

Senza Sordino

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The State of ICSOM

To get a sense of how the orchestras of ICSOM are doing currently, we asked every orchestra's delegate to provide a short blurb about what is happening of note in their orchestra. Charter members of ICSOM are denoted with *.

Alabama Symphony Orchestra

Founded: 1997

Joined ICSOM: 1998 (the predecessor Birmingham Symphony was a member of ICSOM from 1975–1995)

AFM Local: 256-733

The Alabama Symphony is in the final month of a season that featured the performances of all nine Beethoven symphonies, and the initiation of two new outreach programs.

"The ASO Up Close" is a program that allows patrons to sit next to specific musicians in a dedicated rehearsal, in order to develop a deeper understanding of the rehearsal process.

"ASO On The Road" is a program that sends chamber ensembles from the orchestra to perform in such venues as hospitals and schools.

Both programs have been well-received and successful.

Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

Founded: 1945

Joined ICSOM: 1971

AFM Local: 148-462

For the remainder of the Atlanta Symphony's 18-19 season, we are performing two more movies (*Jaws* and *Casablanca*) and a semi-staged version of Beethoven's *Fidelio*, along with several other subscription and pops programs. 2019–20 marks the ASO's gala 75th anniversary season, and Maestro Spano will conduct 12 subscriptions, with guests and Principal Guest Conductor Donald Runnicles providing the rest of the classical conducting. In April, the ASO and chorus will return to Carnegie Hall with a performance of Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*. The master season ends with the complete *Tristan und Isolde* semi-staged over three nights. Other highlights of the season will be Mahler's Eighth and Bruckner's Fourth Symphonies.

*Baltimore Symphony Orchestra

Founded: 1916

Joined ICSOM: 1962

AFM Local: 40-543

Commemorating the 100th anniversary of women's
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Behind the Picket Line

By Steve Lester

ICSOM has reported on the basic elements of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's contract settlement, including wage increases of 13.25% over five years, no increase in healthcare costs to musicians, and the conversion of our pension to a hybrid type of defined



Patrick Gordon

contribution plan with an indexed, increasing, guaranteed benefit for the next 20 years. We must thank each of the 34 orchestras of ICSOM and OCSM that sent support totaling over \$230,000 to the musicians of the CSO!

The purpose of this article is to describe the nature of the strike and how it concluded, including some of the tactics used by our employer, as well as what the musicians did to counter those tactics.

These were very difficult negotiations, not because management (the Chicago Symphony Association) used an especially clever or resourceful attorney, but because their approach was to refuse to negotiate meaningfully on important matters, and very quickly it became a "scorched earth" strategy. In our view, they clearly had two goals: to end a guaranteed retirement benefit for musicians, and to put the compensation and benefit status for the CSO musicians significantly lower than our peers. And they were willing to cancel the rest of the season to achieve their dubious goals. Their attorney, Marilyn Pearson, known for her role as United Airlines's labor attorney when it eliminated the pensions of pilots, flight attendants, and mechanics in the early 2000's, had a simple approach: for the purposes of appearing to negotiate, engage the minor issues, but refuse to make any significant compromise on important issues. They were looking for a strike.

Our negotiations had been going on since April 2018, with the contract extended from September 17, 2018, to the new deadline of March 10, 2019. Most of the musicians saw this coming, and we were reasonably prepared. The combination of a weak manager and anti-union and ideologically motivated board leadership made for a dangerous situation.

When the Association started ad hominem attacks on our negotiating committee, we were not surprised. When the Association went directly to the press with their distortions and disinformation, we were not surprised. When we went on strike

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Chairperson's Report

By Meredith Snow

Solidarity

Solidarity, along with collective action, is the heart and soul of a strong union. Recognizing the interests and objectives we share with our brothers and sisters engenders a sense of unity. The conscious affirmation of this unity creates an environment where mutual service is encouraged. Yet, for participation to be most meaningful, we must actively practice solidarity—oftentimes having to choose the good of the whole over our own self-interest. The willingness to make this sacrifice, while striving towards social justice, is the virtue of solidarity.



Diane Alencarek Photography

The musicians of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra are to be lauded for the strong and unified position they maintained throughout their 7-week strike—

the longest in their 128-year history. Their unified stand was crucial to achieving settlement. Our ICSOM orchestras and other AFM colleagues donated nearly a quarter million dollars to help the CSO musicians sustain their fight. The collective action of all these musicians standing together, along with their patrons, supporters, and other unions, brought about a more equitable resolution. Corporations and governments don't willingly concede to share prosperity. Citizens coming together collectively—in trade unions and workers associations—push to change the way our economy functions.

The financial woes of our AFM Employer Pension Fund have created a serious challenge to our union solidarity. It is understandable that the uncertainty of promised benefits has created apprehension and anger within our membership and among AFM-EPF participants. Sacrifices will be necessary. But we must not give in to the anger at the expense of our unity. Pope Francis said, "The culture of solidarity means seeing others not as rivals or statistics, but as brothers and sisters." We must recognize that the burden of sacrifice needs to be borne equitably by the entire membership. It is worse than pointless to apportion blame—it serves only to inflame an already divisive situation, which then further jeopardizes our solidarity. We need to make the pension whole so that younger members are not unduly burdened nor discouraged entirely from union membership. By setting aside the hostility and acknowledging that we are in this together, immediately and irrevocably, we can maximize the potential for solutions that will preserve our pension, our union, and our solidarity.

All of our ICSOM orchestras are involved with community programs that demonstrate solidarity with their neighbors while furthering social justice within their communities. Extending the scope and reach of classical music outside the concert hall enables people who might never have heard a live classical performance the opportunity to experience our art form. Over and above that, if our orchestra members are invested in their community, that investment will have a positive effect on the concert stage as well.

A few notable examples:

- The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra's Music for Food is a >



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SYMPHONY AND OPERA MUSICIANS

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American Federation of Musicians of the
United States and Canada, AFL-CIO

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Orchestras

Alabama Symphony Orchestra
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra
Baltimore Symphony Orchestra
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra
Charlotte Symphony Orchestra
Chicago Lyric Opera Orchestra
Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra
The Cleveland Orchestra
Colorado Symphony Orchestra
Columbus Symphony Orchestra
Dallas Symphony Orchestra
Detroit Symphony Orchestra
The Florida Orchestra
Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra
Grand Rapids Symphony
Grant Park Orchestra
Hawaii Symphony Orchestra
Houston Symphony
Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra
Jacksonville Symphony
Kansas City Symphony
Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra
Los Angeles Philharmonic
Louisville Orchestra
Metropolitan Opera Orchestra
Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra
Minnesota Orchestra
Nashville Symphony
National Symphony Orchestra
New Jersey Symphony Orchestra
New York City Ballet Orchestra
New York City Opera Orchestra
New York Philharmonic
North Carolina Symphony
Oregon Symphony
Orquesta Sinfónica de Puerto Rico
The Philadelphia Orchestra
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musician-led initiative for local hunger relief that raises money for the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank.

- Grand Rapids Symphony has teamed up with Spectrum Health Music Therapy for the Music for Health Initiative bringing live music into healthcare settings.
- The Los Angeles Philharmonic's Youth Orchestra Los Angeles (YOLA) sponsors eight youth orchestras in four underserved neighborhoods in the LA area.
- Musicians from the Phoenix Symphony participated in a clinical study in collaboration with the Arizona State University College of Nursing about the effects of live music on dementia and Alzheimer's patients.
- In addition to a third trip to Haiti to mentor young music students, musicians from the Colorado Symphony serenaded staff and patients at 25 Davita Dialysis Centers and presented a Concerts for Canines that raised money for animal cancer research.

These activities send a clear message of unity and personal investment that goes well beyond the bounds of our union. Yet they perfectly illustrate the virtue of solidarity—the devotion of time, effort and energy, standing shoulder to shoulder with our fellow citizens, in order to make our communities a better place for everyone. Our solidarity gives us the possibility and the power to create change in our society. 

President's Report

By Paul Austin

Equal Pay for Substitute and Extra Musicians

At both the 2016 AFM convention in Las Vegas and the 2016 ICSOM Conference in Washington, DC, resolutions were adopted in support of substitute musicians receiving the same per-service base pay as the regularly contracted musicians in our orchestras.



Taylor Johnson

I thought that it would be important to visit this topic three years later to see the progress that ICSOM has made in this area, as well as to provide a benchmark for the future.

My research included personally contacting each ICSOM delegate of our 52 member orchestras to ask about the current per-service base pay of their substitute and contract musicians. In some cases the AFM

Local president or orchestra committee chair replied in order to confirm the information. Thank you to all who responded to my inquiries so that accurate data are published.

