been composer-in-residence for the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Milwaukee Symphony.

With the orchestra having recently become signatory to the Sound Recording Labor Agreement, this recording follows their debut last year, a Latin Grammy-nominated recording of *Cofresi*, an operetta composed by Rafael Hernandez. A *puertorriqueño* like Sierra, Hernandez is better known for his latin pop compositions such as *El Cumbanchero*, a famous mambo-like tune, and *Preciosa*, considered Puerto Rico’s second national hymn. The reconstruction of *Cofresi* was commissioned by the Inter American University of Puerto Rico, and the recording received a nomination for best classical recording at the Latin Grammy Awards.

Nashville Ratifies Four Year Contract

Musicians of the Nashville Symphony ratified a four-year agreement on September 22 that includes two 3% increases and a wage re-opener for the third and fourth seasons; wages in year three can be no lower than year two as a starting point for negotiations. In addition, small ensemble education concerts will be moved out of regular weekly services and will be compensated at a scale established in a side-letter.

Orchestra acceptance was not guaranteed because the agreement came after a 15% cut in wages during the 2013-14 season and management’s initial proposals made no move to restore cuts. There continues to be great concern about the apportioning of the budget, since musicians receive less than one-quarter of the yearly budget. Musicians also stepped up last season to work harder than ever performing education and community engagement services and meeting with audience members, patrons and donors.

During the next two years, management and musicians will continue working together to spread a united message to the public that more needs to be done to return the Nashville Symphony to its rightful place, because saving the building was just the first step.

Senza Sordino is the official voice of ICSOM and reflects ICSOM policy. However, there are many topics discussed in *Senza Sordino* on which ICSOM has no official policy; the opinions thus expressed in *Senza Sordino* are those of the author(s) and not necessarily of ICSOM, its officers, or members. Articles and letters expressing differing viewpoints are welcomed.

ICSOM Conference

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Photo by Leslie Shank

Greg Milliren and Norbert Nielubowski

Thalia Moore and Carla Maria Rodrigues – to report on the precarious state of their negotiations. SFOO's concessions have been equal to three years of salary and their cumulative increase has been 0.45%. Yet they faced demands for further concessions while the company's upper management has received salary increases of nearly 67% during the same period. Since negotiations were at a critical point, the

entire delegation returned to San Francisco the next day. *[Note: Following the conference a tentative agreement was reached, which was ratified by the orchestra on September 2. See page 5]*

Bruce Ridge met Andreas Winkler, a member of the Orchester Vereinigte Bühnen Wien, at the FIM conference in Oslo, Norway in February. Winkler later expressed interest in attending the ICSOM conference and was invited to speak. He talked briefly about orchestra life in Vienna, how European orchestras are funded, and how their unions and guilds function. Many delegates appreciated hearing about orchestras in another part of the world and hearing about the similarities and differences between our orchestras. For example, they face the same problems with competition from eastern European orchestras. *[Note: addresses by Chairman Bruce Ridge, President Brian Rood, and Andreas Winkler may be found on the ICSOM website at <http://icsom.org/conferences/index.php>]*

On Tuesday, AFM trustees Brian Rood, Bill Moriarity, Phil Yao, and I updated delegates about the American Federation of Musicians and Employers' Pension Fund (AFM-EPPF). All eight AFM trustees were in attendance. ICSOM electronic media chair Matthew Comerford asked members involved in negotiating the Integrated Media Agreement (IMA) to join him and speak about the bargaining process and current status of negotiations, and AFM President Ray Hair addressed the conference after the IMA presentation.

We also try to schedule a period for members-at-large to meet with their assigned orchestras, although it never seems to be enough time! This year it was traffic concerns that cut the sessions short, to be sure the buses left in time to take us to the Hollywood Bowl to hear the LA Phil perform a program of familiar, but not too familiar, works under the baton of Stéphane Denève. The Bach Toccata and Fugue, Pictures at an Exhibition and Night on Bald Mountain were all Stokowski arrangements, with the Beethoven Emperor Piano Concerto performed by pianist Marc-André Hamelin. ICSOM extends its thanks to the Los Angeles Philharmonic administration and Gail Samuels for generously donating nearly one hundred tickets to the concert – it was a wonderful evening in an incredible venue – and having the ability to attend a concert during the conference was a welcome opportunity.

