

# Senza Sordino

Official Publication of the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians

VOLUME 52 NO. 4

ONLINE EDITION

DECEMBER 2014

## Atlanta Returns to the Stage

by Michael Moore, ASO ICSOM Delegate

On November 13, 2014, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra returned to Symphony Hall stage to a reception that more closely resembled that of fans at a highly anticipated sports event. Music Director Robert Spano conducted, Concertmaster David Coucheron played a Mozart concerto, and the ASO Chorus joined the orchestra for a rendition of the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven. This concert also marked the end of a nine-week lockout, our second in as many years, and the first concert of the Atlanta Symphony's 70th season that should have begun in September. As we played

the music that expresses "Thy magic reunites those whom stern custom has parted," the musicians took the next step in forging a new relationship with our patrons, our board, and the Woodruff Arts Center, following a successful campaign to mobilize the entire community behind the preservation of this great orchestra.

This year's lockout began when our already-regressive two-year contract expired on September 6. Our management—the Woodruff Arts Center, of which the ASO is a fairly powerless "division"—refused even to meet the day before locking us out unless we would accept the unacceptable Last, Best and Final Offer that they had delivered by e-mail. The WAC/ASO's proposal sought to eradicate our already-reduced complement and make it subject to management's sole discretion, and to degrade our healthcare plan and determine unilaterally what it would consist of, while requiring us to share much more of its cost. All of this was against the backdrop of meager salary increases of 0%, 1%, 1.5% and 2% on the reduced salaries we have endured since our 2012 lockout, with no restoration of the ten weeks cut then from each season. The only financial lure, a \$150,000 buyout for those with 30+ years to leave the orchestra, rounded out the WAC's ominous vision of the "flexible" complement by encouraging greater attrition. Designed to make the Orchestra shoulder the burden of the WAC's debt and potential bond rating problems (as well as the fundraising and management failures of departed CEO Stanley Romanstein), the WAC/ASO proposal simply had nothing to recommend it.



ASO musicians participate in "A Deafening Silence"

To protract the lockout and starve us out while appearing to be bargaining in good faith, the WAC/ASO called for federal mediation, knowing cynically well that it had no obligation to agree to anything or to heed any mediator's suggestion.

We were unwavering in our resolve to prevent our Grammy award-winning ASO from being pushed further down and backwards, and had worked to prepare for the 2014 siege throughout the two years of the concessionary agreement we reluctantly accepted in 2012. Aided by well-coordinated bargaining, media and legal strategies and thousands of hours of work, the musicians

received near-unanimous support from far-flung media outlets and powerful individuals—pressure that, during the final two days, for the first time, brought some of the true decision-makers to the table. These conditions enabled FMCS Acting Director Alison Beck and Commissioner Richard Giacalone (who attended the later meetings without Ms. Beck) to prove helpful.

Multiple sellout concerts all over town sponsored by the new 501(c)3 ATL Symphony Musicians Foundation and sales of T-shirts and other support materials on the picket line kept everyone busy. The Political Action Committee spoke with local politicians at every level to gain their support. An independent community group—Save Our Symphony Atlanta—was established, and the ASO Chorus was very vocal and active as well, singing literally and figuratively on the picket lines and social media alike. The orchestra was also incredibly fortunate to have the total support of both Music Director Robert Spano and Principal Guest Conductor Donald Runnicles, who wrote open letters and lobbied publicly for an end to the destructive lunacy of the repeat lockout and for the orchestra's immediate return to the stage. A board member who resigned in September sponsored "A Deafening Silence" ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=yNVlytBBdxc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yNVlytBBdxc)), attended by hundreds of supporters at the entrance of the Woodruff Arts Center. "ASO Presents" concerts were leafleted in support of the AFM's place-

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## Chairperson's Report by Bruce Ridge

### Lockout, Rinse, Repeat

**O**n August 25, 2012, the management of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and the Board of the Woodruff Arts Center locked out the musicians of the Atlanta Symphony.

On September 7, 2014, the management of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and the Board of the Woodruff Arts Center locked out the musicians of the Atlanta Symphony.



In an often misattributed and perhaps apocryphal quote, it has been opined that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.

The Atlanta Symphony lockout of 2012 brought negative attention to that great city, and temporarily silenced one of ICSOM's finest orchestras. It brought division and mistrust to the organization, laying a negative foundation for relationships among all facets of the institution.

So naturally, seeing those results, the board thought they'd go back for seconds, and the 2014 lockout would last over two months.

Musicians and arts enthusiasts all over the world followed the events in Atlanta, and we are all relieved that this second lockout is over. May it be the last time that an orchestra faces such a destructive tactic. The settlement that has been reached could have been achieved by continuing the negotiations and following the musicians' call to play and talk, leading to the same conclusion without ever missing a concert and without damaging the brand of the orchestra with yet another lockout.

While many of our orchestras are achieving great things, it is difficult to hear the great results over the din of self-fulfilling negativity that emanates when a lockout is inflicted upon an orchestra and a community. And there have been too many lockouts recently: Minnesota Orchestra, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony, the Atlanta Symphony, and... the Atlanta Symphony.

We hear so much talk about business models, but what is so obviously lost in that discussion is one basic fact: lockouts are bad business. Lockouts bring negative international attention to the community, undermine the confidence of donors, and reinforce negative stereotypes about the future of the arts.

We noted at the start of the 2014 ICSOM Conference in Los Angeles that for the first time in several years we were commencing our discussions on a day on which no orchestra was locked out. But we also noted that we didn't know what would happen even in the next few weeks. We praised the overwhelming and uplifting response from our members to ICSOM's Calls to Action to assist our members in need, while noting that as uplifting as the response to these Calls to Action has been, we nonetheless hope we never have to issue another.

But we know we will, and we know we must remain prepared to support any musician in need.

In the weeks immediately following the 2014 ICSOM Confer-



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**Subscriptions:** \$10 per year, payable to *Senza Sordino*, c/o Michael Moore, Treasurer, 953 Rosedale Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30306. Report delivery-related problems to Peter de Boor, Editor, 431 N Kenmore St, Arlington, VA 22201.

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ence, Atlanta was locked out...again. We issued a Call to Action, and immediately our members, and our friends across the continent, responded. In less than one month, it became the third most successful Call to Action we have ever issued. In those moments when we feel discouraged by the negativity that sometimes surrounds our field, we should take comfort in the fact that the musicians of ICSOM will always stand together, and will always be eager to assist each other.