As of May 1, 2019, 31 of ICSOM's 52 orchestras have parity in the per-service base pay between contract and substitute musicians: Boston Symphony Orchestra, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, Columbus Symphony, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Florida Orchestra, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, Grand Rapids Symphony, Grant Park Orchestra, Hawai'i Symphony

Orchestra, Jacksonville Symphony, Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra, Louisville Orchestra, MET Opera Orchestra, Nashville Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra, New York City Ballet Orchestra, New York City Opera Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfónica de Puerto Rico, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Saint Louis Symphony, San Diego Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Symphonia, and Utah Symphony.


While some currently do not have equality between the substitute and contract musician per-service pay rates, it is good to recognize noteworthy improvements that have occurred in this area by several ICSOM orchestras in their contract settlements since 2016. To note a few:

- Alabama Symphony Orchestra: Parity in the performance pay scale was reached as of the 2018–19 contract year. As for the rehearsal pay scale, the substitute musician per-service scale was increased with the goal of reaching 100% of ASO scale in the future.
- Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra: Over the course of the current CBA's term (2017–2020), substitute musician per-service pay will increase from 70% to 85% of the contract player rate.
- Los Angeles Philharmonic: The substitute musician rate had been at 82.5% for many years, and recently moved from 85% to 90% over the term of the current five-year CBA (2017–18 to 2021–22).
- Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra: MSO substitute musicians currently receive 90% of the pay scale of the contract musicians. Beginning in the 2020–21 season, that increases to 95% (or \$200 per service, whichever is greater). During the third and fourth years of this CBA, \$200 per service will exceed 95%. This is the first time the MSO has progressed beyond the 90% concession made years ago.
- Minnesota Orchestra: At the beginning of this contract, the sub pay was at 90% of the weekly salary, with annual increases. Then, on the last day of the current contract (August 31, 2020), it will become 100%. This was put into place so that parity would be the starting position for the next negotiations.
- New Jersey Symphony Orchestra: Five years ago, NJSO substitute musicians made about 91% of the contracted musician base pay. Today they are at 96.4%. The goal is parity.
- Oregon Symphony Orchestra: Sub pay currently works out to be 76% of the per-service rate for contract musicians. Next season the effective contract-player rate will be lowered; however, the substitute musicians' per-service rate will increase, raising the per-service rate to 82% of the contract players' per-service average.
- Phoenix Symphony: The orchestra just settled a one-year contract with a 3% pay increase for contract musicians, but a 7% pay increase for the substitute musicians to narrow the discrepancy between the two groups of players.
- Virginia Symphony: A newly ratified CBA (April 2019) will mark the return of a match of the per-service rates between the regularly contracted and substitute musicians (beginning in year three (2020–21) of the agreement).

Commenting on this progress, AFM Symphonic Services >

Director Rochelle Skolnick said, “As a labor organization, one of the principles that drives the AFM is fair compensation for all musicians, no matter what work they do. Where musicians sit side-by-side on stage performing the same music under the same conditions, it only makes sense that they receive the same basic compensation. While every contract negotiation reflects the unique concerns of the bargaining unit, it is heartening to see so many musicians standing together to demand parity for their sisters and brothers who perform as subs and extras.”

A shining example of progress in this effort can be found with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra’s 2016 contract settlement. Not only did they achieve substitute musician parity, with the per-service pay for this group increasing from 85% to 100% of base scale, but they did so while the orchestra’s contract musicians took a 7.5% pay cut. “Our subs got a well-deserved pay increase,” said Micah Howard, PSO’s ICSOM Delegate.

While ICSOM is encouraged by the progress in this area, we know that there is room for improvement in achieving parity in pay for substitute musicians in our 52 orchestras. It is hoped, when visiting this topic in future years, that there will be even more ICSOM orchestras who are abiding by the initiative set forth by both ICSOM and AFM: equal pay for equal work. Thanks to all of the AFM Locals and ICSOM Negotiation Committees who are working together in support of this goal. 

New Integrated Media Agreement

By Brian Rood

On behalf of the ICSOM Electronic Media Committee, I am pleased to report that the AFM has recently concluded negotiations with the Employers’ Media Association (EMA) on a successor Integrated Media Agreement (IMA), after many months of arduous and intense negotiations. We on the Media Committee unanimously recommend its ratification.




The AFM will use ElectionBuddy to facilitate the ratification process.

Shortly, each AFM member of an EMA-signatory orchestra will receive a cover letter and a copy of the new IMA (showing changes from the previous agreement). These will be delivered electronically via email and text.

Please check your spam and junk folders in case they mistakenly go there. You may vote either by email or text.

I wanted to give everyone advance notice in order to allow orchestras to meet with their members and committees to discuss the new IMA. Feel free to consult me if committee chairs have particular questions.

I would like to thank AFM President Raymond Hair, Symphonic Services Director Rochelle Skolnick, Symphonic Electronic Media Director Debbie Newmark, attorney Patricia Polach, and the AFM and ROPA officers who assisted us. I would also like to thank the members of the ICSOM Media Committee for their extraordinary service and expertise during this and previous IMA negotiations. We would not have achieved such a successful outcome without the efforts of each and every one of them! 

Note: the author is the chairman of the ICSOM Electronic Media Committee as well as ICSOM president emeritus.

BSO Academy Turns Ten

By Michael Lisicky

Update: On May 30, the Baltimore Symphony management called an emergency meeting and announced the cancellation of the BSO summer season. This sudden action, despite a recently approved \$3.2 million grant from the State of Maryland, also suspends the tenth BSO Academy, the subject of this article.

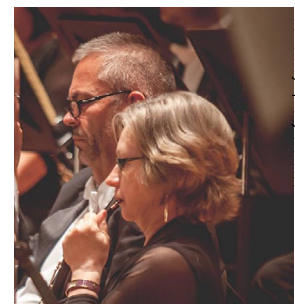
In spite of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra’s current tenuous contract state, the BSO Academy will celebrate its 10th season in July 2019. The annual week-long tuition-based program gives attendees the opportunity to work side-by-side with Symphony musicians. Additionally, there are master classes, sectionals, and enrichment workshops, along with optional chamber music opportunities and private lessons.

The first BSO Academy was announced in January 2010 with initial financial support from the Mellon Foundation, and targeted amateur and adult vocational musicians. Over the past ten years, Academy participants have come from almost all 50 states, as well as foreign countries, including Switzerland, France, Russia, and Austria. BSO English horn player and Academy consultant Jane Marvine says that the program is geared toward adult musicians who are “consumed with a passion for playing and are often frustrated by limitations they face due to lack of instruction, time to devote to it, and the lack of opportunities.” Marvine also states that past attendees frequently cite the “kind nurturing expert mentoring” they receive from the BSO musicians.

In 2012, the BSO Academy caught the attention of amateur clarinetist and *New York Times* editor Daniel J. Wakin. In a July 15, 2012, *Times* cover story, Wakin gave the Academy national exposure when he wrote about his own personal experience. “We sat next to the Baltimore players, drank beer with them and sipped from their decades of personal wisdom. We experienced the obsessive nature of orchestra musicians and felt their physical pain, self-doubt and, once-in-a-while, supreme confidence.”

Over the past decade, the BSO Academy has enjoyed an approximate seventy percent return rate from year to year. Horn player Lyn Banghart is an eight-year veteran of the Academy. Banghart says, “Attendees come together at a place where we all have so much in common; the love of music and the love of playing and performing.” She cherishes her new musical friends from across the country and throughout the world. Banghart also cites her relationship with the symphony musicians as highly rewarding. “The BSO musicians are so friendly, supportive, caring, happy to have us there, and so very helpful. [Over the years] we became friends and to sit next to them is just wondrous!” She recalls one performance of “Nimrod” from *Enigma Variations*. “When the violins started so softly and beautifully, I was overcome by emotion and the tears flowed so that for several minutes I couldn’t see my music.”

In 2015, several friends encouraged violist John Warshawsky to give the BSO Academy a try. During his first year, War-



The author with Jane Marvine

Baltimore Symphony Orchestra

shawsky recalls, “The musicians wanted us to be challenged, and to be at ease getting out of our ‘comfort zones’, knowing that it was okay to fall short musically. It was more important to the musicians that we pushed boundaries, knowing that we would still be accepted and supported by the pros.” He states that the Academy has been “the single most important factor in pushing me to improve” as a musician. Specifically, Warshawsky values the Baltimore Symphony musicians “as truly good and special people who have lifted my spirits when I needed it and whose well-being and friendship means so much to me.”

