

Senza Sordino

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HEAR TODAY — GONE TOMORROW

The auditory sensations that brought us to a career in music could themselves cause the end of that career. Excessive exposure to the raw material of our profession—sound—can cause severe and possibly permanent hearing damage. It can happen gradually over a lifetime of repeated exposure, or suddenly after a single high-decibel incident.

Being a musician is a tricky business, a bit like being a lion tamer, where the performer must get close enough to his fellow performers to develop a rapport, but not so close that he could be harmed. Some musicians, such as piccolo and percussion players, are simultaneously the perpetrators and the victims of potentially destructive sounds. Most bassoonists and violists had no idea what dangerous instruments they had chosen until they got into an orchestra and discovered that their choice of instrument had placed them in the direct line of fire of the trumpets and trombones.

Aural assaults can happen to anyone in the music business. Unbearable sound levels are especially serious in enclosed areas like orchestra pits, but the problem can also be severe for orchestras on stage and even outdoors, where cannonfire in the *1812 Overture* and powerful amplification systems are regular offenders. Rock and show musicians, who almost always work in an environment of electrically amplified sounds, are under constant bombardment.

Most of the acoustic instruments that normally populate symphony orchestras produce less amplitude and are a bit safer, but that fact can lull unsuspecting symphony musicians into complacency and leave them even more vulnerable to assault by those few instruments that are not so safe. Potentially hazardous instruments are the ones that make especially high or loud sounds—mainly trumpets, trombones, percussion, piccolo, and any sound that is electronically generated or amplified.

Many orchestras now have some kind of hearing protection language in their contracts, including Florida Philharmonic, San Antonio, New York City Ballet, Pacific, Savannah, Nashville, San Francisco Ballet, Oregon, Utah, Grant Park, Charleston, San Jose, Long Beach, Calgary, and Jacksonville. Most such contract clauses involve management's duty to provide earplugs, provide Plexiglas shields of various sorts, and/or control the sound levels and positioning of speakers and monitors when electronic amplification is used. Many contracts provide for consultation with the orchestra committee or other musicians' committees in assessing and addressing excessive decibels. The particular wording of these contract clauses can be found using the "Database Lookup" feature on the AFM-BBS (212-768-2525).

Earplugs, Risers, and Sound Shields

"Earplugs for musicians are like mittens for typists," said Art Linsner, President of the Theatre Musicians Association. The better earplugs now available (such as the ER-15 and ER-25, made by Etymotic Research, custom-fitted, at \$119.00 per pair) allow a softer but more natural sound to reach the eardrum, perhaps feeling more like surgical gloves for typists. But with just about every kind of earplug, achieving a sufficient volume reduction entails some degree of discomfort, inconvenience, or musical disorientation. Nevertheless, earplugs are just about the only option for percussion and piccolo players who cannot put an external barrier or a safe distance between their ears and their own instruments. Headset monitors have become popular in pops concerts as replacements for loud and unsightly floor monitors, and they can sometimes provide hearing protection as ear coverings, but beware: if the headset volume is turned too high—as is often the case—it can actually contribute to the problem rather than to the solution.

Risers, while thought to be helpful in directing loud sounds from the back of the orchestra up and over the heads of those in front, can sometimes actually make matters worse. Trumpet and trombone players often play at a slightly downward angle, which means that on risers, instead of blowing into the back of the player in front as they would on a flat surface, they blow directly into the head of that person. For risers to truly achieve the desired effect they would need to be very high, which could create more problems with orchestra balance and cross-communication.

Sound shields, usually made of Plexiglas, a transparent acrylic material, come in two forms—large sheets, several feet square, standing vertically on the floor between offending instruments and

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offended players; and smaller personal baffles, positioned behind the player's head, affixed to the chair or standing behind it. The regular use of some form of Plexiglas sound barriers has been reported in many orchestras, including Baltimore, Detroit, Honolulu, Indianapolis, Jacksonville, National, New Jersey, New York City Opera, New Zealand, Oregon, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, San Francisco Symphony, San Francisco Opera, San Francisco Ballet, San Jose, and Toronto.

The Acoustishield, or "Buffalo Baffle" (so named because it was invented by Bernard Fleshler of the Buffalo Philharmonic), the prototype of the chair-attached model, is enhanced by dead air space between two winged sheets of Plexiglas forming a double layer of protection which partially wraps around the player's head. Some orchestras have adapted this idea into a baffle that stands on its own

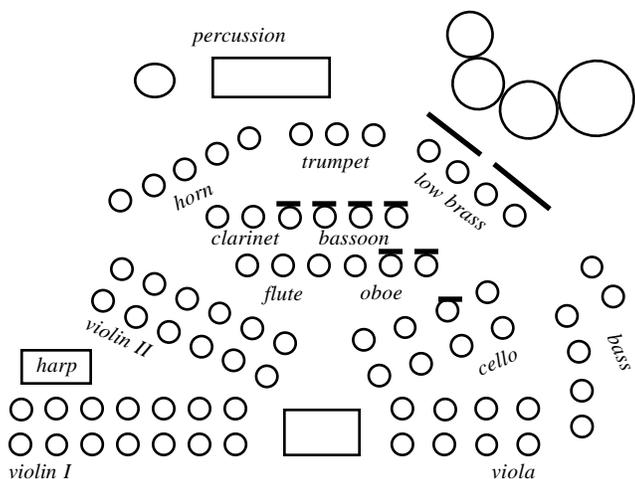
base behind the player's chair. Users of this type of baffle tend to agree that it does effectively cut out the piercing quality of a direct trumpet blast, but there is not a great deal of ambient noise reduction. Although not to the extent of earplugs, the shield also isolates the player acoustically and makes it harder to judge balance and tone during delicate musical passages.

The placement of shields, whether the large sheets or the behind-the-head kind, is also a significant factor. Brass and percussion players warn that if the shields are closer than about 5 to 10 feet from them, their sound is reflected back, creating for them the very safety hazard the shield was intended to prevent, and also a false impression of the loudness of those instruments to the players, conductors, and audience. Barrier shields are therefore most effective if they are placed closer to those needing protection and farther from the source of the sound.

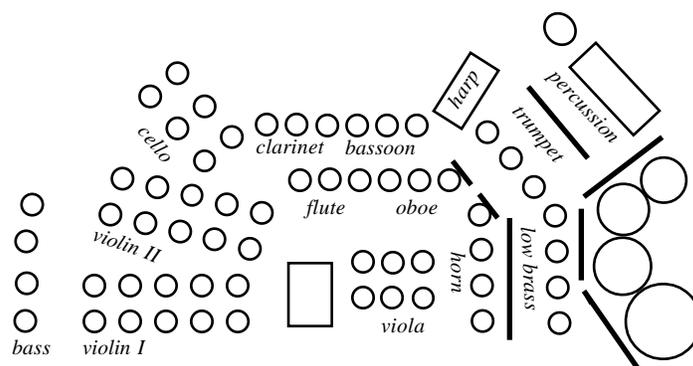
Stage Setup and Shield Placement In ICSOM Orchestras

— "Buffalo baffle" — Plexiglas sheet

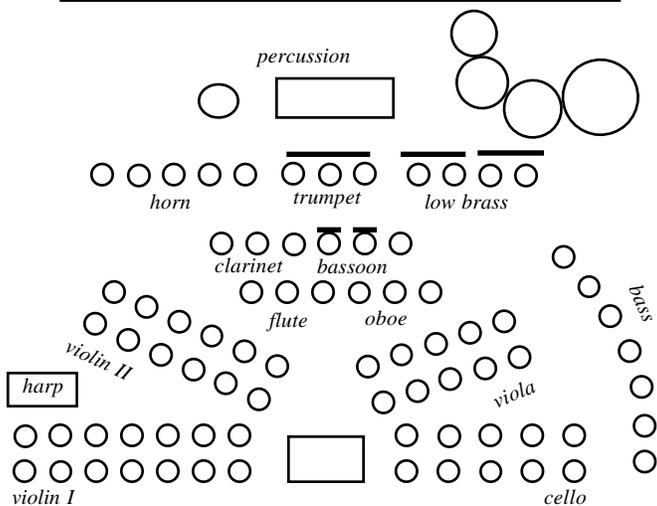
Notes: 1) For pops concerts, it is a common practice in many orchestras to enclose the drum set in Plexiglas. 2) Indianapolis – The Plexiglas sheet in front of the brass is normally used only for pops concerts. Occasionally first and second bassoon, second and third oboe, and some second violins also use individual shields.



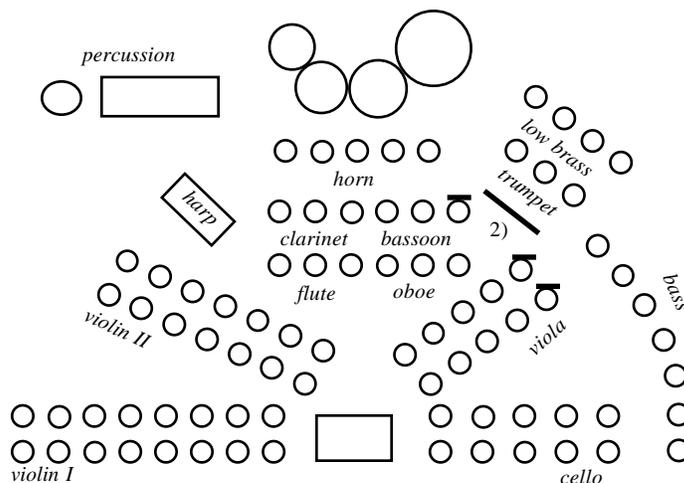
JACKSONVILLE SYMPHONY



NEW YORK CITY OPERA



HONOLULU SYMPHONY



INDIANAPOLIS SYMPHONY

Reflection vs. Absorption

Plexiglas devices, while effective for tempering proximate directional sounds, deflect the sound but do not significantly diminish it. Another approach to solving decibel problems, used most often in the pit, is the placement of absorptive materials such as foam, cloth drapes and carpeting. The drawback to this method is that often too much sound, or only certain frequencies, are absorbed, making it hard for musicians to hear each other and judge tone and balance. Such damping of the sound may cause musicians to instinctively play louder in an effort to hear each other, or to regain the now-absorbed frequencies in their tone, or to project more sound to the audience. Ironically, this method for protecting hearing can potentially aggravate muscular overuse injuries as musicians work harder to make more sound.

However, a new absorptive approach, now being tested in the pit of the St. James Theatre on Broadway, shows potential for reducing damaging sound levels while preserving the natural balances and timbres that the musicians intended. Absorptive panels, strategically placed in the pit as dictated by the architectural features of the particular theatre, absorb a significant amount of sound

evenly across the frequency spectrum. The level of sound going out to the audience is maintained by electronic enhancement, allowing relative comfort in the pit without sacrificing the power of the show. Preliminary reports from the musicians are positive. The newly negotiated provisions for health and safety in the Broadway collective bargaining agreement were the impetus for this acoustic experiment at the St. James.

Out of the pit, absorptive options may be more limited. For both the performers and the audience, the aural and visual expectations of an unamplified orchestra on stage are very different from those in the pit. When the orchestra on stage is the featured act, and there is not the desire or capability to use electronic amplification, sound absorption may be counterproductive.

Whether on stage or in the pit, the task in effectively treating sound problems lies in defining the parameters of the acoustic problem, agreeing upon the specific result desired from the acoustic treatment of the specific performance space, and then creating a

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The New York Philharmonic Supplemental Pension Fund

The New York Philharmonic supplemental pension fund was started in 1980 to help retirees whose pensions had been ravaged by inflation in the 1970s. What began as a token payment to some of the oldest retirees has now become a major source of income to many of our retired colleagues.

Our regular pension fund has always been a defined benefit plan in which the musician retires with a set pension and collects that same amount for his or her lifetime. The benefit was increased dramatically in 1985 from \$500 per year of service to \$800 per year of service. Many of our colleagues and their spouses have been blessed with a long life after retirement, but unfortunately are outliving the useful life of their pensions. We have several members and spouses receiving \$200 per year of service pensions and even one who retired in 1958 with \$90 per year of service. What the supplemental fund provides is a safety net—a minimum benefit that all retirees and survivors will receive. Right now that benefit is set at \$640 per year of service, so the player retiring in 1958 with \$90 per year of service receives an additional \$550 per year of service, and the player retiring in 1984 with a \$500 benefit receives an additional \$140 benefit. The near-term goal is to get everybody up to the 1985 level of \$800 per year of service.

The main source of income providing these extra payments are our open rehearsals. In 1980, we started with 6 open rehearsals, and that has now grown to 23-26 per season. In 1997 we took in \$157,000 net of expenses from 26 rehearsals. Ticket prices are a modest \$10 and will be increasing to \$12 next season. We also took in \$32,000 in contributions from other sources. In addition, there is \$250,000 in the fund, and we drew \$24,000 out of the principal last year to provide a total payment of \$213,000 to 40 musicians and survivors. Not bad for a program that got off to a shaky start.

Surprisingly, the main hesitation in 1980 was on the part of the orchestra. We were already playing four concerts every week and were not enthused about what we feared would become a fifth concert. After many heated meetings, the orchestra decided that as long as every nickel went to our retirees, it was a worthy cause. Management's main fear was that rehearsal ticket sales would cannibalize concert ticket sales, but it turned out that many people who enjoyed the rehearsal would also want to buy tickets to hear the concert. Some even became subscribers as the rehearsals brought in an audience who had never thought of coming to concerts before. Since tickets are so inexpensive, our main competition in the Lincoln Center area are the movie theaters. We try to keep the ticket prices a few dollars higher than a movie, but always within reach of students and senior citizens.

The three orchestra members who serve on the Pension Committee have complete control of the supplemental fund. After consulting with the Philharmonic's chief financial officer, we decide how the money is invested and how much to disburse each year. It is one of the few areas of orchestra business that committee members have direct control over, which for me, makes it the most satisfying committee to serve on. It warms my heart to receive letters from colleagues every year (some of whom retired before I was born!) thanking us for making their retirement more comfortable. I urge all younger players to familiarize yourself with pension matters and to serve on Pension Committees. We all like to think of ourselves as young, but we will all be depending on that fund in what will seem like the blink of an eye.

*Ken Mirkin
New York Philharmonic*

Report from the Chair

Even though the work of the Investigative Task Force has not yet resulted in changes to the bylaws of the AFM, the ITF process has been at the core of an increasingly heated discussion within the AFM about the direction our union will take in the next hundred years. Evidence of that can be seen in many locals' newsletters, as well as in the public writings of AFM officers. Two very interesting examples arrived in my mailbox recently.

Symphonic musicians read the *International Musician* from back to front, usually not getting beyond the "Help Wanted" ads. But about eight pages from the first such ad in the December *IM* was a most interesting opinion piece by AFM Secretary-Treasurer Stephen R. Sprague, "Union Membership Must Make the Difference for Jobbing Musicians." In his column, Sprague wrestles with a dilemma that is painfully familiar to the AFM: how can a labor union represent members whose workplaces are virtually impossible to organize in conventional ways?

This is not a new problem, of course; even when U.S. labor law was more favorable to the workers in the music industry than it is now, the AFM did not do a good job of actually organizing its members into bargaining units. Its philosophy was to maintain a closed shop wherever possible and to use that strength to impose conditions on both employers and musicians. Just why that system fell apart so completely could be the subject of a whole year of *Senzas*. But fall apart it did—which is one big reason why the AFM represents just one-third of the musicians it did 25 years ago.

Sprague's answer to the question of how to represent the jobbing musician is also the conventional wisdom in the AFM: serve them better in concrete ways that make a difference in their working lives. As he writes, "Membership must continue to be a worthwhile investment, where the benefits and services received are always equal to or greater than the costs of affiliation."

But Sprague asks some questions of his own. His first question is, "Is it time for [these] musicians to have an officially recognized AFM Players' Conference?" His second question is, "Does the AFM need to establish and maintain a new department" to deal with issues of concern to these musicians, analogous to the Symphonic Services and Electronic Media Services Divisions? And he asks, "Is it time for a change in the AFM's leadership structure . . . to provide that certain elected positions be nominated and elected exclusively by the various specific common-interest groups within the Federation (symphonic, electronic media, theatrical and casual-club daters, for example)?"