While positive news inevitably receives less media coverage, events outside of Atlanta have occurred as well since the conclusion of the 2014 ICSOM Conference. At a time when the leaders at the Woodruff Arts Center were once again laying out the tired and embarrassing rhetoric of the goal to establish a new model for orchestras everywhere; other orchestras were working to achieve different things:

- The San Antonio Symphony celebrated its 75th anniversary by moving into its new concert hall after closing its fiscal year with a surplus and receiving a one million dollar gift.
- The Chicago Symphony gala marked 125 years and raised \$1.5 million even as the orchestra reported a fourth year of record sales and fundraising.
- The Detroit Symphony reported that annual giving has surpassed the goal of \$17.4 million.
- The Grand Rapids Symphony received a \$1 million gift for its endowment.
- The Lyric Opera of Chicago's 60th Anniversary Concert and Diamond Ball raised \$3.2 million.
- The Kansas City Symphony achieved international recognition as a symbol of its city with its appearance at Game 6 of the World Series.

As I watched the broadcast of Game 6, filled with pride for all of our friends in the Kansas City Symphony, noting how far we have come in working to brand our member orchestras as indispensable to our communities, I couldn't help but wonder what would have happened had the Atlanta Braves been playing in the 2014 World Series. A moment that the management of the Kansas City Symphony was able to cultivate would have been lost by the management of the Woodruff Arts Center, because they were too busy talking about what was not possible, as opposed to what was achievable.

When we hear the clichéd rhetoric of "new business models," we must always remember and be prepared to articulate that our friends at Americans for the Arts regularly conduct a study called the BCA Survey of Business Support for the Arts. The conclusions of businesses that support the arts include:

- 64% agreed that businesses could also support other social causes by giving to the arts;
- 59% found the arts to have a direct impact on the company's bottom line and a direct tie-in to the company name or products;
- 59% stated that the arts can promote employee creativity and growth.

The theme of the 2014 ICSOM Conference was The Art of Advocacy. It has long been our belief that musicians must be their own most ardent advocates, and throughout ICSOM that is being achieved. Virtually all of our musicians have developed skills at utilizing social networking for positive messaging, and the use of Twitter played a prominent role in avoiding a lockout at the Metropolitan Opera. At our Los Angeles conference,

George Brown of the Utah Symphony gave a presentation on the development of a Fourth Wall committee by the musicians of the Utah Symphony, designed to ensure that their positive message about the future of the arts crosses the wall of the stage as clearly as their music.

In Atlanta, the musicians and their committee leadership elevated the art form. Building upon the inspiring efforts of the Met Opera musicians, the Minnesota Orchestra musicians and so many others, the Atlanta Symphony musicians built a social networking campaign that was followed by thousands and thousands. Bloggers from across the world took notice and supported the musicians, analyzing every statement uttered by the Woodruff Arts Center leaders. Financial support from other orchestras rolled in, and pictures of the Boston Symphony, the Cincinnati Symphony, the New York Philharmonic, and others were posted with many of the musicians wearing ATL Symphony Musicians t-shirts.

The Calls to Action that we issue for financial support for musicians facing lockouts always state: "...if we effectively respond to every call, we will demonstrate the power in collective action. We can and will make a powerful statement to our managements and boards as we work to spread the positive community message of the musicians of ICSOM."

Every member of ICSOM can take pride that we once again responded effectively. I am so proud of the musicians of the Atlanta Symphony, and privileged to be associated with all the members of ICSOM. 

## Global Threat Needs Global Reaction

by *Benoît Machuel*

During the week of 17-23 November, 2014, for the first time, orchestra musicians and their trade unions in all countries with a symphonic tradition took part in a global campaign to alert audiences and political decision makers about a situation that has become critical.

Financing of symphony orchestras has been one of the main topics addressed by the FIM International Orchestra Conference in Berlin (2008), Amsterdam (2011) and Oslo (2014). On both sides of the Atlantic, despite different financing models based on different histories and traditions, stable funding is vital to orchestra sustainability. It is virtually impossible for any orchestra fulfilling a genuine, cultural mission that equally values all repertoires and serves a variety of audiences, to rely exclusively on box office revenues or on the sale of recordings or secondary products to balance its budget.

The case of the Rome opera, which fired all its 182 performers in both the orchestra and the chorus at the beginning of October this year, is emblematic of an extremely worrying trend. Although this decision may not be final as negotiation is still ongoing, the argument behind the sudden dismissal of all musicians in the Opera theatre of the capital of Italy—the very country that gave birth to Opera—falls naturally in place within a more global strategy aimed at discharging employers, whether

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## President's Report

by Brian Rood

ICSOM continues to provide many important services to its members and does so on a shoestring budget. Just a few of these include the annual Directory, *Senza Sordino*, annual summer conferences in cities of ICSOM orchestras, member-at-large online and phone call discussion groups, orchestra-l, delegate-l, the ICSOM Electronic Media Committee, site visits by the chair or other governing board member,

the Emergency Relief Fund, settlement bulletins, access to legal counsel, and more. All of this is made available to ICSOM members for a fraction of typical union work dues. ICSOM operates on member dues that are approximately one-tenth of one percent of annual salary or 0.1%.

Perhaps one of the most important services ICSOM provides is the Call to Action for member orchestras

embroiled in labor stoppages that have disrupted operations in Atlanta, Columbus, Detroit, Honolulu, Jacksonville, Louisville, Minnesota, Saint Paul, and Syracuse. ICSOM member orchestras and our friends throughout the AFM and elsewhere have contributed over \$1.5 million to help our colleagues stave off draconian measures imposed by misguided boards and managers.

For this report, though, I would like to focus on another ICSOM service, our partnership with the Sphinx Organization.

ICSOM has long been integrally involved in programs that provide assistance to minority musicians. From 1976-2001, ICSOM supported the Music Assistance Fund, which the New York Philharmonic established in 1965 to provide scholarship support to minority classical musicians. The program later came under the supervision of the American Symphony Orchestra League, now named the League of American Orchestras.

In 1997 Aaron Dworkin created the Sphinx Organization, which he continues to lead. ICSOM delegates enjoyed the opportunity to meet Aaron during his presentation at the 2011 ICSOM Conference in Detroit. He received a MacArthur fellowship in 2005, and recently was tapped by President Barack Obama to be Obama's first nominee to the National Council for the Arts.

The Sphinx Organization has grown and had an ever-increasing role in musical education as well as the composition of orchestras across the United States. In 1998, when Sphinx was just getting started, 1.16% of the members of America's top orchestras were African-American musicians. In just 10 years that number has more than doubled to 2.4%. Before Sphinx there were no dedicated African-American and Latino orchestras. Now, Sphinx has two. Even compositions by African-American and Latino composers have steadily increased since Sphinx began its mission, to "transform lives through the power of diversity in the arts." Aaron and his team of staff, artists, and sponsors continue to provide meaningful opportunities to realize this mission.