After the BSO musicians were presented with a contract proposal in October 2018 that featured drastic cuts to their 52-week season along with numerous changes to benefits and working conditions, many BSO Academy alumni organized and became vocal supporters of the musicians’ cause. A ‘Save Our BSO’ committee quickly formed and became an invaluable driving force by leafleting and assisting with political action needs. Warshawsky has been one of the most visible and vocal alumni advocates. “We locked arms with the musicians and spoke out to management and friends and, where possible, to the public. We did so because, through the Academy, we had come to believe that it was important the BSO musicians knew they had our backing and that they understood that what happens to them affects us, as well.” Jane Marvine finds it ironic that BSO musicians have often told Academy attendees not to worry during rehearsals and concerts. “We would tell them that ‘we are your safety net, we have your backs.’ But it turns out that Academy participants have OUR backs now.”

As the orchestra continues to work without a labor agreement, the BSO Academy’s tenth year, as well as the orchestra’s entire summer season, was threatened. Planning was delayed due to the contract status and the program did not receive an official confirmation until mid March. Happily, it was announced that the 2019 BSO Academy (though traditionally held in June) will occur in July. It will also coincide with Baltimore’s Artscape festival, billed as the country’s largest free arts celebration. This year’s program will include symphonic music by Berlioz, Strauss, Shostakovich, and more.

Marvine, along with other musician and staff organizers, has worked overtime trying to overcome the truncated preparation time. It has proven “challenging, frustrating, and rewarding” for Marvine to see this year’s Academy come into fruition. After ten years of intense organizational involvement, she says it has “created a new dimension to my life and to those of my colleagues. It has been uplifting and has created a new perspective on what the Baltimore Symphony does and how we can share that with others.” As the uncertainty of the labor situation continues to be a matter of interest for Warshawsky, he looks forward to being on the Meyerhoff Symphony Hall stage this July. “The world is a very different place for us, thanks to the past decade with the Academy.” And Lyn Banghart can’t wait to play her horn this July. She is very grateful that the Academy will take place. “I love the BSO. And when I say that, I mean the Symphony’s musicians who sit next to me, help me become a better player, and are now my friends. How could you not love and be grateful to this world class orchestra?”

Note: The author is an oboist with the Baltimore Symphony and the author of Baltimore Symphony Orchestra: A Century of Sound.

Who Gets to File a Grievance?

By Kevin Case

Contract disputes between orchestra managements and musicians are nearly always resolved pursuant to the grievance and arbitration process. I am not aware of any ICSOM orchestra’s collective bargaining agreement (CBA) that does not contain a grievance and arbitration clause. Nonetheless, the process strikes many musicians as mysterious. One of the questions I hear most frequently is who, exactly, has the right or ability to file a grievance—and what happens next.



Maven Karmann

Some basic explanation is helpful. A CBA is a contract between two parties: the employer on one hand, and the union on the other. (It is not, as some may believe, a contract between

the employer and the musicians, or the orchestra committee, or the musicians’ player association.) Because the employer has recognized an AFM Local as the exclusive bargaining representative of the musicians, it is always the Local that is the other party to the contract.

The question thus arises as to what happens when the employer violates the CBA. Generally, if one party to a contract breaches it, then the other party can file a lawsuit in court (or go to arbitration if the contract contains a mandatory arbitration clause). Sometimes, the breach of a contract by one party allows the other party to stop performing its own obligations under the contract.

The situation is more complicated in the case of unions. Federal law actually contemplates federal-court lawsuits between unions and employers. Section 301 of the Labor Management Relations Act of 1947 vests jurisdiction in federal district courts to adjudicate lawsuits for violations of a CBA—even without any minimum “amount in controversy” (i.e., the dollar amount of damages). Clearly, however, it would not be practical for unions and employers to march into court every time a dispute arises over how to interpret a clause in the CBA. Nor would our economy be able to function if management’s breach relieved its employees of their own obligation to work; we can’t have a “wildcat strike” over every purported contract violation.

For that reason, a grievance and arbitration procedure is incorporated in nearly every CBA in nearly every industry. The procedure typically contains a series of steps that are designed to facilitate the speedy resolution of disputes. To that end, the steps begin informally and become progressively more formal. The first step often requires a simple discussion of the problem between the grievant—i.e., the union or a particular employee or employees with a complaint—and a representative of management. If that doesn’t settle the dispute, then the second step might require reducing the grievance to written form and delivering it to management, which then requires a written response. The third step often entails a “2+2” meeting: two representatives from the union and two from the employer (usually fairly high-ranking representatives) meet in person to hash it out. If that still doesn’t work, then the final step provides for submission to binding arbitration (often under the auspices >

of the American Arbitration Association). The arbitrator's award is final; though it can be tested in court, courts offer a great deal of deference to arbitrators' decisions and will not overturn an award unless it is truly horrible. For that reason, the arbitrator's award is nearly always the end of the process.

This process is simpler and more efficient than going to court, and operates as a quid pro quo for a no-strike/no-lockout clause. It reflects an agreement between the employer and the union to handle all disputes in the manner they have mutually chosen—predictably, simply, and efficiently—so as to not disrupt the workplace. And although the above description reflects a typical procedure, the parties are always free to customize the steps to their liking, or to add (or subtract) steps. There is no magic formula.

But whatever the employer and the union agree upon, that is the procedure that must be followed. The courts have allowed virtually no wiggle room on this. If the CBA says the parties will arbitrate a dispute, then they have to arbitrate, period—they can't try to go to court instead. That mandate results from the confluence of several policies inherent in federal law, including: the policy favoring arbitration instead of lawsuits (as expressed in the Federal Arbitration Act and expanded seemingly every day by the current Supreme Court); the policy that gives effect to the method of dispute resolution that the parties themselves have chosen; and the policy encouraging harmonious relations between employers and unions and the efficient resolution of disputes so as to avoid economic disruption.

At this point, you may have noted that I haven't yet addressed the question that is the very premise of this article: "who gets to file a grievance?"—or even the more basic question, "what's a grievance?" The answer to both questions is essentially the same: it's whoever or whatever the parties say in their agreement. For example, some CBAs define a grievance broadly as "any and all disputes between the parties." Others define it more narrowly as "any dispute arising from this Agreement," "a claim based on an alleged violation of this Agreement," or "any dispute arising out of the meaning, interpretation, or application of this agreement." Some CBAs don't define the term "grievance" at all.

Whatever the language (or lack thereof), the general rule is that a grievance is a dispute over an action taken (usually) by management that implicates something in the CBA, whether express or implied. A grievance is distinct from an unfair labor practice (ULP), which is certainly a "dispute" between the parties but not one that arises from contract language; rather, ULPs address fundamental aspects of the relationship between unions and employers, like the duty to bargain. (The distinction is not always simple, alas; disputes sometimes involve both a grievance and a ULP, and the interplay of the two raises tricky issues that are beyond the scope of this article.)

Similarly, the CBA can determine who gets to file a grievance. As noted above, the parties to the CBA are the employer and the union (as the representative of the employees). So if the CBA simply says a grievance may be presented by "the aggrieved party" or "either party," then that is taken literally: the union can file a grievance (and so can the employer, though that is rare), but individual employees generally cannot. If the CBA says "an employee" or "a musician" can file a grievance, then that too is taken literally: any individual musician can

present the grievance, even if the union doesn't. Orchestra CBAs have many variations on this theme. Some explicitly state that a grievance may be filed by "a musician, the Union, or the Orchestra Committee." Some provide that a musician may file a grievance "with" the orchestra committee, which makes little sense unless the orchestra committee is then empowered to bring that grievance to management. Some leave out the union altogether and mention only the orchestra committee. My view is that even the initial steps of the procedure should involve both the orchestra committee and the union in some way, even if individual musicians are empowered to bring their own grievances. Both the committee and the union need to be in the loop and on the same page as much as possible.

But how far can an individual (or orchestra committee) progress through the steps? Or to put it another way, if an individual musician is permitted to file a grievance, can he or she take that grievance all the way to arbitration regardless of what the union (or the orchestra committee) wants? Usually not. By the time the process reaches the final step—submission to arbitration—the language in the CBA nearly always vests that decision with the union; and in the absence of language specifically allowing individual employees to take the dispute to arbitration, only the union will be permitted to make that determination.

In *Vaca v. Sipes*, 386 U.S. 171 (1967), the Supreme Court explained why:

[W]e do not agree that the individual employee has an absolute right to have his grievance taken to arbitration regardless of the provisions of the applicable collective bargaining agreement. . . . If the individual employee could compel arbitration of his grievance regardless of its merit, the settlement machinery provided by the contract would be substantially undermined [and] a significantly greater number of grievances would proceed to arbitration. This would greatly increase the cost of the grievance machinery and could so overburden the arbitration process as to prevent it from functioning successfully.

But is that fair? Is there any recourse for the individual if he or she disagrees with the union's decision not to take a grievance to arbitration?

