

# Senza Sordino

Official Publication of the International Conference of Symphony & Opera Musicians

VOLUME XXV, NO. 4

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## 1987 ICSOM Conference Highlights

As we approach this year's conference commemorating the 25th anniversary of ICSOM, it would be beneficial to examine where ICSOM is now and to look at the questions and issues which will be facing the delegates in Salt Lake City in August.

### Health Issues

ICSOM continues its efforts to improve the quality and quantity of information available to medical experts dealing with musicians' health needs. Dr. Martin Fishbein, who has developed the ICSOM Medical Questionnaire, will give us a first-hand report on how the questionnaire has evolved, the response that we have generated, and the initial results of the data.

We continue to explore other areas of major interest to musicians, including health care cost containment and sound level/hearing concerns. Reports of progress in these areas will be given at the conference.

### Negotiations

Our orchestras find themselves in some of the most difficult negotiations in recent years, hindered by a national attitude that now makes it "chic" for managements (not just in our field) to expect, demand, and receive concessions. This past season, we have had a member orchestra dissolved under a Chapter 7 bankruptcy, and the threat of Chapter 11 reorganization has been made to extract concessions from several other orchestras.

\* Are we seeing these difficulties because of the national climate?

\* Are musicians' "unreasonable" demands resulting in settlements beyond the capabilities of the symphony and arts organizations to fund?

\* Is there a lack of commitment to fund-raising on the part of our arts organizations?

\* Are financial realities leading to a "cultural Darwinism"? (survival of the fittest)

\* Can musicians have a positive impact on our arts organizations or on a community where an orchestra faces difficulties?

### Relationship with the American Federation of Musicians (AFM)

ICSOM again finds itself at odds with the Federation over the work dues issue (see *Senza Sordino*, April '87). This is not a new position for us. We have seen willingness in some locals to fund expert negotiators for contracts, counsel for grievance-arbitration procedures, and dues for the AFM Strike Fund and ICSOM. However, such support is sorely lacking in most locals. ICSOM's Chairperson and President will attend the AFM convention this June and will report to the ICSOM conference those by-law resolution results that relate directly to our orchestras.

### Inside ICSOM

Within ICSOM, we are dealing with the growing pains of an organization that has increased to 47 orchestras with annual budgets ranging from \$2.5 million to \$25 million, and with musicians in these orchestras numbering over 4200. Good communication within the ICSOM network is increasingly important as the needs and numbers of our membership grow.

### Conference Workshops

Two workshops will be presented this year:

\* ICSOM Counsel Leonard Leibowitz and Liza Hirsch DuBrul will give their annual workshop on the concepts and strategies of the negotiation process. This workshop has been in regular demand by ICSOM delegates and has been adapted to include special techniques of negotiating in the 1980's.

\* A new workshop will deal with techniques of survival during a strike or lockout. This workshop has been created to share ideas of delegates who have experienced and solved critical organizational problems during work-stoppages. Topics will include, but not be limited to: concert production, internal strike fund, self-help programs, newsletter, publicity, psychological sustenance, etc.

### Delegates

Your delegate will be representing your views at the conference, so be sure he or she knows your opinions about the issues and challenges facing all of us.

We look forward to seeing you in Salt Lake City, August 19-23.

Melanie Burrell, ICSOM Chairperson  
Lynn Larsen, ICSOM President

## 1987 ICSOM Conference in Salt Lake City

The 25th annual ICSOM conference will be held in Salt Lake City, Utah at the Salt Lake Sheraton Hotel. The conference will run from 1:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 19 until 1:00 Sunday, August 23.

Hospitality and special events will include the following:

On Thursday evening, August 20, the Utah Symphony management will host a reception and tour of Symphony Hall for the ICSOM delegates and guests. USO musicians hope to offer a short chamber concert to demonstrate the acoustics of Symphony Hall.

On Friday evening, August 21, a reception and dinner buffet for the ICSOM delegates and guests will be hosted by Musi-

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cians' Union Local 104 at Snowbird Ski Resort. Transportation will be provided for the scenic, 45-minute drive. This event includes a ride on the Snowbird tram, which ascends to Hidden Peak (above 11,000 feet). The view is spectacular!