Well, of course, the answers are "yes." But the obviousness of the answers is itself revealing. Even the most cursory look at what most locals, and the AFM itself, provide for the jobbing musician will demonstrate that these musicians need better advocacy within the AFM than they've had so far. But if, as Sprague states, they are already 80% of the AFM's membership, what does it say about the AFM that they, too, need a players' conference? One would think that the majority would be the best-served group, not the worst-served. And, if this group of members has been unable to work the democratic process to their advantage so far, is a players' conference really going to help?

Would a department on the national level help the AFM serve these members better? Of course. But departments aren't much help if they're not funded, a lesson proven by the demise of the Public Relations department and the near-asphyxiation of Organizing & Education. The funding for SSD, EMSD and the Travel and Touring Department comes from work dues levied on musicians in the workplaces served by those departments. But there is no Federation work dues on casual/club date work anymore. The ITF Report proposed imposing a flat Federation work dues on all live work—one of its more controversial proposals, and one that the ICSOM Conference declined to approve. But without its own dedicated source of funding, any new department will either be terminally underfunded or funded by diverting money from other departments—a solution that is clearly unacceptable to the existing Players' Conferences, all of whom have made eloquent and convincing pleas for full funding for their departments for badly needed programs.

And to Sprague's final question, the Unity Conference's answer is also "yes." But if we do "provide that certain elected positions be nominated and elected exclusively by the various specific common-interest groups within the Federation," as he proposes, why would we also need an IEB? Who do *they* represent? Certainly not the working musicians in the AFM. The IEB members are not elected by the working musicians, after all; they're elected by the local officers. It's hardly surprising that working musicians—regardless of workplace—are not very happy with the quality of the IEB's work and feel profoundly disenfranchised within the AFM.



A much different approach to solving the AFM's problems is advocated by two of the IEB's current members. Ken Shirk and Tim Shea recently published the second edition of "Observations from the Cheap Seats," a self-funded effort to promote what has become known within AFL-CIO think-tanks as the "organizing model" of unionism (as opposed to the "service model"). They write, "Growth for our union will only come if we move off the services and business trend and transform our union into an organizing union—one in which all working musicians collectively assert control over the music industry."

Admirable sentiments, to be sure, and not so different from some of what the ITF has proposed. But as one astute observer from Local 802 pointed out at the Unity Conference, stirring words about organizing, whether from the ITF or the Cheap Seats, are no substitute for resources. The kind of organizing that is left to do is both expensive and difficult. From where are the resources to come?

A hint is provided by Shea (who has announced his candidacy for the presidency of the AFM) and Shirk when they write, "If bargaining, administering and troubleshooting Local CBAs is handled competently at the Local level by Local officers and rank-and-file in an atmosphere of respect, trust, and cooperation, our Union will derive two huge benefits: 1) the ever-expanding need for CBA support resources will stop, and 2) the Federation can turn its attention to broader-based activities." And if wishes were horses, beggars would ride.

The reason for the existence of SSD and EMSD was the inability of locals to do precisely what Shea and Shirk say they *should*

do. Defunding those departments in order to do new organizing, which seems to be what they are suggesting, is not only a recipe for a political firestorm but is ultimately self-defeating. Symphonic and recording musicians, after all, are the groups that best exemplify the “organizing model” within the AFM, and have organized most effectively to deal with both their employers and their union. Is the AFM now going to punish them for having done such a fine job of organizing themselves by robbing their departments of the money needed to meet their legitimate trade union needs? That’s an interesting message to send to prospective members—not to mention current ones.

There is, of course, a third answer to the problem of how to serve those AFM members who don’t work under CBAs and probably never will. It’s not a good answer, but it is the one that the AFM as a whole has given implicitly for many years—simply don’t worry about serving them well, and let them leave. But that answer, as easy as it is to implement, does not serve the interests of us musicians who do work under CBAs, because it enlarges the already substantial pool of non-union workers who might someday decide, as some already have, that working in the music business is worth crossing a few picket lines.

Any attempts to help free-lance musicians take control of their workplaces, as we have taken control of ours, must not take away from already-organized musicians what they need from their union. Doing that would weaken the AFM, not strengthen it. Secretary-Treasurer Sprague is right: membership must indeed “make the difference.” But it must continue to make the difference for those musicians who work under CBAs as well as the rest of the AFM’s membership. They, too, have the right to expect that their membership in the AFM will be, as Mr. Sprague says, “a worthwhile investment, where the benefits and services received are always equal to or greater than the costs of affiliation.”

Robert Levine, ICSOM Chair

ARTS ADVOCACY DAY

Monday, March 15, 1999 and

Tuesday, March 16, 1999

Alfonso Pollard, AFM National Legislative Director, reports that the AFM will again join with hundreds of arts administrators and enthusiasts from across the country to lobby the U.S. Congress in support of publicly funded arts programs. This year the AFM will sponsor a special event entitled A Congressional Sing-A-Long for the Arts. This live performance/press event is scheduled for Tuesday, March 16, 1999 and will feature, among others, AFM brother Peter Yarrow (of Peter Paul and Mary).

Alfonso says, “I respectfully encourage AFM musicians to strongly consider making the pilgrimage to Washington to lobby the Congress. My office is open to suggestions from all of you and is indeed willing to schedule and facilitate visits with your Congressperson on the issues that are important to us.”

Orchestra Musicians Answer Union’s Call

It appears that the clarion call at the Unity Conference for working musicians to take a more active role in their union has been heard. Recent local union elections have produced an increase in the number of symphony, recording, and theatre musicians elected to union office and as Delegates to the AFM Convention, where they will have the power to vote on matters that could change the AFM.

The AFM Player Conferences, including ICSOM, are permitted by the AFM Bylaws (Art. 27 Sec. 4) to send delegations to the Convention. The ICSOM Chair and President are named in the ICSOM Bylaws as ICSOM’s Delegates to the AFM Convention. However, the Player Conferences have no votes at the Convention, nor may they nominate officers or participate in floor debate on the nominations, nor may they serve on any Convention committees. They are allowed to submit resolutions and speak on the issues, but not vote. Only Delegates representing the locals may vote.

As of December, a majority of the ICSOM Governing Board had been elected to represent their respective locals as Delegates to the 1999 AFM Convention: Stephanie Tretick from Pittsburgh, Michael Moore from Atlanta, David Angus from Rochester, Marsha Schweitzer from Hawaii, and Robert Levine from Milwaukee. Michael, David, Marsha, and Robert also serve as officers or board members of their locals.

ITF Adjusts Proposals to AFM

The Investigative Task Force, armed with the will of the Player Conferences as expressed at the Unity Conference, met in Portland in December to begin formulating joint resolutions for presentation to the AFM Convention in June 1999. More details on the resolutions will be forthcoming in future issues of *Senza Sordino* as the Convention approaches.

(HEAR TODAY—GONE TOMORROW: continued from page 3)

treatment strategy that is unique for that space. However, until such comprehensive analyses are done for each of the venues we play in, we are left with the traditional pragmatic solution to the decibel problem—putting as much distance as possible between the loud instruments and the rest of the orchestra and calling upon backup protection as needed from Plexiglas barriers and earplugs.

Background for this article came from previous issues of Senza Sordino (v16n4, v17n2, v23n5, v23n6, v30n4), The Pit Bulletin (Fall 1998), the International Musician (May 1998), Una Voce (Feb 1998, April 1998), medical journals, research papers, and earwitness reports from musicians in ICSOM, OCSM, and ROPA orchestras. Thanks to Dr. William Dawson, David Sternbach, Bill Dennison of Local 802, and acoustician Mark Ramsay for providing source material, comments, and bibliographies.

Professional Unions On The Rise

... In Academia

ADJUNCT PROFESSORS FIGHT BACK – College and university adjunct faculty, who now teach about half of the university courses in the U.S. and may comprise as much as 60% of the faculty, are professional counterparts of the part-time UPS workers who were the focal point of last year's successful Teamsters strike. The October 1998 issue of *Z Magazine* reports that university adjuncts earn as little as \$1,000 per course, and few have health or retirement benefits, job security, intellectual freedom, or involvement in the decision-making process of their institutions.

At an April 1998 labor conference at the City University of New York (CUNY), a new advocacy group for nontenured and adjunct faculty emerged which, in coalition with graduate teaching assistants and other student employees' groups, will seek to reverse the slide in academic working conditions. University administrators claim that tight budgets necessitate increased hiring of more adjuncts. However, flush state budgets and soaring endowments belie their claims. "I will believe them about the budget," said Brodie Dollinger of the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students, "when they hire the first part-time dean."

At the conference Cary Nelson, English professor at the University of Illinois, cautioned those who might still harbor illusions about winning concessions through moral persuasion. "Administrators will grant nothing on their own initiative," he said. "Asking them to look into the depths of their souls is to plumb the shallows. You will win what you take."

GRAD STUDENTS' RIGHTS UPHELD – For the fourth time, California's Public Employee Relations Board has ruled that graduate student instructors can negotiate with the University of California for a contract. The board ruled on December 11 that the graduate student instructors, tutors and special readers at UCLA had the legal right to bargain collectively under state law. The ruling came after a one-week strike at the eight UC campuses to protest the school's refusal to recognize the UAW-affiliated student employees union. – *AFL-CIO Work in Progress* 12/21/98

... In Health Care

DOCTORS – About 400 doctors working for the Amerihealth HMO in southern New Jersey have approached the NLRB seeking union representation. "The sole purpose of unionization is to improve the quality of care for patients who are subjected to managed care," said UFCW Local 56 President Anthony Cinaglia. "We are trying to bring medical care back into the hands of physicians." – *Allegro* (Local 802)

NURSES, PARAMEDICS – The Health Professionals and Allied Employees union is celebrating a trio of recent New Jersey wins. At Runnels Hospital in Union County, 70 registered nurses voted for representation. When the 17 paramedics from Pascack Valley Hospital in Bergen County voted to join HPAE, they became the first group of paramedics in the county to organize, and they join 500 registered nurses and technicians at the hospital already in

the union. In addition, 65 registered nurses and office staffers at the Bergen Community Blood Center voted to join HPAE. – *AFL-CIO Work in Progress* 12/21/98

... In Sports

On January 6 the six-month professional basketball lockout ended. Chris Sheridan of *The Associated Press* said, "The agreement was reached just 29 hours before the NBA Board of Governors was to vote on cancelling the remainder of the season. It came just before dawn, following an all-night bargaining session at NBA headquarters between commissioner David Stern and union director Billy Hunter. Each side made significant compromises to close the deal, but the owners clearly walked away with a much better agreement than the old one. The players, for their part, came away with their dignity intact and with more money for the non-superstars. 'Did we blink? I guess we both blinked,' Hunter said."

On June 30 the NBA locked out the basketball players, claiming the agreement with the players was "not working" because the players were getting too much (57%) of league revenue. In the new 6-year agreement, there is no revenue limit for the first three years, a 55% limit in years 4-6, and a 57% limit if the league exercises its option to extend the contract to a seventh year.

The Associated Press quotes players' agent Norman Blass, "When millionaires get into a bankroll battle with billionaires, millionaires lose. It becomes brinksmanship and the owners have more weapons than the players." Madison Square Garden president Dave Checketts indicated in October that NBA owners should learn from their baseball brethren and keep players out "as long as it takes."

But *SportsTicker* basketball editor Chris Bernucca looked at the other side of the coin, "With an unwillingness to participate in anything other than concession bargaining, Stern and the NBA owners have badly underestimated the unity and resolve of the players. Having spent the last decade marketing its stars, the NBA now painfully realizes what coaches and general managers have known for years—blemishes, warts and all, it's a players' league, and without players, owners own nothing."

"At its core, organized labor has always been a 'rights' movement. What are collective agreements, labor laws or even labor standards other than the codification of workers' rights? What is a union other than an organization built by workers to win rights, and the vehicle necessary for exercising those rights?

"The difference between having rights and being able to exercise them is not readily apparent. But in the same way that having a driver's license doesn't get you anywhere without the use of a car, it's important to understand that there is a difference between having rights and having what it takes to exercise them—a vehicle. Organized labor understands that rights are not self-actualizing. Collective agreements don't enforce themselves. Like muscles, rights will atrophy if they are not exercised. And like muscles, they are strengthened with use."

– Elaine Bernard in *The Nation*, September 21, 1998

Do Millionaires Need A Union?

Why do people who make millions of dollars join a union? Are they just greedy, ganging up on employers and the public, going on strike, to demand even more? Professional athletes, movie stars, airline pilots, and even some musicians are often accused of socially unjustifiable motives for their labor actions. So why do people who make a comfortable or better living seek union protection in their workplaces?

The professional basketball lockout is an interesting case in point. Although we are meant to think that it was about rich players wanting to get even richer, it was really about much more than that. It was about a management attitude that says, "We, the bosses, want to protect our wealth ahead of yours. We will decide how much, if any, of the profits that your labor makes for us will go to you after we have first taken what we want. We have the power to control this game. We will pull the plug on the season unless you do it our way." That stance is abuse of power, pure and simple, and it matters not a whit whether the victims are millionaire basketball players, sweatshop seamstresses, or symphony musicians.

Clerk: Am I to be kept on, sir?

Scrooge: How much are you paid?

Clerk: Five shillings, sir.

Scrooge: Will you stay on for four?

Clerk: Oh yes, thank you, sir!

— from the 1938 film *A Christmas Carol*

The reason for our disgust at this scene of 19th-century English labor relations has little to do with the amount of money involved in the transaction. It is possible that the clerk could still have lived comfortably on four shillings instead of five (although, given the crushing poverty of a typical Dickens working-class character, even five shillings was probably inadequate). The real stomach-turning issue in this dialogue is Scrooge's leveraging the clerk's job security against his acceptance of a unilaterally imposed pay cut, in total ignorance of and disregard for the clerk's legitimate needs and the quality and quantity of his work.

The clerk's cheery "thank you" in response to the pay cut was not an expression of gratitude, but of fear—fear of losing his job and fear of antagonizing an unfeeling master who would likely impose further cuts in retaliation, without warning and without any just rationale. The fact that Scrooge had the power to limit the clerk's choices to two deleterious and unacceptable alternatives and that the clerk, by himself, had no power to safely advance other fairer alternatives is the tyrannical and abusive social condition that created unions and the labor movement.

Labor relations are not about money. They are, just as the term implies, about relationships—the complete relationship between workers and their employers. How much an employee gets paid is only one of many facets to that relationship. Money is but one tool, albeit a popular and powerful one, that management uses to advance its cause in the fundamental battle of all labor relations—the battle to exercise power and secure control of the workplace.

HAPPY NEW YEAR



Severe Weather Warnings

Storm clouds are gathering again over San Diego, this time concerning the **San Diego Opera** contract negotiations. In late November, management declared an impasse in negotiations, bypassed the bargaining team, and mailed its version of a new contract directly to musicians. The union responded by filing unfair labor practice charges with the NLRB. The management's proposed contract contained many regressive provisions, eroding hiring and firing procedures, job security, and working conditions. The musicians interpret the Opera's hard line as its taking advantage of musicians left tired and economically vulnerable from the long battle to save the San Diego Symphony. The majority of San Diego Opera musicians also play in the San Diego Symphony.

Labor squalls also hit the East Coast and the free-lance orchestras in New York City, particularly the **New York Pops** and **The Little Orchestra Society**, whose December holiday concerts were cancelled due to contract disputes. There are 11 part-time union orchestras in and around New York City who normally coordinate their schedules and contract terms, so labor problems in one may ripple to the others, as well.

Fasten your seatbelts. Rough ride ahead.

All workers need money, of course, but whatever they are paid, they also need respect, a measure of autonomy and volition in carrying out their duties, safe and comfortable work environments, job security, long-term benefits like pension and health insurance, and a reasonable assurance that the value of their labor will be recognized and fairly rewarded. Not only do we need these things; we deserve them and have earned them, by virtue of our status as human beings with basic human rights, and also our status as the producers of the products that give the company we work for the funds and the reason to stay in business.

A basic principle of labor that working people often forget is that every dime of income a business derives from the sale of its products or services, whether that business is a basketball team, a symphony orchestra, a manufacturer, a college, or anything else, comes from the efforts of labor. Workers—not management, not the owners—are responsible for the company's value to the community, its profits, its very existence. Labor is owed compensation and respect in proportion to its contribution.