Enter the flipside of a union's exclusive representation: the duty of fair representation. The court in *Vaca* explained that because the system of collective bargaining "of necessity subordinates the interests of an individual employee to the collective interests of all employees in a bargaining unit," the law imposes upon a union "a responsibility equal in scope to its authority, the responsibility and duty of fair representation." In other words, employees in a union workplace give up some rights to deal with or take action against employer on an individual basis; but in return, the union assumes a duty to fairly represent their interests. That duty is not explicitly set forth in any statute, but has been fashioned by the courts as the logical corollary to the union's status as the exclusive representative of the employees.


That means that when an employee asks the union to pursue a grievance or take it to arbitration, the union determines whether to do so in accordance with its duty of fair representation. Federal jury instructions explain the legal test that is applied to the union's determination: >>

The test is basic fairness. So long as the union acts in good faith, it may exercise its discretion in determining whether to pursue or process an employee's grievance against the employer. Even if an employee's grievance has merit, the union's mere negligence or its exercise of poor judgment does not constitute a breach of its duty of fair representation. But where a union acts in bad faith and with hostility, discrimination, or arbitrariness fails to process a meritorious grievance, the union violates its duty to fairly represent the union member who has made the grievance.

Some may say that simply avoiding discrimination and hostility, or refraining from acting arbitrarily, capriciously, or in bad faith, is not a stringent standard. But it puts the focus where it should be: on the union's actions in evaluating the grievance, not the merits of the grievance itself. Union officers are not judges or lawyers, and should not be held to a standard under which they are presumed to be able to predict with certainty how an arbitrator might rule on a particular grievance.

In other words, the test is not a hindsight evaluation of whether the grievance was a "good" one that the union should have pursued because the union (again, in hindsight) would have prevailed. Instead, the test is whether the union considered the grievance fairly. The union must evaluate the merits of the grievance, to be sure, but it is the union's efforts that are judged—not what the result might have been had the grievance been arbitrated. Questions would include: did the union fail to investigate the circumstances sufficiently to make a reasoned decision? Did the union treat the grievance differently than similar grievances for no reason, i.e., arbitrarily? Was the union's decision not to arbitrate based on some kind of discriminatory reason? Was it out of personal animus towards the grievant, i.e., in bad faith? If the answers to these and similar questions are "no"—if the union made a thorough investigation of the facts and reached a rational conclusion that the grievance lacked sufficient merit to go to arbitration—then the union will have fulfilled its duty.

Procedurally, if an individual employee believes he or she had a meritorious grievance that the union did not pursue and/or arbitrate, then—and only then—can the individual employee go to federal court. Under what is called a "hybrid" claim, the employee must prove both that the employer violated the CBA, and that the union breached its duty of fair representation. (Hence the jury instructions above, which are read by the judge to the jury hearing such a "hybrid" lawsuit.) Accordingly, even if the court or jury finds that the employer violated the contract, the plaintiff will not prevail unless he or she also proves that the union breached its duty of fair representation under the principles described above.

Such lawsuits are not common; success is even rarer. That is less a sign of unfairness than it is a testament to the efficacy of the grievance and arbitration process. It works well. 

Note: the author is ICSOM General Counsel.

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.

Cleveland in China

By Joela Jones

It had been two decades since the Cleveland Orchestra (TCO) visited China.

In late March, the members of the orchestra set out for a three-week tour of Taiwan, Macao and mainland China, including the cities of Shenzhen, Shanghai, Nanjing, Wuhan, and Beijing. Some of the musicians were eager to revisit the same cities they had seen in the 1990s, meet parents of students they taught at the Cleveland Institute of Music, enjoy some great food, and join with colleagues in performing the eleven scheduled concerts. After everyone returned home to Cleveland and had a chance to adjust their biological clocks, I decided to interview four members to gather their personal perspectives of the tour.

Yun-ting "Win" Lee, one of our youngest members, left Taiwan as a child. Now he had returned as a violinist in TCO to play in Taipei's National Concert Hall. In talking about this experience, he said, "I was thrilled to play there because it was the same hall where I had heard my very first orchestra concert as a six-year-old child. It was a dream come true." He was pleasantly surprised to see many enthusiastic Taipei young people in the audience. Since leaving Taiwan, he has occasionally revisited his home country, and feels that over the years the air in Taipei has become cleaner; but not so true of mainland China where on the train from Shanghai to Nanjing, a brown haze could be seen hovering over the countryside.

Feeling that no visit to mainland China would be complete without seeing the Great Wall, Win and some friends planned to go straight there upon arrival at the Beijing airport on their free day. They were amazed that the spot chosen by their guide was devoid of tourists. His group enjoyed spectacular unobstructed views of the sunset.

Richard Weiss, first assistant principal cellist, spent most of his free time giving masterclasses and lessons in Macao, Shenzhen, Shanghai, and Beijing. "At the Shenzhen Arts School, an ensemble of *guzheng* players entertained our group," said Weiss. "The *guzheng* is a traditional Chinese string instrument having 21 strings and 21 moveable bridges. What fun it must be trying to keep them in tune!" In four cities, friends and family of current and former Cleveland Institute of Music cello students gave him tours. Because in Asia it is customary for parents to give gifts to teachers, Weiss needed to purchase a carry-on suitcase to hold all the fine tea and silk scarves he received.

As previously mentioned, air quality is very unhealthy in China, especially in Shanghai and Beijing. Richard observed that while some of the locals wisely wear masks, others apparently >



Courtesy of the Cleveland Orchestra



Richard Weiss

Taipei's National Concert Hall

fight the smog by chain-smoking! He also noted that the concert halls throughout this tour were visually striking. Taipei's hall is an example of traditional Chinese architecture, while Beijing's hall, nicknamed the Giant Egg, is an enormous ellipsoid dome of titanium and glass surrounded by an artificial lake. While enjoying local cuisine, Richard got plenty of practice honing his skills with chopsticks, and learned to write the Chinese characters for *xié xié* ("thanks") when leaving a tip for hotel housekeeping staff.

Mary Kay Fink, the orchestra's piccolo player, was also impressed with the outward appearance of Beijing's concert hall, which she said looks like a spaceship with changing colors of lights at night.

Mary Kay was fascinated watching the Chinese youth as they listened in rapt attention to the performances. She had an interesting encounter with a Chinese gentleman who was an attorney. "He wanted to practice his English, so we discussed China's culture and even some politics," she said. Since people around them seemed interested in their conversation, the man would stop every so often, look around, and say, "We are being watched."

While walking through a large public park in Shanghai, Mary Kay came upon a very unusual sight: a marriage market. Apparently, the way this works is that parents post signs containing photo portraits of their young adult children with evidence about their job, car ownership, and housing status in a market-like atmosphere. Other parents stop by, expressing interest and exchanging information. Evidently, amidst the glitz of modern China, there still exist some old Chinese customs.

Michael Sachs, principal trumpet, pointed out that there was a wide range in the acoustics in the various halls in Asia, so in our preconcert acoustic rehearsals, Music Director Franz Welser-Möst asked for slight adjustments in balance and articulation. "Acoustically, the Beijing hall was probably closest to our Severance Hall sound," commented Michael. For him, the tour was a chance to reconnect with musician friends from the past, and make new friends. Michael noted that students he coached



Richard Weiss in front of the Giant Egg

in Taipei and Beijing were eager and showed a strong quest for knowledge; however, he wasn't certain how much Internet access they might have. He said, "Great strides have been made in the last twenty years with the brass instrument students in China. As Asia develops more brass player role models, it will continue in a positive direction."

Remembering all the construction cranes he had seen in Shanghai back in the 1990's, Michael was amazed by the results now. The size, skyline, and scope of the city were completely changed. He also noticed that Shanghai previously had been "a sea of bicycles" with just a few cars, but now was the exact opposite.

This highly acclaimed tour, conducted by Welser-Möst, included works by Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, and Richard Strauss. Cleverly chosen encores from the *Cantonese Suite* by Xiaogang Ye and *Chinese Galop* by Johann Strauss Sr. elicited enthusiastic and unending applause from the audiences. ▶

Note: the author is a pianist in, and ICSOM delegate for, the Cleveland Orchestra.

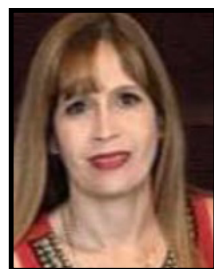
Report from Puerto Rico

By Enid Collado

The Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra faces great challenges and difficult times. The fiscal collapse of the government, the stagnation of the economy, the public debt, the loss of the population, and the actuarial deficit of the retirement systems, threaten the stability of the social environment of Puerto Rico. The high cost of energy, the loss of benefits, and the rise in taxes gradually make the quality of life of the inhabitants difficult.

In 2016, the Congress of the United States passed the Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act (PROMESA), which created a Fiscal Control Board with the purpose of addressing the fiscal crisis of Puerto Rico. In 2017, the government of Puerto Rico filed for bankruptcy under PROMESA to restructure its uncontrollable debt. This move has created great uncertainty among the working class of the country, especially public service employees. It is anticipated that the benefits associated with retirement systems will see substantial cuts.