For those interested, a private tour of the Mormon Tabernacle can be arranged. Other possible tours include the Mormon Temple Square and the world renowned genealogical library.

The conference hotel is located in downtown Salt Lake, one block from the Symphony Hall/Salt Palace complex, two blocks from the Mormon Temple Square, and close to downtown shopping malls. There are convenient athletic facilities and places to jog. The hotel has a beautiful pool. Many fine restaurants are located nearby.

The weather in August is sure to be hot and dry (except for a possible afternoon thunderstorm). However, it can get pretty chilly at Snowbird, especially at the top of the tram.

Larry Rice, ICSOM Delegate  
Utah Symphony Orchestra

## “Playing Hurt” Conference in Minnesota

We are pleased to announce that “Playing Hurt: A Conference on the Identification, Prevention, and Treatment of the Medical Problems of Musicians” will be held September 19-20, 1987 in Minneapolis, co-sponsored by the Minnesota Orchestral Association and the University of Minnesota. This conference will be the first of its kind in the Midwest, and the first such event initiated and co-sponsored by an orchestra, university and community.

With so many injuries in our orchestra and others, it seemed urgent that we address the medical problems of musicians. The seminar for our orchestra has been planned by a committee with representatives from our orchestra and management, the University of Minnesota, the American String Teachers Association, and Dr. Alice Brandfonbrener, director of the Medical Program for Performing Artists at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago.

The University and the orchestra management felt that this was an exciting and worthy effort with potentially broad outreach. Dr. Brandfonbrener will be joined by the following medical professionals: Richard Lederman, Kyle Pruett, Robert Leffert, and Dore Naunton. Additional speakers will include local experts. We have also invited three nationally known performers (string, piano, and wind artists) who will participate in panel discussions.

We are planning seminars and presentations on the following subjects:

- Overuse, a definition
- Surgical intervention, pros and cons
- Stress and resulting medical problems
- Risk factors, prevention
- Performance anxiety
- Practice and performance habits
- Jaw problems
- Hearing problems

Rehabilitation techniques and therapy  
Alternative preventative measures: Alexander technique, Yoga, massage, fitness  
The learning process

Danger signs in the music student

Practical and ethical issues

Hopes for the future from the clinician's viewpoint

All of our faculty will participate in round-table discussion groups and will take questions from the audience. We hope the conference will be attended by teachers, students, physicians, professional and amateur performers, and medical students and professionals. ICSOM musicians are welcome to attend. We are planning a private session exclusively for our orchestra members. Call 612-625-0727 or 612-625-5813 for further information.

Janet Horvath  
Minnesota Orchestra

## Milwaukee Symphony Gets Brainy Ideas

Dr. Mariella Fischer-Williams, a Milwaukee neurologist interested in music medicine, has treated several musicians in the Milwaukee Symphony. In 1985, she approached our management and orchestra committee to offer a medical seminar for the musicians. The idea was approved, and Dr. Fischer-Williams presented seminars in 1986 and 1987. The seminars consisted of a seven-part series on “The Prevention of Occupational Disorders of Performing Musicians.” Discussions included: types of reactions to stress; anatomy and physiology of the sensory-motor system; mechanics of musical performance: a hands-on experience with Alexander Technique; discussion of symptoms and their prevention; and biofeedback demonstrations.

These sessions were very informative and gave the musicians a better understanding of the potential problems we all face in orchestral performance. Dr. Fischer-Williams limited each series to eight musicians, who signed up on a first come, first served basis. Management paid 80% of the cost of the seminars and the musicians paid the remaining \$27 out of pocket. We anticipate that the seminars will continue until every musician has had a chance to participate.

Elizabeth Tuma, ICSOM Delegate  
Milwaukee Symphony

## Letter to the Editor

May 7, 1987

Dear Editor,

I have been very appreciative of ICSOM's interest in music medicine and *Senza Sordino's* coverage up to this date. However, I have noticed that most of the articles have been primarily a Western medicine approach to solving physical and psychological problems. After reading the April 1987 issue, I

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came away with the feeling that we as musicians are predisposed or doomed to a large assortment of specific problems that in some cases can only be solved by extreme measures such as surgery, pain medication, or total rest. I know from personal experience that in most cases, there are other potential ways of approaching our particular medical issues.