Marsha Schweitzer, Editor

Newslets

Unions win in U.S. Supreme Court. The union security clauses found in many collective bargaining agreements—the provisions that require workers who benefit from union contracts to join a union or pay appropriate union dues—were recently tested in the United States Supreme Court. In *Marquez vs. the Screen Actors Guild*, an actress challenged the contract that required her to pay union dues and initiation fees. In November the Court ruled in a unanimous 9-0 decision that union security clauses as presently worded do not violate the rights of workers. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor wrote that, though unions must notify workers they need not become full union members, this right doesn't have to be spelled out in the contract. This ruling by the Court does not change any existing law, and has no applicability in right-to-work states.



Rio is the new hideaway for music pirates. No, not Rio, the city, but Rio, the portable digital audio player, the hottest new technogadget on the block. *Newsweek* (12/14/98) reports that the Rio can store "about 30 minutes of near-CD quality music on its built-in 32MB memory card, in a format called MP3 that compresses large audio files to less than a tenth of their original size." The advent of more powerful new computers with huge hard drives, recordable CDs, affordable CD burners, and the availability of easy-to-use MP3 encoders downloadable from the Internet has led to an explosion of pirated music, both taken off the Internet and copied from CDs.

The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) sued Diamond Multimedia, producer of the Rio, petitioning the court to issue a temporary restraining order to keep Diamond from distributing the Rio in time for Christmas. But a federal judge lifted the restraining order, ruling that "since files cannot be copied from the Rio to another device, the Secretary of Commerce would probably find that the Rio complies with the 1992 Audio Home Recording Act."

The *San Francisco Examiner* reported that in 1997, the RIAA notified hundreds of websites that they were infringing copyrights and facing potential litigation. In December, the five largest labels—BMG Entertainment, EMI Recorded Music, Sony Music Entertainment, Universal Music Group and Warner Music Group—announced they would form a coalition to develop methods to protect copyrighted music on-line. Alan Saracevic of the *Examiner* wrote, "audio . . . is already a viable on-line product. Digital music files can be bought, sold or stolen with no physical product changing hands. As a result, the traditional music distribution model is facing revolutionary change."

The record labels want a digital audio delivery system in which devices like Rio play back only encrypted audio files, limiting unauthorized reproduction of the music. MP3.com president Michael Robertson objects, saying, "Security is restriction, which lessens the value to the user. It prevents them from using the music the way they want."



The *Chronicle of Philanthropy* (12/17/98) reported from a study by the Foundation Center that **foundation grants to arts organizations** grew to an estimated \$1.7 billion in 1996, up \$330 million from four years earlier. However, the share of total foundation contributions that went to the arts slipped from 13.3% to 12.2% during those years. The study indicated that 4748 grants totalling \$297,151,461 were made to the performing arts in 1996, of which 1323 grants totalling \$79,116,870 went to music, of which 686 grants totalling \$52,101,946 went to orchestras.

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Affiliated with the American Federation of Musicians – AFL-CIO

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The ICSOM Website
<http://www.icsom.org>



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Domestic Partner Benefits In Orchestras Survey Reveals Positive Trend

In December, Michael Borschel, a third-year evening division law student at Indiana University School of Law—Indianapolis and ICSOM Delegate of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, compiled and edited a survey of North American symphony, opera and ballet orchestras regarding benefits extended to domestic partners of musicians through collective bargaining agreements. The survey demonstrates that at least seventeen of the country's forty-five leading orchestras are offering some form of health and/or pension benefits to their employees' domestic partner. For the purposes of the survey, "domestic partner" includes both same-sex and unmarried heterosexual partners.

The seventeen major orchestras offering such benefits are: the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Honolulu Symphony Orchestra, Houston Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Oregon Symphony Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, San Francisco Opera Orchestra, and the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra.

Nearly all the orchestras offering domestic partner benefits require an affidavit of some kind. Usually this requires the partners to swear under oath that they are:

- mentally competent;
- at least eighteen years of age;
- not related by blood;
- not married to anyone else;
- residing together;
- in a committed and mutually exclusive relationship; and,
- jointly responsible for the welfare and financial obligations of one another.

Such criteria form what is termed a "functional equivalent test" to discern the committed and enduring nature of the domestic partnership. The functional equivalent was articulated in a watershed decision, *Braschi v. Stahl Associates*, 543 N.E.2d 49, by the New York Court of Appeals (the state's highest appellate court) authored by J. Bellacosa in 1989.

Of the orchestras offering health benefits, several have opted to pay cash stipends or reimbursements to the employee for the purchase of private health insurance in lieu of directly enrolling the domestic partner in the bargaining unit's health plan. Either form of benefit is currently considered a taxable benefit to the employee, unless the domestic partner is the employee's legal dependent according to the Internal Revenue Code Section 152. (See Internal Revenue Code Sections 104 (a)(3), 105, 106 and 152; see also Internal Revenue Letter Rulings LTR 903408 to the city of Seattle and LTR 9109060 to the county of Santa Cruz.)

Borschel concluded, "As the technology sector has shown, the marketplace rewards employers that adapt to change and prize dedicated, creative workers, including those in nontraditional relationships. Lacking a government mandate, collective bargaining is a vigorous and efficient way to implement such change contractually. Consequently, major symphony orchestras are recognizing that it is good business to hire and retain workers who may be in non-traditional relationships by extending health, pension and other equivalent benefits to domestic partners."

A complete copy of the survey results in html, MS Word, or WordPerfect binary file format can be obtained upon request by contacting Michael Borschel at borschel@midlink.com or at:

Michael Borschel
1144 W. 73rd Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46260-4045
317-259-8066



Clute Bows Out
(story on page 2)

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ICSOM Board De-Bassed!

James Clute, a musician of the bassist kind in the Minnesota Orchestra and ICSOM Governing Board Member-at-Large, has decided to leave the ICSOM Board to pursue personal interests. Jim was the Governing Board member with the longest tenure of any current member, and his career as an activist goes back to the earliest days of ICSOM—he was listed as a member of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra Committee in the second issue (March 1963) of *Senza Sordino*.

✂ ✂

“There is no one I would rather have guarding my back in a political knife-fight than Jim Clute. We will miss his wisdom, his humor, and his toughness.”

Robert Levine, ICSOM Chair



Clute, as always, is the center of attention at the 1998 winter meeting of the ICSOM Governing Board. (Mary Plaine, Charlie Schlueter, Florence Nelson and Tom Hall look on.)

“Jim Clute remembers the days when there were no orchestras with 52-week seasons in the United States. He lived through a time when most orchestra musicians had no job security, no pension, no protection from the whims of tyrannical conductors and managers. He understands better than most the importance of ICSOM and the Union. I pledge to you, Jim, that I will work to help the next generation understand and preserve what you fought for and won for us.”

Marsha Schweitzer, Editor, *Senza Sordino*

“I’m one of many ICSOM board members who came onto the governing board during Jim Clute’s tenure. Like the rest, I am a better unionist and a better person for having served with him. I’m only sorry he stepped down before he had the chance to tell me the secret of perpetually being 39.”



Clute confers with 1998 ICSOM/Unity Conference guest speaker Martin Foster.

only sorry he stepped down before he had the chance to tell me the secret of perpetually being 39.”

Lucinda-Lewis,
ICSOM Secretary

“I think we should finally reveal what many have suspected for a long time: Jim is really 40.”

Lucinda-Lewis,
ICSOM Secretary

“Jim Clute is a voice of reason about our movement. He seemed to have a down-to-earth look at issues. To me, he was a man with visions about the orchestra world. I think his approach to issues would turn some off, but his manner and thinking went right along with how I feel on the issues. I will miss him at the ICSOM conferences. I hope he will come and visit us from time to time.”

Nancy Stutsman
ICSOM Delegate
Kennedy Center Orchestra

✂ ✂

James Clute has been with the Minnesota Orchestra for 39 years and has served on representative committees since 1961, including eight negotiating teams. Jim was a delegate at two of the founding meetings of ICSOM and has been a Governing Board Member-at-Large for the past ten years.

✂ ✂

“My strongest impression of Jim is how quiet he could be. Sometimes I would wonder if he had fallen asleep. And then he would rise and address the question on the floor and bring to it all the history and experience he had within him, which is quite a lot. I think ICSOM will be a great deal poorer for not having his memory always at our disposal.”

Mary Carroll Plaine
ICSOM Governing Board Member-at-Large

✂ ✂

William Buchman, a member of the Chicago Symphony, has accepted the invitation of the Executive Committee of the Governing Board to serve the remainder of Jim’s term. Bill is familiar to us as the administrator of the ICSOM Conductor Evaluation Program.

[Editor’s note: The ICSOM Governing Board now has two violas, two horns, two bassoons . . . I feel a weird little midrange sextet coming on . . . with trumpet obligato and tuba ostinato . . . Mary, you’ll get the parts together, right? . . .]

✂ ✂

Updates and Corrections to the ICSOM Directory

Email addresses:

in the listings of:

<i>Florida Orchestra (page 20):</i>	Fusco, Anthony	Heartlites@aol.com
<i>Honolulu Symphony (page 25):</i>	Schweitzer, Marsha	MSchwitzr@aol.com
<i>San Diego Symphony (page 61):</i>	Levine, Richard	rlevine@electriciti.com

Street addresses:

in the listings of:

*San Francisco Ballet (page 62), San Francisco Opera (page 63),
and San Francisco Symphony (page 64):*

Musicians Union, Local 6
116 Ninth Street
San Francisco CA 94103
415-575-0777 (Voice) 415-863-6173 (FAX)



For the first time this year, advertising was sold in the ICSOM Directory. In accepting advertising for the Directory, the ICSOM Governing Board decided to limit advertisers to those offering products and services directly related to the work of orchestra musicians. In keeping with our members' right to privacy, neither the Directory nor any ICSOM mailing lists were provided to the advertisers. ICSOM wishes to thank our Directory advertisers, and ICSOM musicians are encouraged to patronize them whenever possible.

Emeritus:

Add:



Detroit Symphony (page 72-73):

Charles F. Weaver
20193 Briarcliff Road
Detroit MI 48221
313-864-0523
cweav@mich.com

NYC Opera Orchestra (page 74):

Sam Gurkin
3 Stuyvesant Oval #11-D
New York NY 10009
212-777-1614

Lew Waldeck
phone: 201-947-1788
email: lwaldeck@iname.com

Change:

Boston Symphony (page 70):

Wayne Rapiert
zip code: 02332

ShuffleBoard — AFM-Style

AFM Secretary-Treasurer Steve Sprague has resigned his office, effective March 12. In a letter to local officers, Sprague wrote: "First, I want you all to know that I have taken this action voluntarily, and as a result of what I believe to have been conduct unbecoming my position as the AFM's chief financial officer. I have unintentionally breached the fiscal trust you have conveyed upon me, for which I believe there is no excuse that could ever condone or forgive such conduct." The AFM International Executive Board has selected Tom Lee, formerly AFM Vice President, to fill the Secretary-Treasurer position, and Harold Bradley, President of Local 257 in Nashville, to fill the Vice President position vacated by Mr. Lee. All AFM offices will be up for election at the AFM Convention in July.

ICSOM/ITF Proposals Submitted to AFM Convention

ICSOM, along with the other player conferences and local officers who are members of the Investigative Task Force (ITF), has presented official proposals for consideration by the 1999 AFM Convention, in keeping with the instructions of the player conferences as expressed at the Unity Conference last summer. ICSOM has submitted only those proposals approved by the ICSOM Conference. Watch for details in the next issue of *Senza Sordino*. In the meantime, check out the ITF's own website at <http://members.xoom.com/goitf>.

1998-99 Wage Chart of ICSOM Orchestra

Orchestra	Weeks 98-99	Annual Minimum Salary	Seniority: 40-yr Cap if no max	EMG	Pension: 40-yr Cap if no max	Pension Type	Pension Based on Min/Prsnl Scale	Vacation Weeks
Alabama	35	21,630	21,630	0	5%	AFM-EP	p	1
Atlanta	52	57,252	59,332	2,860	4%	AFM-EP	m	8
Baltimore	52	59,800	63,960	0	19,500			8
Boston	52	84,500	91,260	0	50,000			10
Buffalo	35	27,150	28,375	1,550	4%	AFM-EP	m+EMG	none
Chicago Lyric	24	38,760	40,892	0	9%	AFM-EP	p	16%/gross
Chicago Sym	52	85,020	93,089	0	48,000			8
Cincinnati	52	72,800	74,360	3,380	22,000+5%	AFM-EP	m	9
Cleveland	52	81,678	92,078	0	40,000			9
Colorado	42	30,366	32,046	2,520	7%	AFM-EP/DCP	p	4
Columbus	46	43,769	45,149	0	8.5%	DCP	p	4
Dallas	52	61,880	63,960	6,760	4%	AFM-EP	m	9
Detroit	52	76,700	78,780	1,534	30,000			9
Florida Orch	35	25,200	27,475	175	5%	AFM-EP	p	3
Florida Phil	43	35,000	36,075	0	8%	AFM-EP	m	4
Grant Park	not available							
Honolulu	30	23,100	24,450	0	5.5%	AFM-EP	p	none
Houston	52	59,800	61,880	3,900	30,000+4%	AFM-EP		9
Indianapolis	52	56,160	59,280	0	see note			8.5
Jacksonville	38	27,968	29,696	0	3.5%	AFM-EP	p	2
Kansas City	42	26,660	26,660	1,302	3.5%	AFM-EP		2
Kennedy Center	27	40,000	42,700	0	9%	AFM-EP	p	6% of pers
Los Angeles	52	82,680	86,840	2,000	7%	AFM-EP	m	10
Louisville	41	26,440	27,076	1,025	2.168%	AFM-EP	m	4
Met Opera	52	74,828	74,828	0	60%		p	10
Milwaukee	44	50,028	51,420	0	5%	AFM-EP	p	6
Minnesota	52	73,840	75,400	3,640	7%	AFM-EP	m	9.5
National	53	78,030	90,220	0	40,000+4%	AFM-EP	m + sen.	8
New Jersey	33	30,855	31,781	825	9%	AFM-EP	m	2
New York Phil	52	84,500	91,208	0	48,000			9
North Carolina	41	34,112	35,137	0	8.5%	403(b)	m	23 days
NYC Ballet	30	43,440	46,065	0	12.5%/gross	AFM-EP	p	4
NYC Opera	29	33,532	37,012	0	10%	AFM-EP	p	4
Oregon	43	35,198	35,198	506	8.5%	AFM-EP	p	2.5
Philadelphia	53	85,330	91,690	0	46,000			10
Phoenix		not available						
Pittsburgh	52	80,860	83,980	0	35,578			10
Rochester	40	31,400	32,330	0	3%	DCP	m	3
Saint Louis	52	69,680	74,880	0	28,000			9
Saint Paul Chamber	38	55,100	56,700	1,200	9%	see note	p	4
San Antonio	35	25,620	27,020	0	6%	AFM-EP	p	3
San Diego	38	24,000	26,160	1,000	7%	private	p	none
SF Ballet	21	29,720	31,040	907	10%	AFM-EP	p	13% of bas
SF Opera	29	53,907	56,807	1,879	9%	AFM-EP	p	4
SF Symphony	52	82,160	87,360	1,560	42,000			10
Syracuse	38	24,175	24,775	0	.0046	private	p	4
Utah	52	38,532	40,092	0	8%	AFM-EP/403(b)	m	9

AS — compiled by ICSOM Treasurer Stephanie Tretick

Relief Weeks	Notes	Orchestra
none	Pension includes Rule of 85.	Alabama
2 services	1 personal leave day.	Atlanta
16 services		Baltimore
1 of the 10 vacation weeks		Boston
none		Buffalo
1 opera relief, prin & asst.prin		Chicago Lyric
2, plus 1 subscription & 2 summer programs		Chicago Sym
16 services for strings	Guar. pen. min. = 45%/base for 30yrs at age 65.	Cincinnati
1 week		Cleveland
7 personal svcs		Colorado
6 services personal leave		Columbus
12 string services	Pension = \$30,000 w. min 30yrs at age 55.	Dallas
8 services for strings & 2nd winds	AFM-EP contributions begin 1999-00.	Detroit
4 svc, strings + 8 pers lv svc for all		Florida Orch
12 svcs strings, prin & 2nd wwnds & 2nd brass		Florida Phil
		Grant Park
none		Honolulu
none		Houston
8 svc stg/1&2ww/prin brss/2nd hn,tpt/timp	Monthly pension benefit=\$(@\$60+)x Yrs svc.	Indianapolis
6 svc	Seniority is approx. \$.15 X yrly svcs X yrs svc	Jacksonville
none		Kansas City
none	Figures approx: orch under 3 contracts: opera,ballet,musicals.	Kennedy Center
+ 1 week strings, 2nd winds		Los Angeles
String relief provisions		Louisville
1 of the 10 vacation weeks	Salary does not include rehearsal or radio pay.	Met Opera
8 services		Milwaukee
6 maximum (on seniority) + 7 strings		Minnesota
1 week + 1 week for strings		National
none		New Jersey
1 of the 9 vacation weeks	All players receive add'l min. \$20/wk overscale.	New York Phil
5 services personal leave		North Carolina
none		NYC Ballet
none	Base does not include rehearsal pay.	NYC Opera
none		Oregon
1 of the 10 vac wks + 4 pers days & 2 days at Saratoga		Philadelphia
		Phoenix
11th deferred service week possible		Pittsburgh
none		Rochester
1 of the 9 vacation weeks		Saint Louis
1 of 4 = relief week for all	6% AFM-EP, 3% 403(b)	Saint Paul Chamber
none	Terms reduced by 3-wk lockout + 1 unpaid vac. wk.	San Antonio
2 paid & 2 unpaid personal days		San Diego
none	Sal incl vac pay. Yearly guar = 105 perfs.+102 rehs.	SF Ballet
1 opera off each fall for all		SF Opera
3 of the 10 = floating, 1 extra (11th) wk for 2nd wnds		SF Symphony
none		Syracuse
none		Utah



Feedback on Hearing Loss

Several comments and “amplifications” followed the “Hear Today — Gone Tomorrow” article in the last *Senza*:



As a bassoonist who has used the ER15dB attenuators for about 9 years in orchestra and band, I know that it's possible for the performer to adjust or accommodate to the change in sound perception while using the devices. I would hope that musicians would not experience a sense of disorientation while wearing any kind of in-the-ear protection, but rather recognize this increases the relative prominence of their own instrument's sound. Any type of ear plug or attenuator limits the amount of sound received through the air ("air conduction") by one's ears; however, it does not alter the amount of sound received through the performer's body ("bone conduction") by being in physical contact with the instrument itself. The performer will notice immediately the discrepancy between the relative proportions of air- and bone-conducted sound.