As if it were not enough in 2017, the island was devastated by the passage of hurricanes Irma and Maria. The recovery has been slow. Puerto Ricans have faced the process with great courage and determination. In the case of the Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra, its members took the task of bringing a few moments of joy to the different towns and communities that suffered great damage. The members of the orchestra will be eternally grateful for the emotional and financial support >



Enid Collado


The 2019 ICSOM Conference will take place **August 21–24**, at the Park City Marriott in Park City, UT. All attendees, including any member of an ICSOM orchestra wishing to attend, must register in advance with ICSOM Secretary Laura Ross. Registration on the ICSOM website (www.icsom.org) must be completed by **July 18, 2019**.

Attendees should reserve conference hotel rooms through the link provided during conference registration and not through third party websites.

received from ICSOM.

Perhaps the main challenge of the orchestra is the actuarial deficit of the pension system. For years the government has not fulfilled its employer contribution. Now with the bankruptcy process no progress is foreseen in this matter. The orchestra has taken initiatives, such as recordings and special concerts, to raise additional funds. Unfortunately, the scourge of hurricane Maria has disrupted these efforts. The orchestra will continue its efforts to raise additional funds even though it has not received support from the administration.

The Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra operates under the concept of a public corporation. To that end, a substantial part of the funds come from the government's coffers. In its Fiscal Plan submitted to the Control Board, substantial cuts are proposed to the budget of the orchestra. If these cutbacks materialize, the salaries and benefits of the musicians will be reduced, the time and quality of the season would be affected, and it would be a deadly blow to the orchestra as we know it. The members of the orchestra will put up a fight by gathering support from the community, lobbying with the government and the legislature, and taking our claims to various forums.

The Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra was originally created over 50 years ago by the Puerto Rico Industrial Development Company as a tool for economic and social development. Today, more than ever, Puerto Rico needs the assets of the orchestra. Economic growth and social development are keys to take the island out of the abyss in which it finds itself. The members of the orchestra are ready to be part of the solution. 

Note: the author is a violinist in the Orquesta Sinfónica de Puerto Rico and the OSPR's ICSOM delegate.

Newslets

John C. Merrill Act

Baltimore Symphony musicians have been playing without a contract since January 16, 2019. In this context, the passage of Maryland House bill 1404, introduced by the Chair of the Appropriations Committee, Delegate Maggie McIntosh, providing \$1.6 million in each of the next two fiscal years, was most welcome. In addition to providing additional funding for two years, the bill would establish an official work group comprised of a state appointed leader as well as representatives from the BSO board, management, and musicians to examine the “structural efficiencies of the BSO, including health care costs, cost containment strategies and audience development, including methods to diversify access and increased statewide public participation” in BSO offerings. Governor Hogan allowed the bill to become law without his signature on May 28.


Over the course of about two months this past winter, BSO musicians led an effort (which the staff and board eventually joined) meeting with Maryland legislators, the mayor of Baltimore and Baltimore city council members in order to enlist their assistance. Councilman Eric Costello introduced a resolution that passed the city council on February 25, calling on legislators to restore “pre-recession funding levels” to the BSO. On April 8, the bill, named the John C. Merrill Act in honor of a valued member of the BSO who had just passed away, was

passed by both the Maryland Senate and House. The success of the initiative was not only the result of the musicians' efforts, but also thanks to advice from Randy Whatley of the Cypress Media Group and the robust support of BSO patrons, donors, and friends. These supporters, including several prominent Marylanders, contacted city council members, the mayor, the governor, and Maryland legislators both in the house and the senate.

New Initiative in New Jersey


In 2016, the NJSO began formulating a new Diversity-Equity-Inclusion initiative, which will launch a new Fellowship Program this fall as the result of an anonymous five-year \$1 million challenge grant. The proposed program was the subject of a contract re-opener, with lengthy negotiations. The Orchestra Committee/Union largely succeeded in bargaining language maximizing chances of success for the venture, as well as ensuring protections for contracted, extra, substitute, and fellows musicians. Management apparently aspires to consider all these categories of players as interchangeable widgets; the largest effort by the Union at the bargaining table was to disabuse the Symphony of that notion.

The management recently hosted a meeting with musicians to introduce their newly hired HR consultant, who outlined his role in the organization. He was retained in response to personnel disputes arising in the last two years. Future meetings will discuss an evolving sexual harassment and bullying policy.

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) in Newark, of which NJSO is the major tenant, has been awarded a \$20 million grant to build a new educational outreach center adjacent to the PAC. No word yet how this might affect NJSO's numerous educational and community outreach programs, which include M.A.N.Y.—an instrumental and ensemble instruction collaborative venture with NJPAC targeting inner-city youth. 

Behind the Picket Line (*continued*)

and the Association cut off our health insurance, and then brought in armed guards to “protect” the hall, again, we were not surprised. These were all classic anti-union, strike-busting tactics of intimidation used by employers for over 150 years. One of the Association's tactics was to attempt to exploit the members of our orchestra who were especially vulnerable because of health or economic issues, to try to sow dissent among the members. It didn't work; the Association's “last, best and final offer” was rejected overwhelmingly.

For our preparation, we contacted a leading labor law firm and retained the services of an experienced labor attorney, Robert Bloch. His firm has an ERISA (pension) attorney, Bill Kinney, who was also extremely helpful to us. Our Local president, Terry Jares, was helpful in organizing and maintaining contacts with the unions that the Association has contracts with. Despite the Association's efforts to intimidate members of other unions, such as IATSE—eliminating benefits and enacting punitive work schedules—the hall was shut down. Thanks to the courage of our stage manager, Chris Lewis, no event was held in Orchestra Hall for seven weeks. 


We retained the services of an experienced communications firm, whose president, Marilyn Katz, has contacts everywhere. In our messages to the public, we took the high road, always articulating why this orchestra needed the contract provisions we were bargaining for. We went to great pains to explain our positions, even using Association charts to illustrate our points. Our public message was consistent and effective. There were six rallies on the sidewalk in front of Orchestra Hall. Music Director Riccardo Muti spoke at the first rally in support of the musicians, which drew international attention. We are very grateful for the support of the musicians of the San Francisco Symphony who picketed with us at one of those rallies. We received overwhelming support from donors, subscribers, other unions, general public, government officials, artists and performers everywhere. We put on five orchestral and twelve chamber concerts, all over Chicago, free of charge, for large and extremely appreciative crowds. We demonstrated we were Chicago's orchestra. We worked with visiting students whose scheduled concerts had been canceled. All of these efforts paid dividends. The Association's response was minimal, except to hold two staged, poorly attended "town hall" meetings.

During the strike, we constantly kept in touch with our members not only on the picket line, which was maintained for 46 days, from 8 am to 8 pm, but also in weekly meetings. These meetings were extremely important. Everyone got a chance to voice their opinions, ask questions, express their fears. The support of our local, providing the meeting hall, with snacks and beverages, was greatly appreciated. At these meetings we carefully explained, in great detail, the Association's proposals, using their own charts. The meetings were long, averaging over two hours in length, but were crucial to our solidarity. Because we spent a lot of time together, listening to each other, this process brought the orchestra closer together.

Even before the strike was called, we had developed a number of "back channel" strategies to attempt to find a middle ground. These included contacts with influential people in Chicago, most of which we cannot describe here, but one contact, with the Office of the Mayor of Chicago finally paid dividends. We believe that the enormous public pressure to resolve this conflict motivated Mayor Rahm Emanuel to intervene and use his authority (and his excellent staff) to mediate a resolution. His efforts, conducted with respect and sensitivity, all in the space of one day, proved successful, and music has now returned to the stage of Orchestra Hall.

In the end, the incredible strength and unity of our musicians and the great outpouring of public support, coupled with an effective and positive communications strategy, which ultimately got our mayor involved, proved successful.

The really depressing question remains, why would the fifteen executive committee members along with the Board Chair Helen Zell and President Jeff Alexander threaten the existence of the orchestra for an ideological goal? What was their logic? There is no financial crisis at the Association. This represents the nightmare of orchestral life: unsure leadership, fueled by anti-musician, anti-union agendas that ignore the realities of how our orchestra works and why it is successful. For years before, and again during negotiations, we tried to explain to the executive committee how an orchestra works; apparently they did not want to listen. With a deep knowledge of the trustees,

we know that there are many who sincerely hope to move the organization forward, who appreciate the 128 years of history that is shown in the work of the musicians. The future of this orchestra depends on the willingness of everyone to listen, to understand each other, to understand the past, and to anticipate the future. In an arts organization no one has the right to impose their views, no matter how much money they give; it must be governed collaboratively. 

Note: the author is a bassist in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the chair of the orchestra committee.