In 2002, the League and the Sphinx Organization in partnership established what is now the Sphinx Music Assistance

Fund, which has developed into a broad series of offerings, including a summer education program, the Instrument Fund, the College-Bound program and MPower scholarships. Sphinx recently named thirteen recipients of the 2014 MPower Artists Grants, with awards ranging from \$3,000 to attend the Sitka Cello Symposium all the way to \$40,000 to present a semi-staged performance of *Wading Home*, an opera based on the recipient's novel of New Orleans with the same title.

The Sphinx Organization also sponsors the Sphinx Competition, which promotes the development of string performance experience among African-American and Latino youths. The competition is open to all junior high, high school, and college-age Latino and African-American string players. Unlike many competitions, Sphinx strives to provide a nurturing education environment for these talented young players by offering audition and performance experience, various training activities, and mentoring opportunities with jury members. They also work with the Sphinx Symphony, composed of African-American and Latino musicians from top professional orchestras around the country.

All competition participants receive scholarships towards their educational pursuits through the Sphinx Music Assistance Fund, and those demonstrating need are eligible to receive the use of a quality instrument through the Sphinx Instrument Fund.

Since 2002, ICSOM has provided scholarship awards in the amount of \$500 to each year's Sphinx Competition senior semi-finalists. These awards may be applied for music education expenses during the year, including school tuition, private lessons, summer music school expenses, and acquisition and maintenance of a primary string instrument.

Besides the Competition, Sphinx also administers many other programs, including:

1. The Overture Program delivers access to musical education in Detroit and Flint, Michigan. Sphinx instructors offer beginning violin lessons at no cost to the students and provide instruments for their use.
2. The Sphinx Performance Academy provides aspiring African-American and Latino string players (ages 12-17) with a full-scholarship chamber music and solo performance program.
3. Classical Connections has a nationwide reach helping teachers implement musician education in school curriculums. This program has been set up throughout southeastern Michigan, Atlanta, New Orleans, Nashville, Miami, and New York City. It is interesting to



Aaron Dworkin

note that some of the orchestras in these areas either have minority fellowships or include Sphinx Competition winners on their educational series as soloists or both.

This year's Competition will be held January 27-February 1, 2015 in partnership with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and Max M. Fisher Music Center.

ICSOM is proud to continue its partnership with the Sphinx Organization and to support its mission.

For more information please visit <http://www.sphinxmusic.org/>



## Atlanta Returns to the Stage *(continued)*

ment of the ASO on the International Unfair List. The Local, the Symphonic Services Division and AFM President Ray Hair were as supportive as they could be, and ICSOM put out a Call to Action that brought in a quarter of a million dollars from orchestras throughout North America.

The settlement was achieved when the WAC leadership finally agreed to take a risk and incrementally guarantee 88 players by the fourth year, replacing those lost by attrition since 2012. An innovative, money-saving healthcare solution proposed by the musicians was worked out. Although the orchestra certainly wanted more players, a higher scale and the restoration of our lost weeks, the complement issue was by far the most universally important—for the ASO as well as our colleagues throughout the entire orchestra “industry.”

Two years ago we decided that we would not allow the Orchestra to move backwards in size, take-home pay, healthcare, or weeks, and that our restoration had to trump any effort to impose a “new model,” like tying complement to the success of a particular fundraising campaign, with the number and specific positions of players determined by management rather than the art or its artists. We set about to protect our world-class orchestra, by educating donors and the public about what a world-class orchestra is and how important is its preservation, by fostering relationships that could help craft an early and peaceful settlement, and by preparing for the worst-case scenario that the WAC/ASO’s 2012 behavior sadly forced us to expect.

It will take a long time to recover from the harm the WAC/ASO’s tactics have wrought: it hurts that many musicians had to take other work to survive and are still not back among us. Thanks to the help of all of ICSOM’s members, the professionals who assisted and guided us (including counsel Liza Hirsch Medina and PR expert Randy Whatley, whose close coordination with each other and our committee was vital), and the ongoing support of volunteer groups, the Atlanta Symphony is now poised to move forward again. We know now from bitter experience what we have been advised for many years, that the preparation of these past two years needs to be our “new normal.” The work that went into preserving our contract was as subtle and important as the work that built and melded a complement of musicians into a great orchestra with its own distinctive sonic—and people—power. 

## Global Threat Needs Global Reaction *(continued)*

public or private, whatever the sector, from any obligation towards workers (minimum wages, social benefits, working conditions, compliance with health and safety standards etc.).

The Rome Opera management presents the outsourcing of its orchestra and chorus as a modern and efficient management scheme. Following this scheme, musicians would be encouraged to form a new, independent, self-financed entity (the term “cooperative” has been used), which would (or might) be later contracted to provide the service that has been so far an internal resource. It goes without saying that the financial sustainability of such an entity would be highly uncertain. What

is much more certain is the fact that its musicians, whether employed or contracted as independent service providers, would immediately face harsh competition with multiple ensembles established in countries with much lower standards (salaries, social protection, working conditions, cost of living).

The potential consequences on workers are already well known. In all likelihood, they would be forced to opt for a “status” of independent worker, which means an impossibility to benefit in practice from the protection recognized to workers by International Labour Organization (ILO) international conventions and the transposition thereof in national legislation. The FIM survey on the impact of competition rules on collective agreements, published in July 2013, examines the situation in this respect in a series of countries. In most cases, workers without an employment contract are de facto deprived of a number of fundamental rights, including in particular the right to be represented by a trade union and benefit from the protection of collective agreements, which are in this case regarded as price fixing between competing businesses.

Orchestra musicians are therefore facing a double challenge: the endangering of their orchestras as institutions when, for varying reasons, financial sustainability is at stake, and the (global) attack against their rights as workers by unscrupulous employers. We will not be able to tackle this double challenge unless we can rely on unfaltering solidarity and work relentlessly at all levels—local, national, and international—against these modern plagues.

Of course, social dialogue remains absolutely necessary at all levels. In May 2014, FIM and its sister federations (FIA and UNI-MEI) took part in a Global Dialogue Forum (GDF) at the ILO headquarters in Geneva, dedicated to the employment relationship in the media and culture sector. The conclusions of this GDF, which involved representatives from workers, employers and ILO Member States, are meant to be followed by concrete initiatives from all parties including the ILO Secretariat itself. Other consultations under the ILO umbrella are expected to be undertaken within the next 4 years, with a view to adopt, at a future stage, consensual guidelines or code of conduct on the characterization of the working relationship in the sector.