With time and practice, one gets used to the apparent loudness of his/her own instrument and of those seated nearby, and the apparent decrease in perceived sound from instruments placed farther away. Adaptation consists of learning to adjust the dynamics of one's instrument to achieve proper balance with others. This adaptation usually comes quickly and with practice, once the performer is aware of the nature and cause of the problem.

Dr. William Dawson

medical advisor to the International Double Reed Society



I believe that treatments can be implemented to reduce the danger that musicians face on stage while satisfying the visual requirements of the performance space.

As with any design process, the first effective solution will be a collaboration among all concerned parties, led by a design team with the ability to integrate all the disparate factors. In many cases, the solution discovered at the end of the process may differ greatly from the “traditional” solutions in place. After this solution has been reached and verified, subsequent treatments in other spaces will be accepted with less skepticism until the creation of a safe performance space for orchestral musicians will become commonplace.

Mark Ramsay, Baran Design Associates

designer of the successful acoustical treatment of the St. James Theatre on Broadway



My comments stem from my own experiences as a horn player with documented hearing loss, having sat for many years in front of the timpani and trumpets. Hearing problems affect musicians in all genres. Peter Townsend of The Who must limit his

on-stage time to about 10 minutes per set, due to injury and discomfort caused by the loud music of his group. A good friend who is in the Chicago Symphony can validate your remarks about violists being at risk. At one particular concert he found himself in front of the bass trombone for a huge Berlioz work, and that night when he went home, he had no hearing in his right ear. It came back, but he had a bad day or two. Many musicians, mostly older colleagues, report tinnitus (ringing in the ears) as well as hearing loss.

To protect against progressive hearing damage and loss of acuity, periodic hearing tests seem reasonable, just as with routine physicals. Musicians at risk for hearing loss might do well to consider what workers in other employment do to protect their health. Amtrak workers tell me they get 2 hearing tests a year, exposed as they are to constant noise levels. On the other hand, the Health and Safety officer for the flight attendants' union tells me there is no such mandated or negotiated regular testing for these employees, and she remarked that she herself has significant hearing loss and no longer flies.

I would recommend to any musician concerned about this issue to go ahead and get a baseline test for their current hearing status. Retests regularly scheduled will provide an early warning radar system that can lead to informed decisions, whatever they may be, and hopefully, before permanent, irreversible, and severe damage occurs. Some may opt for wearing internal hearing protection, others for baffles, while others may decide to make some career changes. Financing regular testing can, however, be an issue if your health plan policy excludes ear tests.

David Sternbach, psychotherapist
medical advisor to ICSOM

[Editor's note: Instituting and funding an injury prevention program, including aural testing, is a fertile field for management and union cooperation of the sort that Mark Ramsay describes in his comments, and as was the case in negotiating the new health and safety provisions in the Broadway contract.]



Further information on hearing protection devices:

The **Acoustic Shield** (“Buffalo baffle”) is available from:

Wenger Corporation	wenger@WengerCorp.com
555 Park Drive	http://www.WengerCorp.com
P.O. Box 448	1-800-733-0393
Owatonna MN 55060	

From Wenger's Acoustic Shield technical specifications: “The initial wave from a loud musical sound (like a trumpet blast) can be reduced up to 46dB with the Shield in place.”

ER-15 and ER-25 earplugs:

Because ER (Etymotic Research) earplugs must be custom fitted to the wearer's ear canal, these devices must be purchased through a local dealer. Etymotic Research, the company that manufactures the sound attenuating component in the earplugs, suggests that any audiologist or hearing aid dispenser in your local area can provide the plugs and the fitting.



Blasting at Carnegie Hall

My wife and I have attended numerous concerts here at Carnegie Hall in New York City, performed by many American and foreign orchestras. Years ago, when attending Mannes College of Music majoring in Trumpet, I attended many concerts at Carnegie Hall. Prior to the actual beginning of the concert, most of the orchestra members entered the stage at random and inconspicuously played on their instruments. Then at some point this automatically stopped to prepare for the entrance of the Concertmaster and then the Conductor.

Well, unfortunately this has changed. Now, starting about one-half hour before the beginning of the concert, most of the orchestra members are on stage playing full out! The main culprits are the Trumpets followed by the rest of the Brass section. The reaction of people around us is very negative, proving that it is not just my wife and I who are appalled at the cacophony of sound we are being subjected to. Many times after hearing this, my wife and I turn to each other and exclaim, "Well, we just heard all the melodies; why don't we go home now!" I realize that acoustics change from one hall to another, but I also strongly feel that this loud pre-concert playing is unnecessary! Some of you may feel somewhat slighted by what I have said; however, I hope you will give it some consideration and tone it down.

*Bruce J. Revesz
ICSOM Delegate, New York City Opera Orchestra
& member of the Trumpet section*



Not-For-Profit Millionaires

My editorial "Do Millionaires Need A Union?" in the last *Senza Sordino* elicited a few comments from readers along the lines of, "The corporate economics of basketball teams and other for-profit businesses are categorically different from those of nonprofits. You can't really compare nonprofit organizations with profit-making businesses." Well—yes, you can, and here's how.

Well-paid doctors work for nonprofit hospitals; well-paid professors, researchers and administrators work for nonprofit universities; and of course, well-paid executive directors and music directors work for nonprofit symphony orchestras, opera companies, and dance companies (even struggling ones). Nonprofits logically argue that to get the necessary talent for the job they must offer a wage and benefit package competitive with those offered in the for-profit sector. The IRS agrees with this principle, and allows a nonprofit to pay compensation comparable to that for similar work in the for-profit sector without jeopardizing the nonprofit's tax exemption. Nonprofits, like for-profits, can—and do—pay some of their employees very well.

Some say that nonprofit income, relying as it often does on charitable fundraising, is not tied as directly to the sale of products and services—labor's output—as for-profit income is. But donations, like ticket sales, are solicited on the strength and inspiration of labor's production—the quality of the orchestra and its programs—so fundraising is just as dependent on labor as earned income is. The fact remains that without the efforts of labor, the

company, be it for-profit or nonprofit, would have no reason to exist and no rationale to attract income of any kind into the enterprise.

The principles of economics, labor relations, supply and demand, and unfortunately, greed and power, apply as much to nonprofits as for-profits. Between 1979 and 1994 real family income in the United States declined 14% for the lowest fifth of the population, but increased by 25% for the highest fifth, and *increased by 83% for the top 1% of the population*,¹ creating one of the greatest disparities between rich and poor in history. A fundamental goal of the labor movement is to reverse that trend. It is a struggle for (from labor's perspective) or against (from the owners' perspective) the mass redistribution of wealth on a global scale. Nonprofit organizations are in no way exempt from participation in that struggle, nor are they immune to its effects.

The economic goals of nonprofit and for-profit boards are photographic negatives of each other, or maybe reverse angle shots—the same image viewed from opposite directions. The personal goal of for-profit board members and owners is to *gain wealth*—maximize corporate profit and get as much of it as possible for themselves. While the public goal of nonprofits is to advance their charitable mission, all too often the private personal goal of nonprofit board members and the community leaders they represent is not to preserve art or advance social welfare, but to *preserve wealth*—to minimize corporate expenses (e.g., cut labor costs) so as to keep the pressure for their charitable gifts as low as possible. For-profit boards seek to gain new wealth—at the expense of labor. Nonprofit boards seek to hang on to the wealth they already have—at the expense of labor. Either way, the effect is the same; cutting the cost of production always benefits the owners and hurts the workers.

Psychological liberation for employees of nonprofits comes with the realization that the money to fund healthy salaries is always there. It is in the pockets of the board members and community wealthholders, who only mete out as much as is absolutely necessary to maintain the level of service they want. It is always possible for the board and community owners of a nonprofit to take good care of their employees and still keep a sizeable chunk of wealth for themselves. But if labor demands little, little is what it gets. Frederick Douglass, 19th-century orator, editor, and former slave, said, "Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will."

Musicians and other nonprofit employees are asked for concessions not because there is no money, but because those holding the money refuse to part with it. The ultimate controlling factor is the priority that the orchestra holds in the hearts and minds of the public. Community leaders must decide if they want a stable orchestra badly enough to part with enough money to allow it to happen. Is having a good orchestra more important than getting a cheap orchestra? Labor sets the price, so only labor can ask that question.

*Marsha Schweitzer
Editor, Senza Sordino*

¹ from *Dollars and Sense Economic News Service*

"Voicings" graphic design and concept by Michael Gorman and Norman Foster (bass and clarinet, respectively, of the Honolulu Symphony)

TOUR de FARCE
(or, *There's No Place Like Home*)

A survivor of the recent San Francisco Symphony European tour reports a few highlights:

- 1) 30 people with stomach flu
- 2) 50 people (including the tour doctor) with a long-lasting major upper respiratory flu (fevers of 103° F., etc.)
- 3) 10 people with food poisoning
- 4) One broken hand
- 5) One major thumb cut, requiring 8 stitches, from dropping a glass in a hotel bathroom
- 6) One spider bite that led to blood poisoning that came to within 3 hours of our pianist losing a finger. For the rest of the tour, we had a 2-headed pianist; i.e., our pianist played the right hand parts and another member of the orchestra played the left hand.
- 7) One major eye infection
- 8) One sick baby (fever of 105°), but great response and a hotel room visit by a French physician
- 9) One (still) unexplained allergic-like reaction that caused a musician's face to swell up and resulted in hospitalization with IV drips, etc.
- 10) MTT (Michael Tilson Thomas) missed 2 concerts (see #2), but our associate conductor, Alasdair Neale, did a great job.
- 11) One instrument truck was sideswiped by the other instrument truck in an ice-related accident—only the bass drum was damaged—but one truck cab was a total loss. The SFS hired 2 string instrument builders/repairmen to stand by at the concert that night in case of instrument damage. I asked the 2 guys if they knew Francis Cuttner, a string instrument builder who lives across the street from us. "Ah, Douglass Street," was the reply.
- 12) One snowstorm that prevented the (new!) instrument trucks from getting from Brussels to Vienna, so the SFS chartered 2 old Aleutian (i.e., Russian/Bulgarian) 4-prop air freighters and was able to get the instruments to Vienna just before concert time. Our stage crew had to ride in said aircraft. Apparently it was something they will never forget—bumpy, noisy, freezing cold, filled with cigarette smoke, filthy toilets, etc. After the concert, another air freight company was hired to move the instruments to Luxembourg for the flight back to the States. This plane is one of five remaining air freighters made 40 years ago. Two of the five are still being flown and the other 3 are being used for parts.
- 13) One mugging
- 14) Four purse snatchings (\$9,000 worth of cigars was charged on one of the credit cards within 30 minutes of the theft.)
- 15) Four major flight delays, one cancelled flight and one train delay
- 16) Parent of one orchestra member died, so said member had to fly to California and then back to Barcelona in a 4-day time frame.
- 17) Major construction went on in two of the hotels, which precluded getting any rest at said hotels.

But all in all, the tour was a great success!



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- Kennedy Center Orchestra
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- Louisville Orchestra
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- Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra
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- National Symphony Orchestra
- New Jersey Symphony Orchestra
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- New York City Opera Orchestra
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- Philadelphia Orchestra
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The 1999 AFM Convention: A Chance for Salvage, or for Sinking Deeper?

For the last 20 years, the American Federation of Musicians has been in steep decline—many jobs in the music business have been lost, more and more of the work that remains has become non-union, and membership has dropped precipitously. There is a widespread belief, both within the Federation and without, that if the AFM is to survive and succeed, it must radically change the way it operates, both internally—structurally, how it relates to its members—and externally—functionally, how it relates to employers, other unions, and the music industry in general.

At the 1997 AFM Convention it became clear that the current system of AFM governance and legislative representation at the Convention did not provide an effective framework in which to either correctly assess the nature and scope of the AFM's difficulties or enact measures to address them. The Federation's own attempt at restructure failed, and no new vision or plan of action emerged as an alternative course to follow.

In response to this alarming organizational paralysis, the leaders of the AFM player conferences, representing the majority of working musicians in the Federation, formed an Investigative Task Force (ITF) to study the AFM's problems and propose solutions. The results of that study were presented last summer at the Unity Conference, where ICSOM and the other AFM player conferences passed Resolutions, based on the recommendations of the ITF, to be presented to the 1999 AFM Convention.

The following are brief descriptions of the 1999 AFM Convention Resolutions submitted by ICSOM as a result of the ITF's two years of deliberations and the actions of the Unity Conference. (For a complete list of the recommendations and resolutions to be presented at the AFM Convention, see the May 1999 issue of the *International Musician*.)

Resolution No. 1

(amends AFM Bylaws, Article 2)

Establishes that "The primary function of the AFM and its Locals shall be to organize musicians for collective action, . . ."

Resolution No. 10

(amends Article 3)

Creates the Conference Representatives Board, made up of "one Representative elected from and by each official Player Conference and an equal number of District Representatives from the Regional Conferences Convention," to share AFM governance with the IEB.

(continued on page 2)

Why ITF Matters

Robert Levine, ICSOM Chair

Two summers ago, in the wake of the now-infamous "Titanic" AFM Convention of 1997, the four Player Conferences embarked on two major projects: the Unity Conference and the Investigative Task Force (ITF). Some observers predicted that the ITF would simply float into the same old port, calling once again for increased funding for the Symphonic Services and Electronic Media Services Divisions, or perhaps even the establishment of real trade divisions.

But the ITF was a voyage of discovery, not a ferry trip. It was a unique event in the history of the AFM—representatives of the AFM's members who work under collective bargaining agreements, reaching out to local officers, without the blessing of the AFM's power structure, to form a partnership to ask the most fundamental questions a labor union could ask itself: what it ought to do, who it ought to be, and how it ought to be governed.

The most surprising conclusion the ITF came to—surprising even to its own members—was that reform was even more important to the AFM's future than was structural change. The ITF's answers to the questions it asked have the potential to change fundamentally the Federation's culture. And without a change in the way that the AFM thinks about itself and its mission, structural redesign really is the equivalent of shuffling the deck chairs on that most famous of ocean liners.