The Western medical model of illness generally looks at parts of the body as separate. One need only sprain an ankle or stub a toe and notice the resultant tension in the neck or shoulders to know that all the parts are interconnected. Problems in a finger or hand may directly stem from postural problems; surgery can correct the painful symptoms but not necessarily solve the problem. In addition, body re-education through various techniques could avoid the necessity of surgery, or possibly the condition altogether.

It is my hope that *Senza Sordino* will explore various New Age Techniques such as Feldenkrais, Aston Patterning, shiatsu, acupuncture, Traigger, massage, Alexander, meditation, bio-energenics, etc. Some of the techniques are fairly new and the field of somatics is relatively young, yet effective results are available. I have explored various combinations of these techniques over the last seven years and can endorse the validity and usefulness of them in our struggle to promote and maintain viable functioning bodies, minds, and emotions.

Sincerely,  
Dawn Weiss  
Oregon Symphony

## Letter to the Editor

May 8, 1987

Dear Editor,

It was most inspiring to read in your April 1987 issue of the St. Louis Symphony's Employee Assistance Program (EAP). However, while that orchestra's management may well be the first to establish such a program, it is not correct to state that "the St. Louis Symphony became the first orchestra to utilize an employee assistance program."

Here in Local 802 we have had a similar program in place for more than three years, and it has been available to the members of the four ICSOM orchestras in our city, as well as to all other members and their families. In fact, fifty family members and musicians from those orchestras have utilized our Musicians' Assistance Program which provides all of the services that the St. Louis Symphony does and with the same level of staff proficiency and professional procedures. And participation by ICSOM musicians is increasing, as word has gotten around. In fact, we like to think that our program has been the prototype for the St. Louis program and others which are in the process of formation within our Federation.

Perhaps this information will provide part of the answer to the questions raised in your article, "Work Dues: Do You Get What You Pay For?"

John Glasel, President  
Local 802  
New York City

## Historical Perspective on our 25th Anniversary

Twenty-five years ago, in a paroxysm of anger and frustration, ICSOM was born. Symphony musicians at that time were not a large part of a local or its income. The local negotiated some sort of contract for the orchestra, the players in most locals did not have the right of ratification, and the local officials did not have much of an idea of what the life of a symphony musician was like. It was the blind leading the blind. The Federation was even less interested or involved in orchestra life. There was a part of the recording contract having to do with symphonic recording sessions and that was about all we knew about them, or they about us. The problems were mounting, the frustrations were growing, and the explosion finally took place in Chicago, where ICSOM was born in 1962.

We organized, we identified the activists in the orchestras, and they identified with us. We retained counsel; we elected officers; we taught each other how to negotiate, how to organize, and how to be committee people. We taxed ourselves, and did all that a respectable and responsible organization should. Shortly thereafter, the local unions and the Federation became fearful and angry. They accused us of usurping their power, they accused us of dual unionism, they accused us of attempting to unseat them. They truly didn't understand us at all.

We continued to do as much as a volunteer organization could, meeting only once a year. We got better contracts for ourselves and we slowly became more acceptable to some locals and to the Federation. We convinced them (some are not yet convinced) that we were not interested in starting another union. We wanted better service and leadership and more self-determination. The ensuing years, particularly under President Fuentealba, were years of relative progress and cooperation. ICSOM's role became one of identifying problems and trying to get some help from the Federation in solving them. We wanted a larger Symphony Department, and participation in recording and TV negotiations and other areas of symphony life within the Federation.

That's about where we are now. We are a service organization and we represent the 47 major symphony, opera and ballet orchestras in this country. We do this through elected officials and appointed specialists. If ICSOM has done anything in its 25 years of life, it has given a VOICE to the symphony musician, and that voice is a strong one. Our voice is heard by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Major Orchestra Managers Conference, the American Symphony Orchestra League, and last but by no means least, the Federation and its locals. ICSOM gives us an identity.