Beside this long-term approach, there is the immediate emergency: orchestras are on the verge of disappearing in Northern Ireland, Argentina, the US, Italy, Denmark... We deeply miss the artistic vision that wise and penetrating community leaders used to possess when they placed artistic excellence at the foundation of society. The International Orchestra Week that FIM organized last month was meant to awaken communities about attacks on orchestras that seem to be gaining ground every month. It is an opportunity to raise the profile and put forward the social and economical role of orchestras.

Our struggle is not only for those orchestras that are currently endangered. It is for all orchestras, including the well-established, healthy ones whose future could suddenly become uncertain tomorrow due to mismanagement, a drop in funding, outsourcing or otherwise.

More information on the FIM campaign is available on the campaign website: <http://www.stop-cultural-vandalism.org>

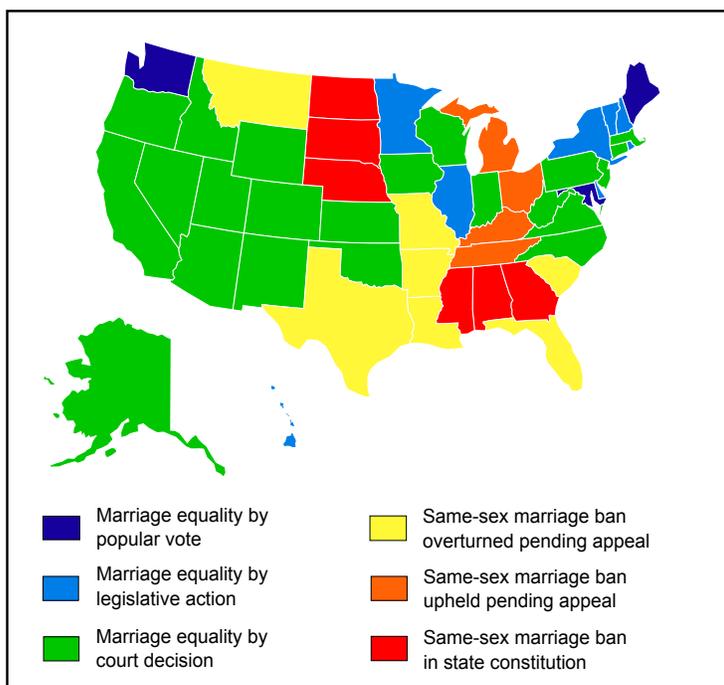
*The author is the General Secretary of FIM (International Federation of Musicians)* 

## The Long Road to LGBT Equality

How the DOMA Decision is Affecting the Workplace

By Susan Martin, ICSOM General Counsel

In June 2013, in *United States v. Windsor*, the Supreme Court struck down as unconstitutional a provision of the Defense of Marriage Act (“DOMA”) that defined marriage as between a man and a woman for federal law purposes (and applied to over 1,000 federal laws). While we’ve come a long way from “don’t ask don’t tell” in the legal arena, there is still a long way to go before there is complete equality under the law for gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender individuals. DOMA continues to reserve to the states the right to define marriage for all state law purposes and there have been a barrage of legal challenges to state law bans on same-sex marriage. Seven cases from five states had petitioned the Supreme Court to rule on the issue, but in October the Supreme Court declined to hear, and thereby let stand, rulings affecting five states—Indiana, Oklahoma, Utah, Virginia, and Wisconsin—holding that state law bans on same-sex marriage were unconstitutional. The high court’s refusal to decide the question had the ironic effect of deciding the question—bans



on same-sex marriage in dozens of states were struck down and numerous appeals courts refused to overturn decisions based on the Supreme Court’s decision not to hear any of the seven petitions seeking review. Most recently, the Supreme Court rejected a request to stay a ruling by a federal court in South Carolina striking down that state’s ban on same-sex marriage.

As of this writing, there are 35 states plus the District of Columbia that recognize same-sex marriage. (Of the 35 states where same-sex marriage is now legal, 24 were the result of court rulings, including in some of the 19 states that passed laws and/or constitutional amendments banning same-sex

marriage.) Only 11 states adopted same-sex marriage by legislation (8) or voter referendum (3). The total number of states allowing same-sex marriage would have been 39 if the November 6, 2014, ruling by the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals had not overturned decisions striking down bans on same-sex marriage in Ohio, Michigan, Kentucky and Tennessee. Several states including Louisiana (in which the trial court upheld the ban) and Michigan, Kentucky, Ohio, and Tennessee (in which an appellate court reinstated the ban) have filed petitions seeking review before the Supreme Court while others, including Kansas, have indicated they intend to seek review. The Supreme Court has complete discretion to decide to hear some or all of the cases although the conflict between the 6th Circuit and other courts is often viewed as a compelling reason to accept review. So while the issue could still be headed to the Supreme Court and the legal landscape is rapidly changing, at present there is a patchwork of state regulation to be aware of and, even if the right to same-sex marriage is upheld, there continue to be gaps in federal protection for LGBT individuals.

### The Good

At the workplace, perhaps the largest post-*Windsor* impact is in the area of employee benefits. Most—but not all—employee benefits under ERISA plans are affected. Generally, the rule is that a marriage that is lawful where celebrated (where it took place) determines marital status for all mandated pension benefit requirements, even if the state where the participant resides does not recognize the marriage. Excluded from ERISA protections are church and governmental pension plans. Same-sex spouses must be treated equally with opposite-sex spouses for pension purposes including, for example, with respect to: joint and survivor benefits; pre-retirement death benefits, certain benefits in the event of divorce, rollover distributions, etc. The effect of the *Windsor* decision also extends to COBRA (the right to continue health care coverage) and HIPAA, as well as FSA, HRA and HSA accounts. Many issues remain unanswered especially with respect to the extent of retroactive rights for persons who were lawfully married yet covered by plans that did not recognize same-sex marriage.

### The Bad

With regard to the right to be covered under a same-sex spouse’s health care plan, the news is not as good. Under the ACA, beginning on January 1, 2015, all qualified health insurance issuers must make same-sex coverage available to an employer’s group health plan. However, in a state where same-sex marriage is not recognized, there is no legal requirement for the employer to offer coverage for same-sex spouses under its health care or other insurance policy or under a self-insured plan. With regard to the Family and Medical Leave Act, the issue is still evolving. The Department of Labor has now issued proposed regulations to make the law of the jurisdiction where the marriage took place controlling—changing it from the current definition that uses the law where the employee resides to determine if someone is legally entitled to FMLA leave. But Social Security has a long way to go. It is finally recognizing same-sex marriage—but only if the state in which the person is domiciled also recognizes the marriage or allows the affected spouse to qualify as a spouse under the state’s law governing

inheritance without a will. Lawsuits against the Social Security Administration challenging the domicile rule have recently been brought. But for those musicians soon approaching Social Security age, the safest course is to be domiciled in a state that recognizes same-sex marriage.