While the ITF Report made eleven recommendations, the core of the Report were two: the establishment of a new body of governance, the Conference Representatives Board; and a ban on employers of musicians serving as union officers.

The **Conference Representatives Board (CRB)**, as proposed, would be a board of ten representatives: five from the AFM's player conferences and five from the various geographic regions. It would have formal oversight over, and approval of, the AFM's budget and any expenses in excess of that budget.

(continued on page 2)

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(WHY ITF MATTERS: continued from page 1)

The CRB has been characterized by some as an “elitist power grab” by the player conferences. In reality, it is an attempt to bring badly needed perspectives to the governance of the AFM. But why are those perspectives needed? Or, to put it another way, why are those perspectives not already present?

Currently, the day-to-day affairs of the AFM are in the hands of the International Executive Board—four executive officers and five members-at-large. The system looks good on paper, but in practice the IEB does not appear to do much real governing. Given the nature of the electoral system in the AFM, this is hardly surprising. Candidates for office at AFM Conventions rarely take public positions on issues, and thus any real ideological differences amongst candidates are blurred or buried. AFM elections are almost invariably fought on the basis of candidates’ personal popularity with the Convention delegates.

Perhaps the system of at-large elections actually guarantees issue-free campaigns. Because no candidate is assured of support by any kind of voting bloc, candidates are anxious not to offend any possible constituency by taking positions on anything controversial, or indeed anything of real substance. In the process of trying to appeal to all possible voters, the successful candidates end up with no real constituency and no mandate to do anything but continue to be popular.

The CRB will bring to the national governance table, for the first time, points of view from real constituencies based both on workplace and geography. It will bring the concerns of working musicians into the room in a way that cannot be ignored. It will make the AFM far more democratic and far more responsive to the concerns of its members.

But even more controversial than the CRB has been the proposal to **ban union officials from acting as employers**. This is likely to seem an abstract issue to many orchestra musicians—after all, *their* employers aren't serving on the local union board.

But imagine, for a moment, what kind of a union it would be if your orchestra manager was also the president of your local. (Given that a number of ICSOM orchestra managers are, in fact, members of the AFM, such a scenario is technically possible in many locals.) With management on both sides of the table, it would give new meaning to the phrase “negotiating against ourselves.” Getting the union to pay for arbitrations against your orchestra management would be virtually impossible. You wouldn't much like the union's take on job security issues. And the union's interest in organizing other employers would be modest at best.

But, for many members of the AFM, that's exactly the kind of union they have, because the boards of far too many AFM locals are dominated by musicians who make most of their musical income *by employing other musicians*. Because of this domination, their union is not very interested in raising scales, especially in ways that might burden employers (such as adding pension contributions.) It's certainly not interested in organizing musicians for collective action against their employers. And it's not likely to take the employees' side in a dispute with the employer. In short, what many members of the AFM have is an employer-dominated union. Is it any wonder that so many of them have left?

It's also not surprising that many local officers don't want to change this system. There are many locals that would have a hard time finding musicians who weren't active contractors to serve on local boards. And, to be fair, some contractors who serve on local boards are good local officers and try to do well by their members. (No doubt, some orchestra managers would also do well by their members as local officers.) But the fact remains that acting as an employer of musicians and serving as an officer of a union that represents musicians are two fundamentally incompatible roles. A labor union that doesn't understand this—or doesn't act to fix it—is a labor union in name only.

Barring employers from serving as union officers and bringing geographic and workplace representation to the national governance table will not, by themselves, be sufficient to make the AFM an effective labor union. But they are absolutely necessary conditions to that end. A union that is run by employers and not by people who are truly representative of the membership will always be a lousy union, regardless of its size or wealth. It's time for the AFM to do better.



(AFM CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS: continued from page 1)

Resolution No. 12
(amends Article 5)

Extends to RMA and TMA Delegates, as well as ICSOM, OCSM, and ROPA Delegates, the requirement that the Local “pay the reasonable and necessary expenses of sending one Delegate from each such symphonic orchestra and/or local chapter to the annual meeting of the national or international Conference with which the orchestra or chapter is affiliated.”

Resolution No. 15
(amends Article 5)

“No Local Officer shall (1) serve in the position of a Personnel Manager or a Contractor for an employer in the Local's jurisdiction; (2) work in any position where s/he receives any remuneration from contracting or booking musical units (other than a regularly organized one of which s/he is a leader or member) in the Local's jurisdiction.”

Resolution No. 16
(amends Article 5)

Provides for Local Officer training.

Resolution No. 20
(amends Article 8)

Establishes an Inactive Life Membership category.

Resolution No. 29
(amends Article 12)

Reverses the 1997 Convention action of charging members for the cost of collecting claims on their behalf.

Resolution No. 44
(amends Article 26)

Defines and manages potential conflicts of interest of Local officers and agents who “only sporadically or minimally engage, book or contract for Local members.”

Resolution No. 48
(amends Article 27)

“As a matter of policy, at least one rank-and-file musician, selected in consultation with the Players Conferences Council, shall be included among the Trustees appointed by the Federation to the board of the American Federation of Musicians' and Employers' Pension Fund”



ICSOM Conference 1999

At The Antlers, Vail, Colorado
August 25 - 28, 1999

AGENDA

Music Medicine Panel
Interest-Based Bargaining Panel
Report on the 1999 AFM Convention
Election of Governing Board Members-at-Large

ICSOM Delegates: Please contact our official travel agents **Susan Levine** or **Carl King** at Travel Gems for help with conference travel and accommodations. Susan and Carl can be reached in New York from 9:30AM to 7:00PM daily at 1-800-569-4495 x115, 212-889-3131 x115, Fax 212-889-8688, or suetravel@aol.com.

There will be Conference discounts available with United Airlines into Denver or Eagle (about 31 miles from Vail) for all participants and their guests. The earlier you call, fax, or email, the lower the price. There are also discounted rates for van service through Colorado Mountain Express, or car rentals from either airport.



Panel Preview: **Music Medicine**

Panelists Dr. Richard Norris (author of ICSOM's publication *The Musicians Survival Manual*) and Dr. Simon McGrail will discuss the performance-related injuries and physical disorders which affect musicians, as well as injury prevention. Psychologist David Sternbach will focus on stress and its links to increased risk for overuse injury. ICSOM counsel Leonard Leibowitz will be discussing disability insurance, worker's compensation, and what players should do legally to protect their jobs when their playing is compromised by injury. Information will be available on the disability benefits available through the AFM-EP Fund.

Optional evening sessions will also be offered by David Sternbach on performance anxiety, and by Richard Norris on ergonomics and injury prevention.

Lucinda-Lewis,
ICSOM Secretary
Music Medicine Panel Moderator

Panel Preview: **Interest-Based Bargaining**

Interest-Based Bargaining. Mutual-Gains Bargaining. Win-Win Bargaining. Sound familiar? What do these terms mean? How is IBB different from "traditional," adversarial bargaining? Is it good for an orchestra, and/or the union? Is it bad? Or is it neutral, just one more tool we should have at our disposal when negotiating a contract?

ICSOM will devote a day of this August's conference to examining these issues. We plan to have a representative from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service spend the morning session explaining the model of IBB, how it developed and why, and how its participants are trained. In the afternoon ICSOM Legal Counsel Leonard Leibowitz and SSD Director Florence Nelson, along with some symphonic musicians who have participated in IBB, will interact with the mediator, examine the pros and cons of IBB, and take questions from the floor.

Mary Plaine
ICSOM Governing Board Member-at-Large
IBB Panel Moderator

Newslets

“As we approach the 21st century there is a very real danger that the strength of the worker that was generated by solidarity will be eroded to the very point at which the need for unity was recognized more than 100 years ago. Perhaps, at that time, history will repeat itself and workers will begin, all over again, the struggle to have a say in their own destiny. . . .

“The union is not the elected officers and staff who comprise the administration, nor is it the physical location of the offices. The Union is the membership, the workers, the people. All the Union can ever hope to be is represented by the resolve of these individuals to unite for the purpose of exhibiting strength in their numbers.”

Frank Amoss, President Local 7 AFM (Orange County, CA), in the Score, Local 7's newsletter



On May 28, the **Honolulu Symphony musicians voted to adopt a resolution** instructing their local's delegates to the AFM Convention to support IEB Recommendation No. 15 concerning changes to the AFM Strike Fund. Then a member of the local's AFM Convention delegation announced to the orchestra that the local's delegation intended to vote in favor of the resolutions and recommendations supported by ICSOM. The musicians' questions and suggestions were invited.



MUSIC WEB HUNTER is a new online service offered by the Denver Musicians Association website. It is designed for searching music sites and promoting music sites across a broad spectrum of music lovers from casual fan to academic to working professional. Check it out at:

<http://www.dmamusic.org/musicwebhunter/index.html>

Music Is A Casualty in Kosovo War

The scheduled appearance by the Boston Symphony in the People's Republic of China was cancelled by the Chinese government in the wake of the killing of three Chinese diplomats in a NATO bombing raid that mistakenly hit the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade.

The *Boston Globe* reports that the Boston Symphony Orchestra's Asian tour was cut short when Chinese officials cancelled two BSO performances in Beijing that were to have taken place in the presence of Chinese president Jiang Zemin. A letter from the China Performing Arts Agency stated, in part, “We believe the favorable atmosphere for the China tour at the moment is no longer there, and no longer is it appropriate for the tour to be conducted as originally scheduled.” Music director Seiji Ozawa, who was born in China, said in a statement that he was “terribly sad” about the cancellation: “I have decided to honor my commitment to give a master class in Beijing, but obviously it's not the same without the BSO. I prefer to think of this as a postponement, not a cancellation.”



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Phoenix Symphony Orchestra
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MUSICIANS EXCHANGE ROLES Australian Up, Minnesotan Down Under

by Julie Ayer

Violinist and ICSOM Delegate, Minnesota Orchestra

I returned home on June 10, 1999 from a nine-week exchange with violinist Gary Andrews, Principal Second Violin of the Sydney Symphony in Australia. The idea of trading jobs with someone in another orchestra had been a dream of mine for many years. I have been a member of the Minnesota Orchestra since 1976, and somewhere along the way I began to imagine making my dream a reality. I discussed my idea with our former music director, Edo de Waart, who is now the music director of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. He was very supportive of my proposal, which enabled me to proceed with arranging the endless details, accomplished mostly by email between the managers of the SSO and the MO, the national and local unions, orchestra committees, and Gary. After 1-1/2 years we had finally settled on the dates and logistics of exchanging keys, lockers, cars, clothes (!), etc. As far as I knew, there was no model to work from, so I tried to anticipate every possible problem that could arise. Although Gary and I are both titled string players, we both agreed that we were happy to sit anywhere the section needed us.

The idea of a musician exchange was suggested as early as 1965 by George Zazofsky, former chairman of ICSOM and violinist with the Boston Symphony: "You can't imagine how refreshing and stimulating it would be for a symphony player to have that kind of change. Not a year off, but something new and broadening." It was attempted by the BSO and a Japanese orchestra, but because of the disparity of salaries and living conditions at the time was not considered entirely successful (although the artistic and cultural rewards were great). The Japanese and Australian musicians' unions sponsored a successful exchange program for orchestral musicians in the mid-'80s. Although it may not be the first time between major orchestras, Gary's and my exchange is unprecedented in the Minnesota Orchestra.

Not only is it a rare opportunity to exchange artistic and contractual ideas with colleagues, and to observe different working conditions and a different pool of conductors and soloists, it is also a cultural exchange. Both musicians are representing their orchestra, city, and country, and are goodwill ambassadors in every sense of the word. It is also important to absorb the experience with an open mind and without preconceived notions.

Unlike conductors, most of us do not have an opportunity to participate in another orchestra after we have committed our

professional and personal lives to a particular job and its environment. We can become frustrated in our respective situations, which can lead to anxiety, psychological and even physical stress. An exchange provides a break from one's routine, and although the working conditions are usually similar, there are other differences which impact upon every orchestra. It is a good experience to observe and participate in a different workplace without the responsibility and involvement required of you in your own orchestra, which for me, is a major difference. (I am referring to extra-musical matters such as committees, meetings, etc.)

Although the musical language is the same, the social dynamics of individual personalities and interpersonal relationships create an atmosphere unique to the SSO and to every orchestra. I quickly discovered a wonderful sense of camaraderie and humor that is so vital to our collective survival. It was a real pleasure to meet my colleagues in the SSO, and there was never enough time to talk to all of them. We were eager to share ideas, problems, and stories with each other, and both Gary and I were invited to attend meetings, not to mention numerous parties, restaurants, wine tastings, and into colleagues' homes!

All the Australian orchestras have a relatively short history compared to U.S. orchestras, having been founded in the 1930s by the ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation). Over the last few years the SSO and the other ABC network orchestras have undergone by far the most substantial change in the fifty years of their history. Spearheaded by the divestment of the SSO, four of the six orchestras are autonomous corporate entities. It is only in the past 10 years that they have separated from the ABC, and now face the daunting task of creating endowments and beginning to tap into private funds. There is no real tradition of private and corporate donations to the arts in Australia.

As explained to the 1998 ICSOM Conference by Martin Foster, head of SOMA (Symphony and Opera Musicians Association of Australia) and contrabassoonist of the SSO, at one time all

(continued on page 3)

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The International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians (ICSOM)

**Statement of Revenues & Expenses
For the Fiscal Year June 1, 1997 to May 31, 1998**

	GENERAL FUND	EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND	ICSOM MEMORIAL AWARDS	TOTAL OF ALL FUNDS
Revenues				
Dues 97-98	110,091.00			110,091.00
Dues 96-97	14,391.00			14,391.00
Book Royalties	4,466.42			4,466.42
Refunds & Reimbursements	1,628.52			1,628.52
Pass through (Louisville)	1,691.85			1,691.85
Interest Income	2,891.24	7,414.36	718.39	11,023.99
Senza Sordino Income	620.00			620.00
CD-Rom Sales	561.46			561.46
Contribution Income	65.00			65.00
Transfers from Other Funds	4,000.00		3,533.00	7,533.00
Total Revenues	140,406.49	7,414.36	4,251.39	152,072.24
Expenses				
Legal Expenses	30,013.26			30,013.26
ICSOM Conference Expenses	6,983.34			26,983.34
Directories	11,649.30			11,649.30
Investigative Task Force Meetings	11,648.06			11,648.06
Telephone	10,776.80			10,776.80
Senza Sordino	10,573.38			10,573.38
Honoraria	10,000.00			10,000.00
Office Equipment	7,814.78			7,814.78
Book Expenses	7,741.98			7,741.98
Mid-Winter Governing Board Mtg	5,670.71			5,670.71
Travel	4,705.65			4,705.65
AFM Convention	4,307.01			4,307.01
Scholarship Awards	4,000.00			4,000.00
CD-Rom Production and Hardware	2,473.77			2,473.77
Conductor Evaluations	2,357.50			2,357.50
Postage	2,184.85			2,184.85
Pass through (Louisville)	1,691.85			1,691.85
Accounting Expenses	1,050.00			1,050.00
Duplication	1,017.74			1,017.74
Emeritus	938.66			938.66
Income Replacement	883.37			883.37
Stationary & Supplies	839.62			839.62
Email	796.79			796.79
Subscriptions	656.33			656.33
OCSM, ROPA Conferences	644.78			644.78
Bonding Insurance	632.00			632.00
Website	550.38			550.38
Bank Charges	181.00			181.00
Transfers to Other Funds	3,533.00		4,000.00	7,533.00
Total Expenses and Transfers	166,315.91	0.00	4,000.00	170,315.91
Excess of Revenues over (under) Expenses	(25,909.42)	7,414.36	251.39	(18,243.67)

Changes in Fund Balances

Fund Balances, beginning of year	91,477.77	182,118.98	11,790.01	285,386.76
Income	140,406.49	7,414.36	4,251.39	152,072.24
Less Expenses	166,315.91	0.00	4,000.00	170,315.91
Fund Balances, end of year	65,568.35	189,533.34	12,041.40	267,143.09

**Balance Sheet
For the Fiscal Year June 1, 1997 to May 31, 1998**

Assets

Cash - checking	49,300.82			49,300.82
Investments		172,033.34	12,041.40	184,074.74
Prepaid Expenses	7,056.53			7,056.53
Dues Receivable	9,211.00			9,211.00
Loans Receivable		17,500.00		17,500.00
Total Assets	65,568.35	189,533.34	12,041.40	267,143.09

Liabilities & Fund Balances

Total Liabilities	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Fund Balance	65,568.35	189,533.34	12,041.40	267,143.09
Total Liabilities & Fund Balances	65,568.35	189,533.34	12,041.40	267,143.09

An ICSOM-Eye View of the AFM Convention *First of Many Reports on the New State of Our Union*



Six of the nine members of the ICSOM Governing Board were Delegates to the 93rd AFM Convention at the Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas in July. Four of the six attended for the first time, and each has been invited to offer their first-time experiences to Senza readers. First out of the starting gate is ICSOM Secretary and ICSOM Delegate to the AFM Convention Lucinda-Lewis:

I had always had an image in my mind of what AFM Conventions must be like. This year, the ICSOM Secretary had a chance to witness first hand the process AFM members employ to govern themselves and establish their membership rights and privileges. While I was expecting the symphonic troops to be vastly outnumbered by the non-symphonic crowd, I was pleasantly surprised to see so many orchestra players serving as convention delegates as well as wonderful diplomats to the rest of the union. During my few days of sitting on the sidelines and observing the proceedings, it became clear that our best hope of changing the Union and making it better is for greater numbers of us to become involved in the process.