Maybe ICSOM foretells the future shape of the Federation. In addition to ICSOM, there are other trade division groupings within the Federation. The regional orchestras have an association (ROPA). The recording musicians have an organization (RMA). The day may not be far away when the concept of geographical division of the AFM may change. Instead of grouping by locals, musicians may group according to category across the country. The AFM may become the umbrella administration apparatus to service all these national organizations.

Our future is through uncharted waters, just as our past has

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been. Going through those waters alone, orchestra by orchestra, would only hurt us. Become an activist on your committee, in your local union, and in ICSOM. Think about what you want for and from ICSOM. You are ICSOM's future.

Irving Segall, ICSOM Delegate  
Philadelphia Orchestra  
ICSOM Chairman 1974-1980

## Settlement Summaries

**Alabama:** ratified a 4-year agreement February 13, 1987. In December 1986, players were told by board president that they must cut wages or organization couldn't last more than a month. In January, on recommendation of counsel, musicians called in a federal mediator. 10-year plan developed to eliminate deficit by 1997-98. Wages will be \$19,000 (freeze), \$20,100, \$21,600, \$25,000. Retirement plan set up for the end of the fourth year involves contribution by management and players. In fourth year, management begins contributing towards dependent health insurance premiums. Disability insurance, new drug and alcohol rehabilitation clause, increased personal leave, general improvements in leave, scheduling, travel. 7 musicians to participate as board committee members; one vote on executive board.

**San Diego:** ratified a 2-year agreement on May 31, 1987. The crucial aspect of this settlement was the immediate and mandatory calling in of a team of experts, agreeable to both sides, via the American Symphony Orchestra League or otherwise. The Association must provide full access to the history, records, and future plans of the symphony, and must implement whatever recommendations are made by the team. The Association also agreed to go along with recommendations for revitalizing the board of directors, which earlier this season had offered to resign.

**Wages:** \$18,400 and \$23,125. Season: 32 weeks, 37 weeks. Orchestra reduced by attrition from 89 to 81 players. Change in audition committee voting structure. Review procedures will apply to reseating. Maternity, paternity, and adoption leave increased to 8 weeks, using sick leave and unpaid leave. Parental leave of 2 weeks (against sick leave) was added. Dental insurance for employees was added, with manage-

ment paying 50% the first year and 100% the second. Vacation: 1 week, 2 weeks. Summer season: 9 weeks produced by players. The San Diego lockout will total fourteen months by the time the players receive their first paycheck next October.

## L.A. Players Renegotiate

In August 1984, musicians of the L.A. Philharmonic ratified a master agreement by a vote of 44-39. There were allegations that at the time of ratification, the orchestra had not been told by the committee or the union of certain substantive changes in the agreement. In September, a motion made to the union board of Local 47 to rescind the contract ratification was defeated by one vote.

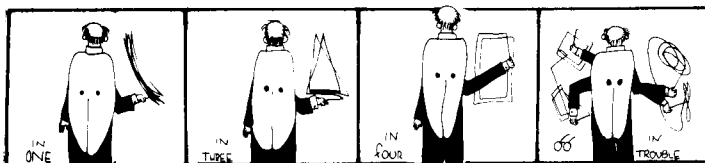
Eventually, the orchestra elected a new committee and the local elected new officers. Due to the narrow margin of the ratification vote, the L.A. Philharmonic management was agreeable to reopening discussions of the contract. This process began in January 1985. By May, discussions were completed and resulted in three substantive contractual changes as well as numerous language changes intended as points of clarification.

The three main points changed were:

- 1) pay scale for the two non-union librarians was brought into concordance with union prices;
- 2) a system of granting pension credit to those on disability in excess of the number of years actually served was agreed upon;
- 3) a new and unpopular bowing clause was dropped from the contract.

The orchestra voted 81-0 in July 1985 to accept the revised master agreement.

Note: The L.A. Philharmonic did not prepare a bulletin about the events of the 1984-85 renegotiation. Information for this article is based on a March 1987 memorandum to the ICSOM governing board from the L.A. Philharmonic orchestra committee.



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SENZA SORDINO is the official publication of the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians and is published six times a year on a bi-monthly basis. ICSOM is affiliated as a conference of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada, AFL-CIO.

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Subscriptions: \$6.00 per year