### Other Laws That Could Help

In states where same-sex marriage is not legal, other laws may help persuade employers to permit all married couples, same-sex or not, to be covered under health care plans and to receive other employment benefits. Cases have been brought challenging denials of benefits to same-sex couples who were married in other states under federal or state discrimination laws. In one such case, a man married in a state where same-sex marriage was legal, sought to add his spouse to his health plan in a state where same-sex marriage was not legal. He was not permitted to add his spouse until January 2014 when the plan changed as a result of a new collective bargaining agreement. He then brought suit under ERISA and under Title VII, the law that prohibits sex discrimination in employment. He argued that because he was a male married to a male he was denied the benefits of employment that a similarly situated female employee who was married to a male would receive. The court has refused to dismiss the case and has allowed it to proceed. More cases like this one have been or will be brought. Unless employers provide equal benefits to same-sex and opposite-sex married couples, they too could be subject to suit or ultimate liability. Musicians should make this clear in bargaining.

### Additional Issues

Even in states that recognize same-sex marriage, application of the changes to the law can be complicated. In some cases, pension plan terms may have to be amended. Contribution limits in Health Savings Accounts may have to be adjusted. And the form of benefit election in a pension should be reviewed. Orchestra members should be given notices to understand and protect their rights. For example, in the area of defined pension benefits, spousal consent is required to elect something other than a “joint and survivor” form of benefit. The IRS has indicated that if a person intends to designate someone other than their same-sex spouse (such as a child) to receive benefits and dies before providing a new designation showing spousal consent, their intended designation could be void. Musicians in a same-sex marriage should check to make sure that all of their beneficiary designations are in compliance with recognition of their marriage. A participant who is now married under the plan’s rules but wasn’t recognized as married before, might have to complete new designation forms. HR personnel should be alerted to these issues as well. Plan and insurance contracts should be reviewed by the committee and union to make sure they comply.

### Domestic Partners

Another potential employment issue that could arise involves what happens with domestic partner benefits. While a health or pension plan may now be required to cover same-sex married spouses if it provides benefits to any spouses, a requirement to continue to provide domestic partner benefits to unmarried partners is less clear in states where same-sex

marriage is now legal. While there may be tax and other incentives for same-sex couples to marry, it hardly seems prudent to require existing domestic partner couples to now marry in order to qualify for benefits. Musicians may want to review this issue and address it in bargaining.

### Possible Impact of Claims Based on Religion

The Supreme Court’s 2014 5-4 decision in the Hobby Lobby case has been some cause for concern in this area. In that case, the Court upheld the right of a Chapter S corporation under the Religious Freedom Restoration Act to refuse to provide an employee health care plan that included contraceptives based on the religious beliefs of its owners. However, under the ACA, the Obama administration had granted waivers to religious non-profit corporations, demonstrating to the majority of the Court that the need for the regulation was not compelling. The same facts would not apply in a case seeking to maintain an unconstitutional or statutory prohibition on the recognition of same-sex marriage

### Sexual Orientation Protection Still Falling Short

While the issue of marriage equality has made great strides in the benefits area, the law still falls short on banning discrimination in the workplace on the basis of sexual orientation. Recently, by executive order, President Obama prohibited sexual-orientation and gender-identity discrimination among federal contractors, and the Supreme Court has held that sexual stereotyping and same-sex sexual harassment is prohibited by Title VII. But most courts have held that sexual orientation discrimination—which is not specifically mentioned in the statute—is not protected under Title VII. Given the recent election, action on a bill to expressly ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and sexual identity seems unlikely in the near term, although one passed the Senate in November 2013 and was blocked in the House. Nevertheless, the EEOC has been very active in this area and has processed charges and filed a number of cases on behalf of LGBT individuals. Many states and municipalities also ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. So at least while a democratic administration remains in office, there is hope on the horizon that the combination of state and local laws that outlaw sexual orientation discrimination and a pro-active EEOC will continue to make progress.

### The Collective Bargaining Agreement

Many collective bargaining agreements contain non-discrimination clauses and may also define entitlements to benefits. These should be reviewed and updated to include prohibitions against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity and to make sure that they do not limit benefits to spouses in opposite sex marriages. If there are policies in place covering harassment, they should also be reviewed with an eye toward extending explicit protections for sexual orientation and gender identity if they do not already do so. 

*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.

## Orchestra Newslets

### Newark Early Strings Program to be Replaced

The Newark Early Strings Program (NESP), a community outreach initiative of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra in collaboration with the Newark Public Schools, is closing down after 14 years of service, due to reallocation of funding by the Newark School District. Undaunted, the NJSO has just announced a new educational program, to be named Music Advancement for Newark-Area Youth (MANY).

NESP taught violin to randomly-chosen students—300 third, fourth, and fifth graders per year—in a modified-Suzuki group setting several times a week, employing Newark Public School teachers, with NJSO members coaching both the NPS teachers and the students themselves on a regular, ongoing basis.

Since the program's inception in 2000, NESP has served nearly 4,000 students and 30 music educators in Newark, and represented a \$2 Million investment by the NJSO.

Columbia University Teachers College followed and researched NESP during its first eight years, culminating in a report published in 2009. The report found that the program students, initially lagging behind academically compared to students in school systems in more prosperous New Jersey communities, rapidly caught up to their suburban peers. To quote the report, "Consistently, [Early Strings] students have outperformed their schoolmates on year-end achievement tests. This result, based on gain scores, appears to further cement the relationship between string instruction and academic achievement." The report also cited "the ability to concentrate, the capacity to cooperate with others, and self-confidence" as further benefits of the program.

The new MANY initiative will be a joint venture between NJSO and the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), which is also NJSO's home concert venue. NJSO will provide a training orchestra that aims to serve as an "on ramp" to bring students into the NJSO Academy Youth Orchestras—a long-running program coached by NJSO musicians. NJPAC will sponsor a symphonic band, and also a piano lab and music theory instruction (partly online) through the Berklee College of Music.

The NJSO looks forward to the success of these new endeavors.

### Major Gift in Grand Rapids

Grand Rapids Symphony has received a gift of \$1 million from the estate of west Michigan philanthropist Peter M. Wege, who passed away in July. Wege, the former CEO of Steelcase, Inc. and a long time supporter of the arts, also bestowed \$1 million on the Grand Rapids Ballet and \$1 million on the St. Cecilia Music Center. He also underwrote the GRS's 2007 Grammy-nominated CD, *Inventions and Alchemy*, as well as the DVD that accompanied that project.