When I first became an ICSOM delegate in 1983, the symphonic landscape was littered with problems between symphony managements and musicians and between symphony musicians and local unions. The difficult problems we faced within our own institutions generated a high level of internal activism which often made up for the total lack of support and services coming from our locals. The best and brightest from the ranks of symphony orchestras stepped up to the challenge of finding solutions to the myriad of problems. Eventually, union services improved as did symphonic labor agreements. Unfortunately, the intensity of those early battles left many activists burned out.

During his address to the 1994 ICSOM Conference, Chairman Brad Buckley asked what had happened to all the orchestra activists. Their numbers were in steady decline. He was concerned that musicians were becoming less involved in their own orchestras and in the Union, thereby putting greater responsibility repeatedly on the same few people. Brad's observation summed up the biggest problem facing the AFM—lack of rank-and-file involvement. The annual call for grassroots activism from the AFM leadership, especially during last year's Unity Conference, seems like a trite, redundant, meaningless plea. But unless you see how the process for change works, you can't possibly understand how important individual involvement really is. However, as Brad pointed out, most musicians today just want to play their notes, collect their checks, and go home.

Perhaps we have a right to believe that our considerable union dues buys us the right to expect someone else to "take care of business," but in fact, most of us are aware that some union

problems cannot be "taken care of" by union officials and a handful of motivated, well-intentioned members alone. It's going to take greater involvement in the process by all working members. Other unions, like the Teamsters, have succeeded in effecting change when member activists organized the rank-and-file. If change for the better is to occur within the AFM, its members will eventually have to step up and be counted. ✂ ✂

More reports from ICSOMites at the AFM Convention will appear in future Senza's, including analyses of the official proceedings and legislation that was passed. – Ed.

(MUSICIAN EXCHANGE - continued from page 1)

ABC orchestras were covered by a single collective bargaining agreement negotiated by the Musicians Union without musician input. (Sound familiar? This parallels U.S. orchestras' experiences until the formation of ICSOM in 1963). There had been much infighting between local and federal unions, and by the early '70s, committees were providing services to their own orchestras which the union was not able or chose not to provide.

Australian symphony musicians were given little opportunity to replace the union leadership because the union would hold unannounced elections, and relationships continued to deteriorate. The orchestra musicians eventually decided to secede from the Musicians Union of Australia and join with other arts workers in the Media Alliance as SOMA, the musicians division of the Media Alliance. The general feeling is that this has been a positive move, and the complete overhaul of industrial practices has seen an end to the confrontation and divisiveness of the previous two decades.

However, the future of all SOMA orchestras depends on the future of opera and dance, and these companies equally depend on the orchestras. In Australia, it is the responsibility of government to provide sufficient base funding in order to provide a vibrant artistic life for its artists and audiences. Depending on which party is in office, the arts dollar can be quite finite.

From the 1998 ICSOM Conference, Motion #10:

Resolved: "That the delegates of the 1998 ICSOM Conference express their heartfelt admiration to Martin Foster and their colleagues in the Symphony Orchestra Musicians of Australia for their tenacity and courage in their fight for self-determination and union democracy."

Gary and I agree that our exchange was a wonderful experience, and I am happy to say that the exchange was a success for all involved. Carl Nashan, my husband and now-retired violinist from the MO, and Gary's wife Dale, an accomplished music educator, accompanied us on our great adventure. We four immersed ourselves in the cultures of the orchestras and the cities in which we found ourselves. We all have met new friends and colleagues, experienced some wonderful music-making, formulated some new ideas, and hope to return someday.

No worries, mate!

✂ ✂

ICSOM Conference 1999

At The Antlers, Vail, Colorado
August 25 - 28, 1999

ICSOM Delegates: Please contact our official travel agents **Susan Levine** or **Carl King** at Travel Gems for help with conference travel and accommodations. Susan and Carl can be reached in New York from 9:30am to 7:00pm daily at 1-800-569-4495 x115, 212-889-3131 x115, Fax 212-889-8688, or suetravel@aol.com.



The primary function of a true union is not just in organizing the employees it seeks to represent, but in the manner in which those employees are represented for collective bargaining purposes. To do so, it must first purge itself of any semblance of employer domination.

In the AFM, that's a very tough nut to crack because the AFM has yet to determine who the employer is. As long as it maintains the illogical and fictitious notion that the "father of the bride" is the employer, there can be no reform. The "father of the bride" is not the employer of free lance musicians, but the "client" of the employer.

Nearly thirty years ago, while the Chicago Federation of Musicians was in trusteeship under the late Hal C. Davis, actually because we had defeated James C. Petrillo and put him out to pasture, Wayne Barrington and I introduced a resolution at a membership meeting to resolve this employer situation in that AFM Local. Trustee Davis would not, under any condition, permit its consideration at the membership meeting at which it was to be acted upon. Things have not changed all that much to this day in the AFM.

The mere presence of employers at AFM membership meetings is an inhibiting and intimidating factor that the National Labor Relations Board and the courts have long recognized as the unfair labor practice of "employer domination." Until the AFM is purged of these employer members, it cannot collectively bargain for the 80% of its members who are free lancers. Collective bargaining is the ONLY means a union has at its disposal to represent the interests of its employee members. Thus far, the AFM has yet to take its first step. Is it any wonder that AFM officers have never understood the true nature of the relationship of symphony musicians and their employers?

Sam Denov
Chicago Symphony Orchestra Emeritus

"Voicings" graphic design and concept by Michael Gorman and Norman Foster
(bass and clarinet, respectively, of the Honolulu Symphony)

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Affiliated with the American Federation of Musicians - AFL-CIO

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AFM Convention Brings Positive Change

Robert Levine, ICSOM Chair

While it was neither “the best of conventions nor the worst of conventions” (Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Vegases*) by the usual standards that ICSOM has measured conventions, it was a rousing success. Not only was there legislation passed that will be very good for symphonic musicians and other AFM members working under collective bargaining agreements, but equally important, nothing bad happened.

A very significant set of reforms to the AFM Strike Fund passed, opening up the Fund to many more orchestras by setting up a system of tiered benefits and dues. Legislation that ICSOM had co-sponsored to require locals to pay for the costs of sending delegates to all Player Conference annual meetings, rather than just the symphonic Player Conference meetings, passed. A resolution that ICSOM co-sponsored requiring the AFM to appoint a rank-and-file musician to the board of the Pension Fund passed. The IEB’s recommendation allowing the re-assignment of collective bargaining rights from one local to another, and another IEB recommendation which limits the ability of locals to force musicians travelling into locals for short-term symphonic employment to join, also passed, reducing the financial burden of union membership on our driving-for-dollars colleagues.

More money will come into SSD as a result of the passage of another IEB recommendation (heavily modified in the back rooms at the urging of ICSOM, ROPA, and OCSM) redefining symphonic orchestras for purposes of Federation work dues. ICSOM supported the redefinition in part because of a public promise by President Young that much of the additional revenue it generates will flow to SSD. And a measure put forward by Local 802 increasing the voting power of large locals passed—remarkably, on a voice vote.

ICSOM also helped defeat several proposals, some before they even came before the Convention, that would have hurt symphonic musicians, including a move to do away with the Orchestra Services Program (OSP) and a resolution that would have diverted a substantial chunk of the AFM’s income away from the operations departments like SSD and EMSD and towards organizing. No one doubts that the AFM needs to do more organizing; the ITF package began with a change in the AFM’s bylaws that put organizing at the heart of the AFM’s activities. But organizing needs to be funded, and funded in ways that do not penalize those AFM members who are already organized.

These positive outcomes were a result of many people’s efforts. Perhaps the most important factor was the increased presence of working musicians, not only over in the Player Confer-

ence corner of the room, but amongst the voting delegates. Many of those who attended the Unity Conference took to heart the call to become AFM delegates, and their presence made an enormous difference, not only in the outcome of debate, but to the tone and substance of that debate as well. The last AFM Convention spent three hours arguing about the bylaw requiring locals to have telephones; this convention spent time discussing such issues as the role of contractors on local boards and how much voting power the largest locals should have. Finally the AFM was talking about substance and not trivia.

Working musicians were not only on the floor of the Convention, but also served in the back rooms on the very important Finance, Law, and Measures & Benefits Committees. President Steve Young put some very well-known ICSOMites on some very important committees, where they spent long and punishing days advancing the cause of working musicians.

The efforts of all of these activists made this a successful Convention by the usual standards. But of course we weren’t using the usual standards this time. Through the ITF process and the Unity Conference, the Player Conferences had raised the bar dramatically.

So how did we do? Very little of the legislation proposed by ITF was adopted unscathed. Of the two most important ITF proposals that ICSOM approved last summer at Unity, the proposal barring local officers from serving as employers was passed in a severely restricted form. The proposal for the Conference Representatives Board (CRB) was withdrawn by the ITF after several days of difficult negotiations with the Joint Law and Finance Committee.

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Interest-Based Bargaining Coming Soon To An Orchestra Near You

Mary C. Plaine

Baltimore Symphony Orchestra ICSOM Delegate and
ICSOM Member-at-Large

For the past several years, Interest-Based Bargaining, or IBB, has been promoted by many employers, and also some employees, in the symphonic field as well as other industries which engage in collective bargaining as an alternative to the traditional adversarial style of collective bargaining that can occasionally disintegrate into confrontation.

Proponents of IBB claim that in traditional bargaining the two sides bring their close-to-final proposals to the table—the solutions to the problems that they want to solve—and hammer away at each other until one side wins and the other loses. They assume that in traditional bargaining neither side cares about the interests, desires, or fears of the other side—the reasons behind the proposals. Traditional bargaining responds to power and right. The aftermath of bargaining in an adversarial manner leaves both sides mistrustful of the other, and the loser always ready and eager to beat up on the winner during the life of the contract.

There are also assumptions to be made when engaging in Interest-Based Bargaining. Some of these assumptions are that both sides have mutual interests and goals, that both sides have equal power and knowledge, that information and ideas are shared openly, that the most important people are at the table and committed to

creating/continuing a relationship with the other side while being committed to making a deal, and that there is good will on both sides. Also assumed is that the resulting contract settlement, reached through consensus, leaves both sides feeling good about each other, ready to continue building a healthy working relationship throughout the life of the contract and for years to come.

To fully use IBB in negotiations, all members of both the employer's and the employees' negotiating committees must attend a two-day training program given by what should be an impartial third party, frequently a federal mediator. (It was suggested that an orchestra's secondary leadership and those of opposing opinions also be included in the training.) At the training sessions, the rules of IBB are learned and practiced. Those thinking of engaging in IBB should know that IBB is a very time-consuming process and requires commitment on everyone's part in order to succeed.

This process of traditional Interest-Based Bargaining is outlined below. Remember that these steps are done at the table with both sides working together as one unit.

- The issues to be dealt with at the table are identified. The focus is on the issues and not on personalities.
- The interests behind those issues are examined. What are each side's fears and needs? Mutual interests are identified. "Active listening" is an important skill to be used.
- The technique of brainstorming, without judgement, is used to generate as many options (possible solutions) as possible to satisfy the issues. Information is shared.
- Objective standards against which the options are to be compared are agreed upon.



A Week In The Life Of ICSOM The 1999 Conference Through the Eyes of the Editor

8/23/99 Monday

9:30 am ~ My first stop en route to the ICSOM Conference is mile-high Denver, to spend a few days acclimating to altitude before the climb to 8,000-foot-high Vail. (Thanks to Michael Thornton, hornist of the Colorado Symphony, for hosting my stay.) Cindy Lewis, the All-Powerful ICSOM Secretary, is picking me up any minute now for the 2-hour ride to Vail. Once there, we go to the grocery to buy food for the **Annual Pre-Conference Governing Board (GB) Chowdown**. This is the first round in the GB's constantly repeating conference routine—eat, think, talk, eat, think, talk, eat, think, talk, eat, . . . It always begins and ends with eating.

1:00 pm ~ Cindy and I haul food up to Cindy's room, known as the "Hostility Suite" (only semi-Hostile this year because ICSOM Treasurer Stephanie Tretick can't be here), and we begin meal preparations. Cutting potatoes is giving me a tiny twinge in my alternate C# trill key finger, and a little high-altitude headache is setting in, but Cindy and I, while preparing dinner, are having a productive

discussion about the future of ICSOM and the changing role of the GB in getting there. We agree that more involvement of the rank-and-file needs to be part of that future.

7:00pm ~ The GB, Conference Coordinator Tom Hall, ROPA President Andy Brandt and other dignitaries gather in the Hostility Suite for a dinner of grilled potato chips, salad, veggie wraps, coconut chicken, trout a l'orange (fresh-caught by Cindy at a trout farm in Boulder), steak, dessert, and assorted beverages (Tom brought the wine). The dialogue continues and the circle of discussion widens.

8/24/99 Tuesday

9:30am ~ Here we are, hunkered down in the "Ego Suite" (the Lair of the ICSOM Chair) for the **Annual Pre-Conference All-Day GB Meeting**. It starts with lox and bagels (remember what I said about eating?), moving into discussions about ICSOM's internal schedules, labor flare-ups in the orchestra field, underfunded

- The options are measured against these objective standards.
- The ultimate option that meets both sides' interests is reached by consensus.

In traditional bargaining there can be a lot of posturing and sparring before we all come down to the final questions, "What do you really want? What will it take to make this deal?" In IBB, "What do you really want" is the starting point of the conversation between the two sides.

Too good to be true? Perhaps. But in two examples which were presented at the 1999 ICSOM Conference, musicians spoke of the positive results their players had achieved using IBB in negotiations. They had become believers.

In addition to the few orchestras which have actually used IBB or similar processes in contract talks, many others have managements which have made noises about it. The American Symphony Orchestra League twice this year conducted seminars on IBB for orchestra management personnel. Because it seemed a timely subject, the second day of the 1999 ICSOM Conference was devoted to exploring Interest-Based Bargaining.

The conference was fortunate to have as the morning presenter Commissioner Joel Schaffer from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service in Oakland, California. Prior to joining the FMCS, Joel had been a Field Representative for Service Employees International Union Local 790, a Journeyman Sheetmetal Worker, and an Ordinary Seaman in the U.S. Merchant Marine. He also has a Black Belt in Aikido. Joel served as mediator for both the dancers and the musicians of the San Francisco Ballet.

Joel proved himself a good sport. Whether he was trading barbs with ICSOM Counsel Leonard Leibowitz or demonstrating martial arts moves as a metaphor for being willing to consider another person's viewpoint, he made his points about negotiating in an entertaining fashion.

In Vail, Joel Schaffer began the morning by stating that he was not a shill for IBB. He was not going to stand up at the front of the room and tell us, "You must do IBB this way. Period." Or that IBB is the best and only way to negotiate. Rather, he encouraged us to learn about the philosophy and reasons for IBB, and to keep an open mind when entering any negotiation process. If we have already determined for ourselves how things are, based on our perceptions, we close ourselves to the ability to be creative and find solutions that may achieve our goals while also meeting the needs of the other side as well.