The State of ICSOM (continued)

suffrage in the U.S., the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and Music Director Marin Alsop celebrate women in music in the 2019–20 season. Highlights include: world premieres by Lera Auerbach, Anna Clyne, and Reena Esmail; the BSO debuts of guest conductors Carolyn Kuan, Ruth Reinhardt, and Xian Zhang; and performances by Olga Kern, Viktoria Mullova, and Renée Fleming.

The 2019–20 season also includes a tribute to Beethoven that culminates in All Together: A Global Ode to Joy. This special project, launched in partnership with Carnegie Hall, sees Maestra Alsop leading performances of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony on five continents with nine different orchestras. The BSO's season-closing concerts feature a new translation of "Ode to Joy" by Baltimore-based rapper and musician Wordsmith.

*Boston Symphony Orchestra

Founded: 1881

Joined ICSOM: 1962

AFM Local: 9-535

The Boston Symphony recently opened the Tanglewood Learning Institute (TLI), an adult educational initiative to be held in a multi-building complex newly completed on the Tanglewood grounds in Lenox, MA. This initiative will present not only music by members of the BSO, but also visual and the other performance arts and culture to TLI participants. From the performance side, the BSO's recent recording of Shostakovich's 4th and 11th Symphonies with Music Director Andris Nelsons received the 2019 Grammy Award for Best Orchestral Performance—the third recording in the series to do so.

*Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra

Founded: 1934

Joined ICSOM: 1963

AFM Local: 92

The Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra has seen ticket-sales growth again this season amid some rather diverse programming. The orchestra enjoyed a successful tour of Florida in April, performing in five locations. We look forward to next season, celebrating 20 years of leadership under music director Joann Falletta.

Charlotte Symphony Orchestra

Founded: 1932

Joined ICSOM: 1999

AFM Local: 342

As part of Charlotte's 250th anniversary, the CSO participated in the production of *A People's History of Charlotte*, a video event that took place on the facade of the McColl Center in uptown Charlotte. Using 3D projection-mapping software, still images, video, and music, the story of Charlotte-Mecklenburg was told through the eyes of the people. The CSO recorded the score by Nkeiru Okoye used in this collaboration.

We were happy once again to host a ProAm event this year. The stage was so full of great people who love to play their instrument that we had to turn people away. We always welcome the company of our amateur colleagues, and it is exciting to meet them on our side of the stage. Next season one of our highlights will be our gala concert featuring Itzhak Perlman playing Mendelssohn. Not only are we looking forward to an excellent evening of events, we can't wait to share the stage with such a fabulous artist.

Chicago Lyric Opera Orchestra**Founded:** 1954**Joined ICSOM:** 1969**AFM Local:** 10-208

The Chicago Lyric Opera Orchestra concluded its 2018–2019 season in March with a gala concert honoring Renée Fleming's 25 years of engagement with Lyric Opera of Chicago. The Lyric Orchestra looks forward to the upcoming season celebrating both Sir Andrew Davis's 20th season as music director and a much-anticipated Ring Cycle in the spring. The Orchestra musicians also will continue their community outreach endeavors, such as performing at retirement homes and volunteering at the Chicago Food Depository.

Chicago Symphony Orchestra*Founded:** 1891**Joined ICSOM:** 1962**AFM Local:** 10-208

Support from ICSOM for the musicians of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra was a key part in sustaining our fight for a contract that reflects the quality of our orchestra. The seven-week strike, the longest in the CSO's history, came to an end as the musicians voted at the end of April to ratify a new five-year agreement. Primary issues included salary and retirement benefits, specifically the CSOA's insistence on ending the Defined Benefit Pension Plan. Final details of the contract continue to be hammered out, and will soon appear in the Settlement Bulletin. Highlights of next season, besides the absence of picketing, include: five world premieres; a tour of Europe, including three performances in Vienna as part of the 150th anniversary season of the Musikverein; two performances at Carnegie Hall; and a cycle of all of Beethoven's symphonies to celebrate his 250th birthday.

Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra*Founded:** 1895**Joined ICSOM:** 1962**AFM Local:** 1

As the fifth-oldest US orchestra, the Cincinnati Symphony celebrates its 125th anniversary season in 2019–2020. Highlights of the season include a gala weekend in January 2020

featuring soprano Renée Fleming, eight newly-commissioned compositions by US composers, and a recreation of the Vienna Akademie concert of 1808, that included the premieres of Beethoven's Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, the Fourth Piano Concerto, and the Choral Fantasy. Music Director Louis Langrée will close the season in May 2020 with a new work by composer Julia Adolphe and Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 3.

The Cleveland Orchestra*Founded:** 1918**Joined ICSOM:** 1962**AFM Local:** 4

The Cleveland Orchestra has just begun its second century of giving concerts in Cleveland and around the world. The orchestra has ongoing residencies in Miami and Vienna, as well as at Indiana University, and just completed a tour of China with Music Director Franz Welser-Möst. The CO Youth Orchestra is completing its 33rd season with a trip to Europe this Spring.

Colorado Symphony Orchestra**Founded:** 1989**Joined ICSOM:** 1968 (joined as the Denver Symphony, then reformed as the CSO after bankruptcy proceedings in 1989)**AFM Local:** 20-623

Coming off three straight years of financial stability and on course for a fourth, the Colorado Symphony is in the process of finding a new home. Summer programming highlights for the CSO include Andrea Bocelli, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Josh Groban, Weird Al Yankovic, Tenacious D, and OneRepublic at the historic Red Rocks Amphitheater. The 2019–2020 season will highlight our Concertmaster Yumi Hwang-Williams celebrating her 20-year anniversary with the CSO.

Columbus Symphony Orchestra**Founded:** 1951**Joined ICSOM:** 1990**AFM Local:** 103

The Columbus Symphony's 2019–20 Masterworks season will include an expansion of our popular festival concept programs. These combine music, art, educational, and other thematically related events, immersing patrons in each festival's focus across multiple disciplines. There will be six: one American, two separate Russian programs, two celebrating Beethoven at 250, and a Chihuly Festival.

Dallas Symphony Orchestra**Founded:** 1900**Joined ICSOM:** 1968**AFM Local:** 72-147

The Dallas Symphony Orchestra's 2019–20 season begins a new chapter in the artistic history of the organization with the arrival of Music Director Designate Fabio Luisi. Luisi's five concerts during the year will include the Dallas premiere of Composer-in-Residence Julia Wolfe's new orchestral composition, Richard Strauss's *Salome* in-concert, the first DSO performance of Franz Schmidt's *The Book of Seven Seals* and the launch of a new Brahms recording project. The DSO will also welcome Gemma New as principal guest conductor. New's debut week coincides with the orchestra's inaugural Women >

in Classical Music symposium, a four-day event that will spark conversation and dialogue on an issue of great importance in the field. In addition to the work on stage, the DSO has begun work in southern Dallas to bring free instruments and instrument education to children of that area, a comprehensive program in partnership with area schools and community organizations.

*Detroit Symphony Orchestra

Founded: 1887

Joined ICSOM: 1962

AFM Local: 5

The Detroit Symphony Orchestra is set to embark on a season-long centennial celebration of its historic home, Orchestra Hall. This acoustical gem was opened in October 1919 under then music director Ossip Gabrilowitsch, and many programs in 2019–2020 will feature repertoire performed during Orchestra Hall's initial season. The DSO will also return to the Interlochen Center for the Arts this July for the first time since 2006. This five-day residency will feature a performance by the orchestra, as well as side-by-side opportunities, masterclasses, and individual training sessions led by DSO musicians. As its search for a new music director continues, the DSO is excited to welcome new and returning guest conductors throughout the season.

The Florida Orchestra

Founded: 1968

Joined ICSOM: 1987

AFM Local: 427-721

The musicians welcome Mark Cantrell, the new President and CEO of the Florida Orchestra, who comes to us from the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra. We wish him much success in leading TFO to new artistic heights and growth towards major orchestra status.

Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra

Founded: 1957

Joined ICSOM: 2001

AFM Local: 72-147

The Fort Worth Symphony welcomed its new CEO Keith Cerny in January 2019. Robert Spano was welcomed as the new principal guest conductor starting March 2019. Music Director Miguel Harth-Bedoya will be ending his 20-year tenure in the summer of 2020, and the search is on for the next music director.

Grand Rapids Symphony

Founded: 1930

Joined ICSOM: 2013

AFM Local: 56

The 2019–20 season is the 90th Anniversary of the Grand Rapids Symphony. Helping to commemorate this milestone will be performances by Itzhak Perlman, Augustin Hadelich, and Olga Kern. Kirill Gerstein will be performing all of the Beethoven Piano Concertos over two evenings, and Ingrid Fliter will perform in the GRS debut of a new series, "The Pianists".