### Boston's New Music Director Takes the Helm

Latvian conductor Andris Nelsons, appointed the Boston Symphony Orchestra's 15th Music Director in May of 2013, began his tenure with a gala concert of opera excerpts played to an expectant and very excited full house. The concert was described by the orchestra's new President of the Board of Trustees, Paul Buitenhuis, as "one of the great evenings of the BSO in my experience," an auspicious beginning to what all are hoping will bring new life to an orchestra that has recently lacked leadership. After almost three Director-less years (with many injuries, surgeries, and absences ultimately forcing James Levine to resign), the orchestra is happily embracing Nelsons, whose musical energy and eagerness to build on the BSO's illustrious history of great performance has proven infectious.

Nelsons' three-week stint in November highlighted some extraordinary new, recent, and returning works of great merit, giving the Boston musical community a glimpse of his programming interests—Sofia Gubaidulina's *Offertorium*, of which the BSO made the world premiere recording, and Brett Dean's new trumpet concerto being prime examples. An extraordinary program including works by John Harbison and Latvian composer Erik Esenvalds, *Sinfonia Concertante* by Prokofiev, and Rachmaninov's *The Bells* capped Nelsons' first weeks. He will lead the orchestra for ten weeks in this, his inaugural year, and will give the BSO 12 weeks in subsequent seasons.

Nelsons will resign from his position with the City of Birmingham Orchestra in England in order to concentrate on his work with the BSO.

### Momentous Season in San Antonio

The San Antonio Symphony is celebrating its 75th-anniversary season, as well as the long-anticipated move into its new home at the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts. The first event in the new hall (a state-of-the-art facility built within the footprint of San Antonio's Municipal Auditorium) was a gala concert with Renée Fleming, featuring the *Four Last Songs* of Richard Strauss, three of which received their American premiere by Kirsten Flagstad and Max Reiter on the very same spot with the San Antonio Symphony in 1950.

Also this season, the SAS has commissioned and will premiere fourteen "American Preludes" to highlight the anniversary. Each classics subscription concert in 2014-2015 will open with the premiere of a brief prelude, including new works by Michael Daugherty, Aaron Jay Kernis, Robert X. Rodriguez and Doug Balliett (formerly Assistant Principal Bass of the SAS). 2014-2015 also marks the San Antonio Symphony's return to performing fully staged operas after a nearly 30-year hiatus; a production of *Salome* in collaboration with the new Opera San Antonio will be a part of our 2015 Strauss Festival.

The SAS has also received a \$1 million matching gift from Charles Butt, Chairman and CEO of the H-E-B grocery chain (headquartered in San Antonio). As a result of the gift, the SAS has been able to make all of its Young People's Concerts and Family Concerts free of charge to all audiences, as well as ensuring that 10% of each subscription concert's seats will also be offered free of charge to area students.

## Global Academy Unveiled

The New York Philharmonic recently announced details about its Global Academy program, which will start with the full orchestra in residence for 10 days in Shanghai during July 2015. Members of the orchestra will also travel to Shanghai three times per year in addition to the full orchestra's residency, to give masterclasses, private lessons, and joint performances with the students. The Academy will also include a similar partnership with the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara. During the year, Academy students from Santa Barbara and Shanghai will travel to New York to work with members of the orchestra, and perform alongside the musicians of the full orchestra. The Philharmonic is looking to possibly expand the Academy to South America, Europe, Asia and the Middle East. Although the purpose of the Global Academy is to train orchestral musicians around the world while making the Philharmonic's "brand" more visible, another goal is to establish relationships with potential donors.

A gut renovation of Avery Fisher Hall is planned to begin June 2019, which would put the orchestra out of the hall for two seasons, with a projected cost of \$500 million. Lincoln Center recently announced an agreement with the heirs of Avery Fisher to drop his name from the hall, allowing the resale of the naming rights as a fundraising incentive.

## New Music Director in Jacksonville

The Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra opened its current season under the baton of new music director designate, Courtney Lewis, the eighth music director of the orchestra in its 65-year history. The program included two clarinet concertos celebrating the 40th-anniversary season of principal clarinetist (and Local 444 President) Peter Wright. Lewis comes to Jacksonville after four years with the Minnesota Orchestra and is currently serving as assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic. He was also music director and co-founder of Discovery Ensemble chamber orchestra in Boston and a Dudamel Fellow with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. The decision to hire Lewis was unanimous among members of the search committee and enthusiasm for what Lewis will bring to the orchestra and the community is very high among musicians, board members, staff, and patrons. As the symphony's concertmaster Philip Pan put it, "He's really who we need here, both on and off the podium."

## Banner Night in Kansas City

The Kansas City Symphony (KCS) performed "The Star-Spangled Banner" for Game 6 of the 2014 World Series. The KCS had been scheduled to perform at Game 5 of the American League Championship Series but was not needed when the Royals swept the Orioles in four straight games.

Learning of the World Series invitation little more than 24 hours before game time, the KCS staff deserves special credit for handling every logistical detail with precision and ease. Special credit also goes to Debbie Newmark, SSD EMSD Director, and Pat Varriale, Bill Thomas and Mary Beth Blakey of the AFM West Coast Office for a very quick turnaround in utilizing

the AFM TV-Videotape Agreement. The personal attention of AFM International President Ray Hair was instrumental and much appreciated.

The brass and percussion sections have performed the SSB a few times for the Royals, most recently in September.



ICSOM President and KCS trumpeter Brian Rood said that in comparison, the World Series performance was "off the charts. To stand behind home plate with my colleagues of the Kansas City Symphony amid the sea of blue at the 'K', knowing that millions of people were watching us perform 'The Star-Spangled Banner', was absolutely exhilarating! I was asked if I was nervous. No, I was just excited and very proud of our Symphony, the Royals and Kansas City."

The Royals were kind enough to give the whole orchestra and staff terrific seats so that they could enjoy the game, especially the second inning.

## A Chi-fecta of Good News

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association has appointed Jeff Alexander to the position of President, effective January 12, 2015, succeeding Deborah Rutter. Alexander currently serves as the President and CEO of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra (VSO), a position he has held for 14 years, with additional years of experience before his time with the VSO, including 16 years with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.

The Chicago Symphony just returned from its fifth tour to Europe with Music Director Riccardo Muti. This was the 32nd European tour and the 58th international tour in the Orchestra's history. The tour included the orchestra's debuts in Warsaw, Poland and Geneva, Switzerland, along with a concert in Luxembourg, two concerts in Paris and a week-long residency in Vienna with four performances at the Musikverein. Two of the performances at the Musikverein included Verdi's *Requiem* with the Wiener Singverein.