Joel stated that IBB is not a way to repair damaged relationships. He added that a good relationship has the ability to deal with differences, and that well-placed skepticism is better than misplaced trust. While it seems that the biggest requirement for IBB to work well is "trust" between the two sides, Joel responded that he preferred the word "transparent," meaning that neither side has a hidden agenda or withholds information.

The morning session ended with an exercise often used in IBB training to teach participants more creative ways to solve problems, to think "outside the box." The Delegates took a short test to determine each person's working style, and each of us was classified as an Amiable, Expressive, Analytical, or Driver. In the next exercise, the Delegates discovered that the traits the four personality types most admired about themselves were the traits the other three groups

(continued on next page)

pensions, and the possibility of a joint conference in 2001 with the other symphonic player conferences, among other things.

12:30pm ~ Lunch arrives (remember what I said about eating?), and we come up for air. As we eat, the talk moves to developing more union activism in our ranks, leading to more working musicians as AFM Convention delegates and more reform at the local level. At 4:00pm Florence Nelson of the SSD joins us and we tackle our mutual concerns, including the AFM Wage Charts, media issues, and problems/opportunities in the recent expansion of orchestral education and outreach programs.

6:30pm ~ The GB being brain-dead, the meeting diminishes to an end. Several GBers plan to rendezvous for dinner, but I opt for a quiet dinner in my room and an evening to prepare for the next day's activities. At about 8:00pm the phone rings. Mary Plaine, ICSOM Member-at-Large, asks if she could come over for a chat. The thread of discussion Cindy and I began 36 hours earlier continues.

10:00pm ~ My local union calls, informing me that an Internet broadcasting crisis has come up. Could I please talk to Debbie

Newmark, SSD Media Administrator, and Brad Buckley, ICSOM Media Chair, about it while we are all there in Vail? "Of course," I say. "Fax over the material." (The ICSOM Conference is not just formal meetings and presentations; it is a national networking opportunity *par excellence*.)

8/25/99 Wednesday

1:00pm ~ **Opening session of the Conference.** I take my seat at the head table. This is the fourth year I have done this, sitting among the officers of this organization. There is always a lump in my throat, a feeling of trepidation about sitting in a leadership position among the giants of my industry. What a quirk of destiny, a fluke of history, that I should have this experience. And how fast I must run to keep up with the demands of responsibility. But here I am, with humble skills to offer (and blood and guts to spill), so I keep running.

(continued on next page)

(INTEREST-BASED BARGAINING - continued from page 3)

disliked the most about them. It was a fun way to get to know something about ourselves and made the point that we frequently come up against people with whom we don't get along but with whom we must learn to work and interact. "The advantage of Interest-Based Bargaining," commented Joel, "is that it helps to develop a culture of inquiry as a way of solving problems."

In the afternoon the Delegates heard from five other speakers. Two of them, Leonard Leibowitz, ICSOM Counsel, and Florence Nelson, Director of Symphonic Services for the AFM, spoke for the union and the more traditional approach to bargaining. Lenny reminded us that a committee's goal in collective bargaining is to get the best contract it can. "Making nice" might get a deal but will it get the *best* deal? "Is it the goal of collective bargaining to improve relationships or is it to get a good agreement?" He stated that, in his opinion, good traditional bargaining *is* interest-based bargaining, that this discussion comes down to a difference in semantics. He also warned that while a negotiator's job is to get the best contract settlement possible, a mediator's primary concern is to get the deal—any deal—done. Lenny's concern is that ASOL and our managements are supporting the move from traditional bargaining to IBB because it is more beneficial to their needs.

Unions have several fears for employees who enter into IBB negotiations without fully understanding the possible pitfalls they might encounter. One of these fears is that by eliminating the two "sides" at the table, union identity is eliminated as well.

We must remember that as employee representatives we should have a voice in creating the ground rules for doing IBB. These rules are just as negotiable as the issues which will come up during the

actual bargaining. Some of the traditional IBB ground rules are:

- Instead of the two sides sitting on opposing sides of the table, the seating is arranged management-employee-management-employee-, etc.
- Instead of both sides taking notes individually, a different person (alternating between the two sides) at each meeting makes notes on a flipchart, which becomes the record, the history for the negotiation.
- There is no caucusing or note-passing.

If these or other ground rules are unsatisfactory to us, we have every right to insist on rules with which we are more comfortable. Perhaps the result of these initial negotiations will be that IBB is not right for your orchestra at this time.

Some of the AFM's concerns are that during brainstorming and consensus building, two IBB processes that both sides do together, divisions in orchestra solidarity will become apparent to the other side and be used against us. Other union anxieties due to the process of IBB (the possible retreats, the training, the sharing, etc.) are that the employees' negotiating committee will become much closer to the employer and more distant from the rank-and-file. We must remember that our job is to get the best contract for the orchestra and not be intimidated by group pressure to agree to consensus if we feel that it is not in our best interest.

Peter Wahrhaftig of the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra said that IBB really worked for them. He echoed Joel's admonition that you need to have an out, a way of transitioning to a more traditional form of negotiating if IBB breaks down. Peter also agreed with Florence that the musicians must prepare for IBB negotiations just as if they were going into traditional bargaining. All homework must

(A WEEK IN THE LIFE - continued from page 3)

7:00pm ~ The ICSOM social event, the "Mixer." More eating and thinking and talking and eating. I got a chance to meet and talk with Larry Wexler, ICSOM Delegate this year from the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. What a charming man. He manifests the same gentle dignity that I have seen in so many of our older colleagues who fought the first battles of ICSOM. What a knowledge of the history of orchestra labor problems he has, and of the fact that those problems continue to this day, even in the most secure and best-paid orchestras in the country.

9:30pm ~ The GB has one more commitment today—another meeting in the Ego Suite, this time with Charles Olton of the American Symphony Orchestra League. We call it a night by 10:30pm, tired but buoyed by optimism for better relations and more collaboration between ICSOM and ASOL.

8/26/99 Thursday

10:00am ~ The Interest-Based Bargaining Panel. Oh boy, have I been waiting for this! Maybe now I'll find out what the hell it

is. Joel Schaffer from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service gives a wonderfully clear and entertaining presentation, but by the end of the afternoon session it is the ICSOM Delegates themselves and the SSD who elucidate me on the practical meaning of IBB—IBB is the kind of negotiation you have when management can be trusted; "traditional" or "adversarial" bargaining is what you have when they can't be.

8:00pm ~ Paul Judy of the Symphony Orchestra Institute gives an informal presentation in the "Hospitality Suite" (not to be confused with the Hostility Suite) about his views of the orchestra business. Everyone is respectful and appreciative of Paul's efforts to help the orchestra field, but several Delegates and guests question some of Paul's positions.

10:30pm ~ The Delegate from my orchestra and I get together with representatives of the New Jersey and North Carolina orchestras in SSD Negotiator Chris Durham's room to discuss how those two orchestras had built better relationships with their boards, in hopes of helping my orchestra do the same. (This is a great value of ICSOM—providing the communicative link for each member orchestra to benefit from the experiences, both positive and negative, of the others.) We recess around 12:30am, but these talks will continue tomorrow.

be done. The rank-and-file must be organized.

James Clute told how IBB had been used in Minnesota in a pension reopener, and later in a full contract negotiation. He had been firmly against taking part in IBB but was now strongly advocating its use for two reasons, aside from the fact that it had achieved good results—the IBB process had shut up the management lawyer and had created a situation where the players had direct contact with board members. “When it comes to touchy-feely, if it will bring a better contract, I’ll touch anything and feel anything.”

Oregon’s ICSOM Delegate Fred Sautter explained that, in the aftermath of his orchestra’s recent strike and due to the hiring of a new executive director whom the players feel is a trustworthy person, the musicians were behind the use of IBB in their next contract talks. The musicians had already been in several training sessions with a FMCS commissioner to evaluate the process and were ready to begin the training with management this fall.

All the speakers seemed to agree that IBB is just one more tool that can be used in bargaining. It doesn’t have to be the only way to negotiate, but that its techniques can be used when desired and discarded when necessary.

In the final exercise of the session, the Delegates met in small discussion groups to answer three questions: Would IBB work with their orchestra? Why or why not? What kind of relationship did their orchestra want with management? The one word that many said reflected the type of relationship they wanted but didn’t have was “respect.” Most Delegates seemed skeptical that IBB would work in their situations, due mainly to a lack of trust between the players and the employers. Joel suggested that it is the responsibility of the committee to teach management which of their behaviors build trust and which break it down.

It seems, Joel Schaffer observed, that all employees want a relationship with their employer that is respectful and where agreements are honored. If the musicians feel that management is trustworthy, that their relationship with management is healthy, and that the communication is open, then IBB will probably work well for the orchestra. If a negative climate exists, IBB will probably not succeed.

How did the Delegates feel about spending the day discussing Interest-Based Bargaining? Some felt it was time very well spent. But one Delegate commented, “IBB is nothing more than management orientation and I’m very disappointed that a whole day was wasted on it.” Another reacted, “IBB seems to be an initiative by managers who are tired of facing musician negotiating teams. If so, it tells me that negotiation skills (and intra-musician communication) have reached a very high level on the part of ICSOM musicians!”



John Koen (Philadelphia), John Lofton (Phoenix), and Fred Sautter (Oregon) also contributed to this article.

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8/27/99 Friday

10:00am ~ Music Medicine panel. I know this is important, but I can’t get over the feeling that this session will be—well, boring. But not so! Our array of medical experts cover problems both inside and outside the head, and also with arms, backs, necks, and stomachs, including shockingly graphic photos of lip surgery. Thank God psychologist David Sternbach had first offered us some techniques to relax the mind.

2:30pm ~ Technically this is the Conference’s afternoon off, but ICSOM Counsel Lenny Leibowitz and SSD staff offer an optional workshop for negotiating orchestras which many Delegates, including some from non-negotiating orchestras, attend. I am deeply moved by the discussion, witnessing the common labor grounding shared by all the orchestras represented, large and small alike, each caring about the problems of the others and wanting to help.

4:00pm ~ The GB meets again in the Ego Suite, this time for a debriefing of the July AFM Convention. Fred Sautter, Oregon Symphony ICSOM Delegate and a member of the Finance

Committee at the Convention, Bill Moriarity of the New York City local, and Mark Jones of the Buffalo local, all of whom were major players at the AFM Convention, join the GB to discuss the general success of the ICSOM/PC/ITF agenda at the Convention and the things we need to do to keep up the momentum.

5:00pm ~ I catch the tail end of David Sternbach’s optional seminar on stage fright and the psychology of performing. I can see by the beatific look on everyone’s face that David’s words are having the desired effect.

7:00pm ~ We try a new thing, an open session at which the Delegates and officers of ICSOM get to talk about whatever moves them. The evening begins with “campaign speeches” by each of the candidates for GB Member-at-Large or their representatives (10 people are running for 4 positions), followed by opportunities for Delegates to raise any issues that are important to them. Several problems surface that ICSOM can help solve, and resolutions are drawn up for legislative action tomorrow. This unstructured session seems to be a good idea, productive and well-received by the Delegates.

(continued on page 7)

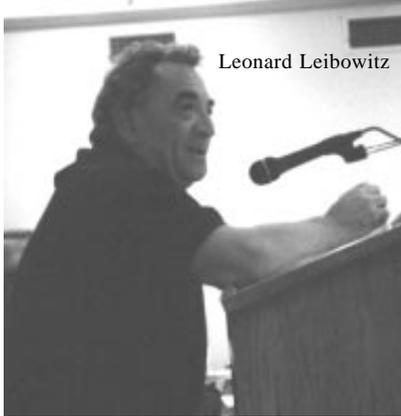
ICSOM @ Work

Jim Clute

Robert Levine

Nancy Stutsman

Fred Sautter



Leonard Leibowitz



Joel Schaffer



Warren Powell,
Bill Buchman, and
Rachel Goldstein



*Photo credits:
Hollis Ulaky (Char-
lotte), Mary Frank
(Jacksonville), and
Marsha Schweitzer
(Honolulu)*



Geoff Hale

John Lofton

Nancy Stutsman

Mike Buccicone



Be It Resolved . . .

Resolutions adopted by the 1999 ICSOM Conference

Whereas, Fred Zenone has served ICSOM with great distinction as regional vice chairman from 1974 to 1978, as ICSOM vice chairman from 1978 to 1980, and as ICSOM chairman from 1980 to 1986; and

Whereas, The ICSOM Governing Board and Delegates have traditionally sought to express their gratitude to those who have served with such distinction on suitable occasions; and

Whereas, Fred Zenone is now retiring from the National Symphony Orchestra after thirty years of service; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the ICSOM Governing Board and the Delegates to the 1999 ICSOM conference express their profound gratitude to Fred Zenone for his service to ICSOM, to orchestra musicians, and to the orchestra field as a whole; and, be it further

Resolved, That the ICSOM Governing Board and the Delegates to the 1999 ICSOM Conference congratulate Fred Zenone on the occasion of his retirement from the National Symphony and wish him well in his further endeavors to advance the cause of symphonic music and musicians; and, be it further

Resolved, That the ICSOM Governing Board and the Delegates to the 1999 ICSOM Conference dedicate the 1999 Annual ICSOM Conference to Fred Zenone.



Whereas, The principle of open elections is fundamental to the healthy functioning of a democratic organization; and

Whereas, There has been a perception expressed to the ICSOM Governing Board that the functioning of the ICSOM Nominating Committee has discouraged interested individuals not nominated by the Nominating Committee to run for office; therefore, be it

Resolved, That article 5, Section 7(b), of the ICSOM bylaws be amended to read as follows: "The Governing board shall appoint a Nominating Committee which may, at its discretion, nominate candidates at each annual conference for those offices which are to be filled that year. Additional nominations may be made from the floor."



Whereas, The music of the Latin community, like the music of other ethnic communities in the United States, represents the rich ethnic fabric of North America and is an integral part of the modern culture of the United States; and

Whereas, The labor of Latino musicians across the U.S. created \$570.8 million in Latin music revenue for record companies in 1998—a 16% increase over 1997—while many Latino musicians do not receive fair industry standard compensation for their work; and

Whereas, The AFM, by initiating the grass roots STAR (Support Tejano Advancement in Recording) campaign in Texas, has taken a position in opposition to such profiteering when it is at the expense of the artists who made such profits possible; and

Whereas, The STAR campaign, coordinated by the AFM's Organizing and Education department, has galvanized a broad base of support among community and labor organizations, thereby bringing favorable attention to our union; therefore, be it

Resolved, That we, the Delegates to the 1999 Conference of the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians, endorse the STAR campaign and declare our unqualified support for Tejano musicians' campaign for justice and equality; and, be it further

Resolved, That we, as union symphony, opera, and ballet musicians, shall individually and collectively do whatever possible to support the AFM's efforts to increase union density in the recording industry through organizing and mobilizing musicians who record Latin music; and be it further

Resolved, That we will educate and inform musicians in our orchestras, as well as supporters of classical music in our communities, about STAR and encourage them to actively support the campaign; and, be it further

Resolved, That we hereby call upon the AFM's International Executive Board to make available to the STAR campaign whatever financial and human resources are practicable in order to assist in bringing the campaign to a logical conclusion for the benefit of our brother and sister musicians.



(continued on next page)

(A WEEK IN THE LIFE - continued from page 5)

8/28/99 Saturday

10:00am ~ The final day of the official Conference. I am exhausted, having gotten barely five hours of sleep per night for most of the last week. Mark Schubert, the Honolulu Symphony Delegate, refers to this as "the sleep deprivation experiment that is ICSOM." Though bleary-eyed, we forge ahead. Elections for Members-at-Large are held; Jay Blumenthal, New York City Ballet Delegate, becomes the only new face on the GB, with Mary Plaine, Michael Moore, and Charlie Schlueter winning reelection. Brad Buckley follows with his usual stirring media report, full of good news from the negotiations and bad news about what looms over the horizon in the recording industry.

1:00pm ~ Resolutions, resolutions, and more resolutions. Amendments to resolutions. Amendments to the amendments. Motions to call the question. Motions failed. Motions carried. There is a pain in my side that I get when I have been sitting almost constantly for six days. It will pass. Most of the resolutions will, too.