Grant Park Orchestra

Founded: 1944

Joined ICSOM: 1977

AFM Local: 10-208

The Grant Park Music Festival season is fast approaching. We are proud to continue the long tradition of free classical concerts in Chicago. Our wonderful chorus, led by Christopher Bell, joins us this season for Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, Mahler's *Resurrection* Symphony, Vine's *Choral* Symphony (No. 6), Kahane's "emergency shelter intake form", and Delius's *Mass of Life*. Our season also features world premieres of two commissioned works, Roustom's *Turn to the World: A Whitman Cantata*, and Garrop's *Shiva Dances*. We are also performing symphonies by Tchaikovsky (No. 2), Beethoven (No. 8), Shostakovich (No. 1), Vaughan Williams (No. 2), Mozart (No. 38), and Dvořák (No. 7). The season also features several concerti and other orchestral works, a Broadway program, and a showing of *The Wizard of Oz*, with live soundtrack provided by the orchestra. Come join us for some wonderful concerts.

Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra

Founded: 2011

Joined ICSOM: 1967 (as the Honolulu Symphony)

AFM Local: 677

The Honolulu Symphony Orchestra, originally founded in 1900, is now in its seventh season as the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra with an eighth season on the horizon. Though the current HSO has a smaller footprint of total work than its predecessor, the orchestra still produces dynamic programming coupled with world-class guest conductors and soloists.

Houston Symphony

Founded: 1930

Joined ICSOM: 1965

AFM Local: 65-699

The Houston Symphony is closing this season with programs that include Rachmaninoff's *The Bells* and Bartok's *Bluebeard's Castle*. 2019–2020 Opening Night will be conducted by Leonard Slatkin and feature Yefim Bronfman performing Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No. 3. During the season we will play programs of all Stravinsky and all R. Strauss, and a two week Schumann Festival. Soloists throughout the season will include Danill Trifonov, Emanuel Ax, and Augustin Hadelich. We have just announced our new concertmaster, Yoonshin Song, who starts with us in May. Yoonshin comes to us from the Detroit Symphony.

*Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra

Founded: 1930

Joined ICSOM: 1962

AFM Local: 3

The ISO is currently undertaking a large-scale reimagining of our Symphony on the Prairie summer series, as management looks to increase revenue by adding more performances and guest artists, generally expanding the season, although retaining the same number of orchestra weeks. Highlights from the 2019–20 season include a three-week Beethoven Festival in January, which will include the first five symphonies; the Con- ➤

certo for Violin, Cello and Piano; and five works commissioned by the ISO specifically for the festival. Three ISO musicians will also act as soloists in 2019–20, as Jennifer Christen plays the Strauss Oboe Concerto, Conrad Jones plays the Haydn Trumpet Concerto, and Austin Huntington is featured in the Beethoven *Triple Concerto*.

Jacksonville Symphony

Founded: 1949

Joined ICSOM: 1997

AFM Local: 444

The Jacksonville Symphony is currently in the midst of a search for a new President and CEO, whom we are hoping to have in place by the beginning of the 2019–2020 season. We have been invited to participate in the SHIFT festival of American Orchestras next season, and look forward to bringing our orchestra to Washington DC for the event in 2020.

Kansas City Symphony

Founded: 1982

Joined ICSOM: 1998 (the predecessor Kansas City Philharmonic was a member of ICSOM from 1966–1983)

AFM Local: 34-627

During the upcoming 2019–20 season the Kansas City Symphony will celebrate three important anniversaries—2020 marks the 250th anniversary of the birth of Beethoven, and the KCS will pay tribute with 10 concerts featuring the composer's best known works.

Next year also marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Isaac Stern—the father of the symphony's music director, Michael Stern—and 2019–20 also marks the 15th anniversary of Michael Stern's tenure as music director.

Long-time and admired Executive Director Frank Byrne will step down in late July after many years of outstanding service and will be succeeded by Daniel Beckley, current vice-president and general manager of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra.

Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra

Founded: 1978

Joined ICSOM: 1978

AFM Local: 161-710

The Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra recently celebrated its 40th season since organizing and establishing itself as the tenured opera, ballet, and theater orchestra of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the Washington National Opera. Next season will include an additional WNO mainstage production and touring ballet companies from four countries.

*Los Angeles Philharmonic

Founded: 1919

Joined ICSOM: 1962

AFM Local: 47

The Los Angeles Philharmonic is celebrating its centennial season with 50 new commissions, performances conducted by all extant Music Directors, and three international tours. The LA Phil's Youth Orchestra LA (YOLA) is celebrating 10 years since its foundation by Gustavo Dudamel.

Louisville Orchestra

Founded: 1937

Joined ICSOM: 1980

AFM Local: 11-637

The Louisville Orchestra's 2019/2020 season opens with violinist Anne Akiko Meyers, who was included, alongside Music Director Teddy Abrams, on the "19 FOR 19: ARTISTS TO WATCH" list by New York Classical Radio WQXR. The LO will continue its commitment to living composers in various programs including *From the Diary of Anne Frank* by Michael Tilson Thomas, which will be the culmination of a city-wide exhibition of the Violins of Hope. Other season highlights include Mahler 5, Verdi's *Requiem* and three guest conductors who will make their LO debuts.

*Metropolitan Opera Orchestra

Founded: 1880

Joined ICSOM: 1962

AFM Local: 802

The Metropolitan Opera's new season opens on September 23 with Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess*, and November brings the Met premiere of *Akhmaten*, Philip Glass's ode to ancient Egypt. Artist William Kentridge creates a new staging of Berg's *Wozzeck*, conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin, the Met's Jeanette Lerman-Neubauer Music Director. And in February 2020, mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato headlines the Met premiere of Handel's *Agrippina*. The season's final new production spotlights *Der Fliegende Holländer*. The season also features 20 classic revivals—including Verdi's *Macbeth* and Puccini's *Tosca*. In May and June 2020, the MET Orchestra takes the stage of Carnegie Hall for three concerts with Nézet-Séguin and guest conductor Gianandrea Noseda, with works of Stravinsky, Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Beethoven, and Strauss.

Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra

Founded: 1959

Joined ICSOM: 1970

AFM Local: 8

The Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra welcomes its new music director, Ken-David Masur, for his first season, beginning in September 2019. We look forward to an exciting year as we transition into our new home, Milwaukee Symphony Center, starting in September of 2020.

*Minnesota Orchestra

Founded: 1903

Joined ICSOM: 1962

AFM Local: 30-73

Highlights from the 2018–19 season include our live-in-concert recording project with celebrated rapper-singer-writer Dessa, a continuation of our Mahler recording cycle with the Seventh and Tenth Symphonies, and a season-long focus on 20th and 21st-century American music. During Sommerfest, we will continue to deepen our connection with the music and musicians from last summer's tour to South Africa, as well as this season's ongoing partnership with musicians from our first local Common Chords residency in North Minneapolis. We will also embark on a summer-long celebration of music from Latin >

America, concluding with a much-anticipated performance of Osvaldo Golijov's *La Pasión según San Marcos*.

Nashville Symphony

Founded: 1946

Joined ICSOM: 2000 (the orchestra was also an ICSOM member from 1975–1977)

AFM Local: 257

The Nashville Symphony will complete its 2018–19 season with the release of its recording of Symphony No. 4 by Jonathan Leshnoff, written for and recorded with the Violins of Hope. The orchestra will also perform this piece along with *Carmina Burana* by Carl Orff at the League of American Orchestras annual convention in Nashville in early June. The 2019–20 season includes more recordings of new works by John Adams, Jennifer Higdon, Gabriela Lena Frank, and Brad Warnaar.

*National Symphony Orchestra

Founded: 1931

Joined ICSOM: 1963

AFM Local: 161-710

For its 2019–20 season, the NSO will play 16 works it has never performed before, eight of which are by living composers, plus three co-commissioned works. We will record all nine Beethoven symphonies with our music director, Gianandrea Noseda, who will lead us in a performance at Lincoln Center in addition to an international tour of China and Japan.

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra

Founded: 1922

Joined ICSOM: 1973

AFM Local: 16-248

The NJSO will conclude its classical subscription season in early June with a performance of Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Rachmaninoff's Second Symphony. Late June and July will see five summer outdoor pops concerts, and the sixth-annual Edward T. Cone Foundation Composition Institute at Princeton University.

New York City Ballet Orchestra

Founded: 1948

Joined ICSOM: 1968

AFM Local: 802

In April, the NYC Ballet Orchestra began the Spring 2019 season. This season will include much of NYCB standard repertoire including *Concerto DSCH* (Shostakovich Piano Concerto No. 2), Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3, Barber Violin Concerto, and Copland's *Rodeo* conducted by Music Director Andrew Litton. The season will also include the premiere of an orchestrated version of a piano composition written by Mark Dancigers, *Bright*, and conclude with Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

New York City Opera Orchestra

Founded: 1943

Joined ICSOM: 1970

AFM Local: 802

2018–19 has seen five productions, only one of which, *Stone-wall* (to be performed in June), has a full (reduced) orchestra

complement. The number of performances of this has been reduced from eight to five. The rest of the season's productions have been with chamber players (one on a part) or string quartet or piano. Some have only included non-NYCO musicians.