The tour follows the fourth consecutive year of record-breaking ticket sales and fundraising for the orchestra, which received two of the largest gifts in its history, totaling \$32 million. A gift of \$17 million from the Zell Family Foundation will help support the position of music director in perpetuity and a \$15 million gift from the Negaunee Foundation endows the Institute for Learning, Access and Training as the Negaunee Music Institute at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. 

## ASAP — A Brief History

By Holly Slocum, ASAP Secretary  
and Paul Gunther, ICSOM Member at Large

In Norfolk, VA, in 2009, at their pre-conference planning session, the ICSOM Governing Board heard a presentation and began a discussion that would ultimately result in the formation of the American Symphonic Advocacy Project (ASAP). We introduced the Governing Board to Mark Lindsay, Director of the Healthcare and Pharmaceutical Division of The Livingston Group, a lobbying firm in Washington, DC. Lindsay is an attorney who previously served on President Obama's transition team and in President Clinton's White House as Assistant to the President for the Office of Management & Administration. (Lindsay's full bio is at [http://www.livingstongroupdc.com/bio\\_lindsay\\_mark.php](http://www.livingstongroupdc.com/bio_lindsay_mark.php)). We felt he was the perfect person to bring to ICSOM because in addition to Lindsay's professional CV, which includes deep connections to public officials and years of advocacy experience, he happens to love symphonic music.

As the Governing Board described the issues that symphonic musicians were facing—declining ticket sales in some markets, claims that audiences were aging, pressure on some managements to decrease pay and reduce contracted numbers of highly trained musicians—we began a discussion. What might it be like to have a national organization that specifically advocates for symphonic musicians throughout the country, and in many communities? One whose primary purpose is to educate board members and policy makers about the economic and cultural value of the arts and symphonic music in particular? This organization would need to be able to raise money for projects, and devote time, energy, and resources to grand ideas. And thus what was to become the American Symphonic Advocacy Project (ASAP) was born.

Chair Bruce Ridge and President Brian Rood asked Lindsay to chair the nascent organization and both Ridge and Rood agreed to serve on ASAP's initial board of directors along with Norbert Nielubowski (Minnesota) and Dr. Lawrence Mitchell, a lawyer, educator and friend of Lindsay.

After a name was chosen for the organization, ASAP was registered as a 501(c)(3) non-profit, the appropriate bylaws and legal documentation were completed, and the volunteer board spent time discussing how best to be relevant to the symphonic community. Slocum spoke several times with Michael Kaiser at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts about ASAP, and arranged a meeting where she introduced Kaiser and Lindsay. Kaiser agreed to serve as an advisor to ASAP.

During the first and second years, Lindsay met individually with a number of community leaders on behalf of various symphonies but it was usually after a crisis point had been reached. The ASAP Board discussed at length how to assist musicians to develop advocacy skills, so they can form relationships with leaders in their own communities, and during a sudden crisis musicians (and their consultants) will find their pleas more effective, and their community leaders and legislators far more receptive to the musicians' viewpoint.

In ASAP's second year the quarterly Advocacy Training Calls were instituted. Lindsay, ably assisted by ICSOM's favorite PR guru, Randy Whatley, began to offer regularly scheduled

conference calls, each for a dozen or more musicians from various orchestras around the country to ask questions and to discuss what was happening in their orchestras, and how best to handle those situations. These calls have proven very popular and very helpful. In the words of Brad Mansell (Nashville), "I learned so much from just listening to my colleagues from other orchestras on how they are getting their members, especially the younger players, involved in advocacy projects such as web sites and social media."

There was consensus that a board made up mostly of musicians was unlikely either to represent the community well or to raise money as effectively as we hoped. In August 2014, at the end of the second year, six new members joined Nielubowski and Mitchell on the ASAP Board of Directors, while Ridge and Rood rotated off the Board in order to focus their efforts more directly toward ongoing ICSOM activities. The new Vice-Chair of ASAP is Paula Bresnan Gibson, an attorney and the author of *Voices from a Chorus*, about the Washington, DC, Gay Men's Chorus. The new Treasurer is Lee Henderson, a Minneapolis attorney who was instrumental in assisting the musicians during their sixteen-month lockout. Other new board members include Dave Adams, a retired naval aviator and CEO of Healthcare Pays; and Erika Laws, Founder and President of Boswell Communication in DC. The two new musician board members are ICSOM Member-at-Large Jennifer Mondie (National) and George Brown (Utah). Slocum's background is as a consultant and fundraiser, and she will continue to serve as ASAP Secretary.

Last year the ASAP Board identified one particular partnership program from several possibilities as the one for ASAP to focus on, and the goals for 2014-15 include initiating it and setting it up to run in at least three states. Called *Voices of Valor*, it is a therapeutic program to assist veterans with reintegration into civilian life by addressing issues of stress and trauma through the creative use of music and songwriting. The program has a history of delivering measurable results as well as being cost-effective. The ASAP Board is currently fundraising in order to implement this program using symphonic musicians beginning in 2015.

At present, ASAP is developing a logo and a website. The quarterly Advocacy Training Calls will continue. And we plan to add several additional board members.

ASAP will hold our mid-year meeting in Washington, DC, in early December 2014. There, board members will attend an annual event sponsored by the Rock and Roll Caucus of the United States Congress. Lindsay is seeking ways to increase the exposure of musicians as prominent members of American culture, and by inviting the ASAP Board to this event, he is hoping to encourage a relationship between ASAP, members of Congress, and The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland (on whose Board he serves). During the mid-year meeting ASAP Board members will also attend an open rehearsal of the National Symphony conducted by Helmuth Rilling, with a backstage tour of the Kennedy Center.

ASAP is planning its annual meeting to occur just prior to the ICSOM Conference in Philadelphia, with the intention that ASAP board members might be able to meet ICSOM members and hear some speeches and presentations. The more the ASAP Board members can engage with musicians and learn about

the issues that are important to musicians, the more effective advocates they can become.

The ASAP Board looks forward to working with the other groups who also support musicians and especially welcomes and invites your input—there is much work to be done. If you have ideas or questions for ASAP please feel free to contact ASAP Secretary Holly Slocum at [hslocum19@gmail.com](mailto:hslocum19@gmail.com). 

## Together Again

By Mark Shuman

“Do you believe in miracles?” was the phrase used when the US Hockey team won the most improbable victory during the 1980 Winter Olympics. That members of the **New York City Opera Orchestra** just completed a week-long tour in Japan brings to mind the same sense of astonishment and accomplishment.

Thirteen months ago NYCO filed for bankruptcy and was left for dead. But the orchestra, though depleted in nearly every sense except the musical one, has tried to remain together as a unit.

On November 7 we boarded a plane at JFK taking us to Japan to perform two concerts, one in Nagoya and one in Natori, a small town near Sendai. Natori is in Tohoku, the region that was devastated by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami.