One of the most important opportunities available to ICSOM conference attendees is the ability to meet with colleagues from across the country. Member-at-large Meredith Snow escorted a number of ICSOM attendees backstage during intermission to greet their counterparts and friends from college and music festivals, and to meet new friends. How amazing it was to see so many musicians in animated conversations with old and new acquaintances.

On Wednesday morning the presidents of ROPA, OCSM, TMA and RMA addressed attendees, followed by a presentation by AFM Symphonic Services Division (SSD) staff about electronic media guarantees, and wage chart and internal organizing issues. Delegates were interested to hear a special report from Metropolitan Opera Orchestra negotiating committee chair Jessica Phillips Rieseke, who interrupted her vacation schedule to attend the conference and share information about their very recent settlement, along with Local 802 president and IEB member Tino Gagliardi. *[Note: see page 4]* ICSOM Counsel Susan Martin's discussion about the Affordable Care Act and how it applies to bargaining health benefits followed.

There were breakout groups by SSD Counsel Rochelle Skolnick, who discussed issues regarding disabilities and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), by Pittsburgh Symphony delegate Penny Brill, who shared her education and music initiative's programming ideas, and by Randy Whatley and Bruce Ridge, who teamed up to discuss refining the orchestra's message to the public. A jam-packed

(continued on page 12—see ICSOM CONFERENCE



Photo by Laura Ross

John Lofton, Meredith Snow, Nancy Neville, and Tom Reel

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**Checks made out to ATLSM Foundation
may be sent to:**

**ATLSM Foundation
953 Rosedale Rd. NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30306**

atlsmfoundation.org

ICSOM Conference

(continued from page 11)

Town Hall Meeting that evening between ICSOM delegates and officers ended just in time to take advantage of the special hospitality provided by the AFM & SAG-AFTRA Intellectual Property Rights Distribution Fund and hosted by its executive director Dennis Dreith and director Shari Hoffman, who spoke the next day about the recent distribution to 13 orchestras, with more anticipated in the future.



Photo by Leslie Shank

New ICSOM Governing Board, with ICSOM Counsel
Susan Martin and retiring Editor Richard Levine

Susan Martin moderated a panel discussion about alternative defined contribution and defined benefit pension plans with panelists Brian Rood, Bill Moriarity and Gene Kalwarski, the founder and CEO of the actuarial firm Cheiron.

There were some historic results during this year's election. When Bruce Ridge was re-elected he became the longest serving Chair of ICSOM. Peter de Boor from the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra was elected Editor of *Senza Sordino*, replacing Richard Levine, who matched Henry Shaw's 10-year tenure as longest serving Editor. Michael Moore was re-elected and continued to extend his length of service as ICSOM's longest serving Treasurer. Members-at-Large Paul Gunther and Meredith Snow were re-elected to two-year terms, and Jenny Mondie from the National Symphony was elected to replace Gail Kruvand, who resigned just prior to the conference after serving one year as Member-at-Large.

Resolutions adopted at the conference can be found in their entirety on pages 8-9.

The 2015 ICSOM Conference will be hosted by the Philadelphia Orchestra and Local 66, and there are multiple offers for future conference sites.

We express gratitude to our colleagues in the Los Angeles Philharmonic; for the hard work by Meredith Snow, Nancy Neville, and John Lofton; for the generosity of the LA Philharmonic administration; and to Vince Trombetta, John Acosta, Gary Lasley and Local 47 for one of the best run ICSOM conferences yet. After 52 years we may finally be getting the hang of this!



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF
SYMPHONY AND OPERA MUSICIANS

Senza Sordino

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