The orchestra approved filing a grievance with local 802 against management for hiring non-NYCO members, and for failing to pay our orchestra's 18-performance yearly minimum.

We are awaiting arbitration results.

*New York Philharmonic

Founded: 1842

Joined ICSOM: 1962

AFM Local: 802

In the 2019–20 season, the New York Philharmonic launches an ambitious commissioning project to mark the centennial of the 19th amendment, which gave women the right to vote: Project 19 will feature world premieres composed by nineteen different women, representing both established and emerging voices. The Philharmonic also eagerly anticipates a spring tour to Europe, culminating in its appearance at the Mahler Festival 2020 in Amsterdam. The orchestra will perform Mahler's first and second symphonies under Music Director Jaap van Zweden, and is the first American orchestra to appear at the festival.

North Carolina Symphony

Founded: 1932

Joined ICSOM: 1972

AFM Local: 500

The North Carolina Symphony is currently in contract negotiations. The NCS received a very generous gift for our endowment. After 2019–20 Grant Llewellyn will become MD Laureate, so the NCS will be looking for a new music director. Llewellyn's final full season will include Mahler 5, Beethoven 9, and *The Rite of Spring*. Our Gala Concert guest artists will be Renée Fleming and Branford Marsalis.

Oregon Symphony

Founded: 1896

Joined ICSOM: 1971

AFM Local: 99

The Oregon Symphony is finishing up a season full of artistic creativity and vision. After the past two seasons' wildly successful *SoundSights* and *Sounds of Home* projects, this season saw the latest installment, called *SoundStories*. These multi-event projects saw a wonderful collaboration of many creative genres, including video, art, and puppetry, and pushed the boundaries of how a symphony orchestra concert can be defined. We are in the midst of a very exciting search for our next music director, and next year's season includes a wide variety of new and exciting projects, including the next installment of our ongoing Sounds project: the second iteration of *SoundSights*.

Orquesta Sinfónica de Puerto Rico

Founded: 1958

Joined ICSOM: 2003

AFM Local: 555

The Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra faces great challenges and difficult times. The fiscal collapse of the government, the stagnation of the economy, the public debt, the loss of the >

population, and the actuarial deficit of the retirement systems all threaten the stability of the social environment of Puerto Rico. The high cost of energy, the loss of benefits, and the rise in taxes gradually degrade the quality of life of the inhabitants. All of these problems have been exacerbated by the impact of hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, from which the island has not fully recovered. (Note: see the Report on page 8.)

*The Philadelphia Orchestra

Founded: 1900

Joined ICSOM: 1962

AFM Local: 77

The Philadelphia Orchestra celebrates its 120th season beginning September 2019 and the eighth with Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin. We will be welcoming Erina Yashima, Assistant Conductor, and Lina Gonzalez-Granados, Conducting Fellow.

Phoenix Symphony

Founded: 1947

Joined ICSOM: 1974

AFM Local: 586

Fundraising for the Phoenix Symphony is centered around our Mind Over Music programs. Musicians are teaching STEM classes in elementary schools using music as a way of explaining all sorts of academic subjects. We continue to perform programs for Alzheimer's patients, and to perform at homeless shelters and indigent rehab centers. We have improved ticket sales for classics and pops, and our board is larger and more involved than ever.

*Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

Founded: 1895

Joined ICSOM: 1962

AFM Local: 60-471

The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra is looking forward to another season with Music Director Manfred Honeck. A highlight for next season is our three-week tour to Europe in the fall.

*Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra

Founded: 1922

Joined ICSOM: 1962

AFM Local: 66

For the 2019–20 season, several concert programs by the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra will feature a focus on local history. The RPO is commissioning a new work to honor Susan B. Anthony, social reformer and women's rights activist, who played a pivotal role in the women's suffrage movement. Anthony spent most of her life in Rochester. Also planned are concert performances of Virgil Thomson's 1947 opera *The Mother of Us All*, which chronicles Anthony's life and work.

*St. Louis Symphony

Founded: 1880

Joined ICSOM: 1962

AFM Local: 2-197

The 2019–2020 season will celebrate the 140th year of the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra and the beginning of Frenchman Stéphane Denève's tenure as the new music direc-

tor. St. Louis has strong and abiding connections to France, and Denève's inaugural season will highlight this. With the richness, vibrancy, and interconnectedness of music from the two countries, the season will feature familiar works by Gershwin, Ravel, and Saint-Saëns alongside the newer voices of our generation, including Adams, Higdon, Puts, Kernis, and Connession, among others. Several other larger works will be presented as well: Mahler's Symphony No. 2, *Resurrection*, and Berlioz's *The Damnation of Faust* in its entirety. Also exciting is that acclaimed pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet will be the artist in residence throughout the season.

Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra

Founded: 1959

Joined ICSOM: 1984

AFM Local: 30-73

The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra is looking forward to its 61st season and welcomes keyboardist and conductor Richard Eggar as well as composer and musical host Rob Kapilow as new Artistic Partners. Both make their official start in the 2019–2020 season.

San Antonio Symphony

Founded: 1939

Joined ICSOM: 1978 (the orchestra was also an ICSOM member from 1968–1970)

AFM Local: 23

After a hostile takeover attempt failed last season, the SAS concluded an executive director search and hired Corey Cowart. SAS also announced that the 2019–20 season would end our Music Director Sebastian Lang-Lessing's tenure after ten seasons and he will be named Music Director Emeritus. We are beginning the music director search process.

San Diego Symphony Orchestra

Founded: 1910

Joined ICSOM: 1974

AFM Local: 325

The San Diego Symphony welcomes its new music director, Rafael Payare, and prepares for the building of its new summer home, the Bayside Performance Park.

San Francisco Ballet Orchestra

Founded: 1975

Joined ICSOM: 1977

AFM Local: 6

In 2019, the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra celebrated the career of Executive Director Glenn McCoy, who is retiring after 32 years of service. We thank Glenn for his support of our orchestra, and his good work in helping to make the San Francisco Ballet one of the world's premier arts organizations.

San Francisco Opera Orchestra

Founded: 1980

Joined ICSOM: 1983

AFM Local: 6

The San Francisco Opera Orchestra 2019 Summer Season features three conductors making their company debuts, with productions of Bizet's *Carmen*, led by James Gaffigan, >

Handel's *Orlando*, with Christopher Moulds on the podium, and Dvořák's *Rusalka*, under the baton of Eun Sun Kim. This fall, Plácido Domingo makes a much anticipated return to the War Memorial Opera House in a special concert to commemorate the 50th anniversary of his first appearance with San Francisco Opera.

*San Francisco Symphony

Founded: 1911

Joined ICSOM: 1963

AFM Local: 6

The San Francisco Symphony had an exciting season, beginning with two concerts at Carnegie Hall to open its season. In November a new, progressive four-year contract was signed well before the expiration of the previous agreement. In December, Essa Pekka Salonen was named music director designate. He will begin his tenure in the 2020–21 season at the conclusion of Michael Tilson Thomas's 25-year music directorship. The musicians are pleased to collaborate with the administration on a new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiative.

Symphoria

Founded: 2012

Joined ICSOM: 1970 (as the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra)

AFM Local: 78

Symphoria looks forward to working with Pamela Murchison, who joins us as our first executive director on June 3, 2019. Highlights of our upcoming 2019–20 season include a

Rachmaninoff festival featuring the four piano concertos and a performance of Peter Boyer's *Ellis Island: The Dream of America* with actors from Syracuse Stage.

Utah Symphony

Founded: 1940

Joined ICSOM: 1979

AFM Local: 104

The Utah Symphony highlighted its own musicians this season as soloists in all six of Bach's Brandenburg Concertos. We are also celebrating local history with a commissioned work by Zhou Tian commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Transcontinental Railway, and performances next season of Olivier Messiaen's *Des Canyons aux étoiles...*, inspired by the landscapes of southern Utah. The 2019–20 season marks the Symphony's 80th anniversary.

Virginia Symphony Orchestra

Founded: 1920

Joined ICSOM: 2000

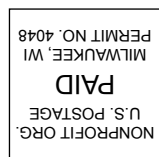
AFM Local: 125

The Virginia Symphony begins its 99th season this fall as we undertake a search for our next music director. We have just signed a contract that takes us through our centennial season. As we celebrate the achievements in our first century, we anticipate new artistic heights and better lives for the musicians in the century ahead. "Supporting the arts means supporting the artists!"



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF
SYMPHONY AND OPERA MUSICIANS

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