Our trip was short and intense. In eight days we managed 27 hours of flights, five hours of bullet trains, five and a half hours of bus rides, four rehearsals, two performances, many hours waiting for said planes, trains and buses, checking in and out of three hotels, and two 14-hour time changes.

This brief tour was an opportunity to play with our dear friend, Maestro Atsushi Yamada, in support of Project Hand in Hand, an organization devoted to organizing “international performances to call for the continued and extensive support of Japan’s long-term recovery efforts and to express gratitude for the warm support that has already been given from all around the world.”

Through Project Hand in Hand, Maestro Yamada has for the past three years brought children’s choruses from Tohoku to New York, where they performed with the NYCO Orchestra. This time we were going to perform with them in their home.

The repertoire was Tchaikovsky’s Fifth Symphony, a work we all knew, but had certainly never performed as a group, and Orff’s *Carmina Burana*, which we had played with Maestro Yamada and the Japanese children’s choruses at Lincoln Center’s Rose Hall in March of 2014.

When NYCO toured Japan in 2005, we performed in Nagoya in the Theater of the excellent Aichi Performing Arts Center. This time we played in the Concert Hall of the same Center—a large, bright, open space.

The concert hall in Natori was smaller with warm, excellent acoustics. But of much more importance and significance, we were told that after the tsunami it was home to 400 families for six months. We knew that our concert there was going to be the emotional center of this short tour. Learning of the vital role this hall played in so many lives raised our own already heightened emotional commitment.

As one might imagine, under the very best of circumstances,

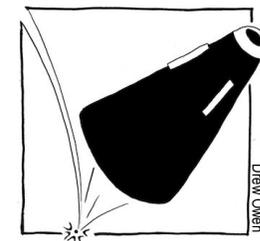
organizing and executing an orchestra tour is a mammoth task. Attempting to arrange one with no staff is beyond monumental and our thanks and appreciation must first and foremost go to David Titcomb, our personnel manager, without whose patience, trust and experience nothing would have happened. That the same appreciation must go to Maestro Yamada and the tiny volunteer staff of Project Hand in Hand is without question.

Our opera company is still bankrupt and out of business, and as an orchestra we are together only rarely. But we were doubly rewarded on this trip—playing together again as an orchestra, and bringing comfort through music-making to an area that has experienced so much sorrow as well as to ourselves. 

## Dropping the Mute

by Peter de Boor, Editor

When I joined the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra in 1997, the AFM-EPF benefits multiplier stood at \$4.14, and our orchestra’s contribution rate was 7.5%. Our Orchestra Committee chair regaled me with his perspective that our pension was a fantastic benefit, and I agreed with him. Two and a half years later, the multiplier was up to \$4.65, and I was comfortable in the knowledge that



my retirement was taken care of, with no further action necessary on my part.

We all know the story of what came next—multiplier reductions step-by-step down to \$1. Our orchestra committee negotiated several contribution increases (up to its current level of more than 12.5%), first to take advantage of the great benefit, then to make up for

that benefit’s diminution. Should I continue to be complacent about my retirement?

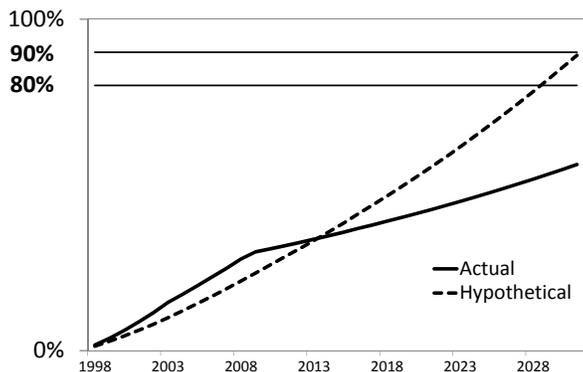
Financial self-help books and online advisors often discuss how much money you need for retirement, and many will frame it in terms of what proportion of your final salary you need to maintain your lifestyle. Ranges of 80-90% are quite commonly cited. One of the advantages of a defined-benefit plan like the AFM-EPF compared to defined-contribution plans such as a 403(b) is the knowledge of how much benefit you will derive in the future. Once you have vested, you can find out (either with a calculator or with the help of the AFM-EPF website) the monthly payment you will receive in retirement based on contributions already made. And it is not complicated to factor in the benefit from anticipated future contributions.

I recently ran a calculation of just such a number, for a hypothetical member of our orchestra, using our current CBA (and conservative estimates of future wage increases beyond its term) to predict future contributions. Self-centeredly, this hypothetical person began work in 1997 and will retire in 2032, but she only makes the minimum annual guarantee, and she never earns seniority. (She is also single.) The twist is that I ran the calculation twice—once based in reality, the other in a halcyon world where the benefit multiplier remained at \$4.14, but our contribution rate also remained fixed at 7.5%. Here are

(continued on page 12)

**Dropping the Mute** *(continued)*

the results, showing the cumulative annual pension benefit at retirement as a proportion of final salary:



This chart justifies my complacency in 1997, with a hypothetical retirement income of 90% of final salary. It is also a personal call to action in 2014, with an actual projected retirement income of only 61% of final salary. Currently 73% of ICSOM orchestras participate in the AFM-EPF, and their average contribution rate is about 8.5%. Even with our much higher rate, I'm unlikely to reach the recommended level of retirement income from the AFM-EPF alone. To do so, I would need a contribution rate closer to 25%, according to my calculations, about double the current rate.

At the annual ICSOM conference, the state of the AFM-EPF has been a perennial topic, at least since 2008 when I became

a delegate. In view of the diminished multiplier, should orchestras be bargaining additional contributions to the AFM-EPF or shoring up their pensions in other ways, such as an employer match on 403(b) contributions? I think we should be having open discussions about these issues, in the context of balancing the needs of the many against the needs of the few. I'm confident that just this type of discussion was at play recently in Atlanta, where the impact on other orchestras of a possible capitulation to management's demands on the orchestra complement was surely part of the conversation.

One thing that is not in dispute, however, is that ultimately you are responsible for your own retirement. There are well-publicized personal savings vehicles available to you to supplement whatever pension plan you have at your workplace. Those of you, like me, whose orchestras participate in the AFM-EPF, should be making use of them. And even those who have a private plan that is currently in good shape should not be complacent. As history shows, the justification for that complacency can simply vanish.

ICSOM bylaws provide that dues are late after December 31. If your orchestra has not yet sent in your dues payment, please do so as soon as possible. Thanks for your support!

Michael Moore, ICSOM Treasurer



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF SYMPHONY AND OPERA MUSICIANS

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