Good and Welfare. This is the time at the end of the Conference when people say nice things about each other, offer thanks, etc. Warren Powell, Delegate of the Florida Orchestra, commends the editor of *Senza Sordino* for her work on the paper. Oops, I almost miss my moment, engaged as I am in helping Cindy sort out the just-passed resolutions. In the nick of time I notice that I am being applauded. I stand for a bow, but it feels weird without a bassoon in my hands.

around 5:00pm ~ Business being concluded, the Conference is adjourned. Just like that, it's over.

10:20pm ~ In the Hospitality Suite, members of the ICSOM Governing Board are seen expressing their appreciation to members of the SSD staff for their hard and effective work, one human being to another, one denizen of the labor trenches to another. Some people took last year's criticisms of the AFM in *Senza* as a sign of enmity between the AFM and ICSOM, but not so. Like most dissent, it was more a kind of tough love.

(continued on next page)

(RESOLUTIONS - continued from page 7)

Whereas, The position of ICSOM Directory Supervisor has become increasingly demanding; and

Whereas, The current occupant of that position has filled it with great distinction and competence; therefore, be it

Resolved, That ICSOM pay an honorarium of \$500 to the current ICSOM Directory Supervisor, Mary Plaine, in recognition of and appreciation for her contribution to ICSOM during the past year.



Whereas, The position of ICSOM Conference Coordinator has become increasingly demanding; and

Whereas, The current occupant of that position has filled it with great distinction and competence; therefore, be it

Resolved, That ICSOM pay an honorarium of \$500 to the current ICSOM Conference Coordinator, Tom Hall, in recognition of and appreciation for his contribution to ICSOM during the past year.



Whereas, The AFM and ICSOM have negotiated a "fence agreement" with the New World Symphony which governs the conduct of the New World Symphony with relationship to professional musicians and professional orchestras; and

Whereas, This agreement has not yet been signed; therefore, be it

Resolved, That ICSOM urge the AFM to expedite the signing of this agreement and that the AFM vigorously enforce the terms of that agreement in consultation with the ICSOM Governing Board and the elected representatives of the musicians of the Florida Philharmonic; and be it further

Resolved, That any future renegotiation of the "fence agreement" be conducted by the AFM and ICSOM in consultation with elected representatives of the Florida Philharmonic.



Whereas, Richard and Fiona Simon of the New York Philharmonic have spent over \$50,000 to win a major victory for symphony musicians in the field of tax law; and

Whereas, Their principled stand on behalf of their colleagues nationwide will result not only in great tax savings for those colleagues but also in ensuring that musicians entering the symphonic field will be able to afford access to quality instruments; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the ICSOM Governing Board borrow from the ICSOM Emergency Relief Fund an amount necessary to settle the Simons' remaining legal bills, said amount not to exceed the guidelines of the Fund; and, be it further

Resolved, That the Delegates and Governing Board of ICSOM appeal to every ICSOM orchestra to make a collective contribution of a sufficient amount to repay the ERF.



Whereas, ICSOM has often held its annual conferences in a member orchestra's home city; and

Whereas, The longtime venue for the annual ICSOM Conference, the Antlers at Vail, will be unavailable in 2000 and perhaps in 2001; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the ICSOM Governing Board be given the authority to accept an invitation from a member orchestra or find another suitable site for the ICSOM Conference 2000.



Whereas, The 1998 Unity Conference resulted in valuable sharing of information and networking among the representatives of member orchestras of ICSOM, ROPA, and OCSM; and

Whereas, The longtime venue for the annual ICSOM Conference, the Antlers at Vail, will be unavailable in 2000 and perhaps in 2001; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the ICSOM Governing Board be directed to explore, in consultation with the boards of OCSM and ROPA, the advisability of, and possible agenda items for, a joint symphonic conference for the summer of 2001.



Whereas, The positive impact of rank-and-file working musicians attending the 1999 Convention of the American Federation of Musicians was widely noted; and

Whereas, The American Federation of Musicians belongs to its members; and

Whereas, Rank-and-file working musicians have a fundamental interest in the health and operation not only of their local unions but of the American Federation of Musicians as a whole; therefore, be it

(A WEEK IN THE LIFE - continued from page 7)

8/29/99 Sunday

8:00am ~ I run down to the Conference office—the domain—nay, the kingdom—nay, the Empire, of Benevolent Despot Tom Hall, the Greatest Conference Coordinator That Ever Was, to do some last minute computer printing for the—yes, yet another—GB meeting. (Did I say it was over? Well, for the GB, not quite.) Cindy and Dave are already here, as is Tom, packing papers and other Conference stuff into boxes to be sent back to points East.

10:00am ~ Here we are, again in the Ego Suite for the Annual Post-Conference All-Day GB Meeting. We talk about matters such as implementing the Resolutions passed at yesterday's final session, possibilities for future ICSOM book publishing and research activities, developing and publicizing the ICSOM minority scholarship program, and agenda items for next year's Conference.

1:30pm ~ But what's this? The meeting's over already? Perhaps it's the improved email communication through the year, or maybe there aren't as many problems as in prior years, or maybe we have

become more efficient in solving them. Whatever—the meeting is over, and the afternoon is—FREE! (I wish I could remember what I did with it.)

6:00pm ~ The GB minus Charlie, Michael, Jay and Len, who had already left, plus Tom, Andy, Brad and friends, go to dinner at Sweet Basil, one of Vail's finer restaurants. ICSOM Chair Robert Levine, finally allowed a moment of quiet reflection, said, "I really look forward to this—a relaxing dinner after the Conference, a nice glass of wine with friends in pleasant surroundings. And jokes, even a few viola jokes."

8/30/99 Monday

6:30am ~ Time to get up. My van leaves for Denver at 7:55am and I'm still not packed. I snarf down the last of my granola and milk on my way out the door. Andy Brandt is also in the van, and we spend the next two hours recapping the summer's conferences and talking about overuse injuries in bassoon players, Cajun cooking, and alligators (the animal, not the clause).

Senza Sordino Makes The Rounds

During the past year, articles from Senza Sordino have been referenced or reprinted as a resource and educational tool in the health, labor, and educational fields:

◆ In early 1999, psychologist David Sternbach invoked *Senza Sordino* articles on hearing loss at workshops for young musicians at **Brass Day, Levine School of Music**; for physicians, teachers, and performing musicians at the Eastern Regional Workshop, **International Horn Society; for the Medical Society of Maryland, Baltimore**; for occupational health professionals at the **4th Interdisciplinary Conference on Occupational Stress and Health**, "Work, Stress, and Health" in Baltimore; and for the **U.S. Air Force Band** at Bolling AFB, Washington, D.C.

◆ The chart "Stage Setup and Shield Placement in ICSOM Orchestras" from the January 1999 *Senza Sordino* was reprinted in Vol. 22, No. 1 of *The Double Reed*, a publication of the International Double Reed Society.

◆ ICSOM Emeritus Dr. Edward Arian (Philadelphia Orchestra) is using several *Senza Sordino* articles on unions and labor relations in a class he teaches at **Temple University** entitled "Classical Music Profession in the 21st Century."

◆ Michael Borschel's article on domestic partner benefits in orchestras from the April 1999 *Senza Sordino* was reprinted in the August 1999 issue of *Overture*, newsletter of AFM Local 47, Los Angeles.

◆ *Senza Sordino* has been quoted in the *Union Democracy Review*, an independent newsletter of the Association for Union Democracy, which tracks the union democracy movement in America.

Resolved, That the Delegates to the 1999 ICSOM Conference urge the members of all ICSOM orchestras to actively support the election of working musicians to local boards and especially to the position of AFM Convention delegates for their locals; and, be it further

Resolved, That the Delegates to the 1999 ICSOM Conference direct the ICSOM Governing Board to assist in this effort with research, advice, and exhortation.



Whereas, It is vital for all ICSOM orchestras and classical musicians in general that wage rates for national and international media product be uniform; and

Whereas, There is currently increasing pressure by employers to undermine these uniform rates by creating locally negotiated rates and other terms and conditions which are lower than the uniform rates; and

Whereas, This effort by employers must be resisted by the AFM, ICSOM, ROPA, and OCSM; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Delegates to the 1999 ICSOM Conference urge the AFM, the Player Conferences, and all their member orchestras, to resist any attempt to create locally negotiated rates, terms, and conditions to replace and/or undermine AFM national agreements.



Whereas, It appears that the management of the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra violates the terms of its Collective Bargaining Agreement on a regular basis; and

Whereas, Management appears to view its CBA as a set of guidelines rather than a binding document; and

Whereas, The musicians are in a period of transition out of the Orchestra Services Program; now, be it

Resolved, That the Delegates to the 1999 ICSOM Conference call upon President Steve Young to continue to monitor the situation closely and the legitimate concerns of the musicians of the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra until they are satisfied with the local's ability to maintain and enforce its CBA; and, be it further

Resolved, That the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra remain in the transition period out of OSP until such time as those legitimate concerns are resolved to the satisfaction of the musicians of the orchestra.



9:30pm Hawaiian Standard Time ~ After a 2-hour delay in Denver, a 5-hour delay in San Francisco, and 18 hours total in transit, I return to sea level in Honolulu. The flight delays meant that I had time to read three more issues of *The Nation* and get started on a couple of articles for this and future *Senzas*. (When you live in the middle of the ocean, you become adept at making good use of time in airplanes and airports.) The vice president of my local union met me at the Honolulu airport. "How was ICSOM?" he asked. "Maybe I'll remember in the morning," I mumbled.



Postscript ~ And I did remember. The conviviality, the commonality, the comradeship of orchestra musicians at this year's ICSOM Conference seemed especially strong to me. The general understanding of union principles; the knowledge that united we stand, divided we fall; the genuine liking and sympathy of one orchestra for

another; the sense that we all share, at one time or another, the same problems; the skilled and erudite articulation of the needs of orchestra musicians by dozens of Delegates; our compassion for the indignities our colleagues suffer at the hands of employers in orchestras both large and small; our laughter of appreciation for a Delegate's good humor; our tears of gratitude for the lifetime of service of a beloved colleague and good union soldier; our tender moment of healing for an ailing comrade; the overwhelming intelligence, sense, and experience represented by the Delegates assembled; and most of all—the dedication and integrity of 48 Delegates, ICSOM's present and former officers, union officials, and honored guests who—each and every one—care deeply about art, music, truth, beauty, dignity, respect and love. To spend seven days in the constant company of these wonderful people is as great an honor as can be bestowed on a single human life. Long live life, love, art, and ICSOM.

Marsha Schweitzer 8/31/99



At the recent ICSOM conference I was asked to describe the **AFM and Employers' Pension Fund disability pension provision**. I am sorry to say I did not do so as completely as I might have wished.

To receive a disability pension from the AFM & EPF 1) you must have stopped working in covered employment due to a condition of total disability; 2) you must have at least ten years of vesting service, and; 3) you must not have started to receive a Regular Pension Benefit.

To determine total disability the Pension Fund Board of Trustees relies on either a Social Security disability award or a physician's statement. The board also may arrange confirming medical examinations or reexaminations with a physician of its choice; this is almost always the case when an application is based on a participant's physician's statement.

Your disability pension amount will be the same as the monthly amount you would receive if you were age 65 and began receiving a Regular Pension Benefit. In general, the same rules apply to the disability pension as apply to a Regular Pension.

Your disability benefits will continue for your lifetime or as long as you are totally disabled for work under covered employment. You are, however, allowed to earn up to \$15,000 in covered employment in any calendar year while continuing to receive your disability pension; this policy was put in place to allow a participant to develop another discipline within the music field and to begin to earn a living by means of that discipline. It might, for example, allow a disabled instrumentalist to develop skills in music preparation. If you earn more than \$15,000 in a calendar year, your disability payments will stop.

Should you need any further information, please do not hesitate to call the AFM&EP Fund at 212-284-1200 or 800-833-8065.

*William Moriarity
President, Local 802
and AFM-EPF Trustee*

Thank You All

for the cards, phone calls, tape, and especially the healing moment. It is hard to describe how much difference your support made in my hospital stay, especially at the worst. When one is alone and very vulnerable, frightened and in pain, it is hard to remember that so many folk out there are hoping, caring, and wishing the best. The tangible evidence of this was worth more than any medicine or pain killer. Thank you all for everything.

I am home now and slowly recovering, but I can see progress every day. If you wish to make contact with me my email is:

lwaldeck@iname.com.

Love and kisses,

Lew Waldeck

Editor's note: Lew Waldeck, retired Director of the SSD and New York City Opera Emeritus, had hip replacement surgery, with transient complications, at the time of the ICSOM Conference. Psychologist David Sternbach led those assembled at ICSOM in a quiet moment of healing for Lew.



The ICSOM Governing Board: Dave Angus, Jay Blumenthal, Robert Levine, Michael Moore, Mary Plaine, Cindy Lewis, Marsha Schweitzer, Charlie Schlueter.

(AFM CONVENTION - continued from page 1)

In light of these apparent setbacks in advancing our most critical reforms, can we call the ITF a success? As with most answers to hard questions, it all depends on the definitions. The ITF process was a very ambitious effort, and it achieved some very surprising results. We may not have gotten the AFM to accept our view of the evils of having employers on our local boards, at least this year, but we forced a discussion of what is perhaps the most fundamental issue that any union can ask itself—for whom does it exist?

It's a discussion that, for the AFM, is happening 100 years later than it ought to have, and it's not over yet. It may not even be very far along the road to ultimate resolution yet. But if it weren't for the ITF/Unity process, it wouldn't have started at all. If, in ten or twenty years, the AFM and its locals will have been purged of all traces of employer domination, as I believe will be the case, none will deserve more credit than the Player Conferences and the local officers who associated themselves with the ITF.

The fate of the ITF's proposal on AFM governance presents a similar picture. While the ITF proposal for the CRB was withdrawn, that was done only after a commitment from President Young that a working group consisting of himself, AFM General Counsel George Cohen, members of Joint Law and Finance, and members of the ITF would be formed—and funded by the AFM—with the intention of producing legislation to meet the concerns of the Players Conferences that would pass at the next AFM Convention.

The ITF process was a milestone event in the AFM's history. In a union where most ideas come from the top down, the ITF was an eruption of grassroots concern about core philosophical issues. In a union where the Player Conferences and the locals have been fighting for three decades, the ITF was a forum where local officers and Player Conference leadership met as true equals and formed a consensus about change. In a union where candidates for office stay as far away from issues as possible, the ITF went a long way towards forming the basis for a progressive movement, based on issues, within the AFM.

The ITF was an idealistic venture, with the goals of identifying core issues for the AFM's future and proposing substantive and achievable solutions to those issues. In those goals it succeeded. But all the participants in the ITF process knew from the outset that "achievable" did not mean "easily achievable." And, if we were paying close attention last summer at Unity when Ken Paff told us that union reform was a marathon and not a sprint, we should have known that "achievable" doesn't mean "achievable tomorrow," either.

Unions are conservative institutions, and democratic unions are *very* conservative institutions. Institutions like change no more than people like change. But neither people nor institutions can freeze themselves in the status quo. The ultimate success of the ITF/Unity process may be simply that it defined the terms of the debate over the AFM's future.

The ITF and the Unity Conference helped to create an informal, but very real, coalition of progressive forces within the AFM. That coalition has opened a door for fundamental reform of the AFM. Now we have to walk through that door and continue to push to make the AFM a real union for working musicians.

✱ ✱



drawing by Ethan Stang (Pittsburgh Symphony, retired)

Newslets

The **Charlotte Symphony Orchestra** was voted to ICSOM membership at this year's Conference as the 48th ICSOM member orchestra. Welcome!



ICSOM has paid the final installment to cover the legal costs of the Simon tax depreciation case, in which Richard and Fiona Simon of the New York Philharmonic defended in Tax Court their depreciation deduction for their antique bows (see "The Depreciation Deduction," *Senza Sordino* December 1996). The Simons won the case, to the benefit of all professional musicians, but incurred staggering legal costs in the process. **\$10,000 was contributed from the ICSOM Emergency Relief Fund to the Council for Living Music-Instrument Fund** to pay the Simons' final legal bills. At the 1999 ICSOM Conference the Delegates agreed to raise the necessary funds from ICSOM orchestras to repay the ERF.



Over \$1,400.00 was raised at the 1999 ICSOM Conference for TEMPO, the AFM's political action committee.



NOTICE – The AFM Symphonic Services Division and the ICSOM Media Committee urge all orchestras to contact Florence Nelson or Debbie Newmark at the SSD before entering into any kind of media agreement with management.



"Sing Faster: The Stagehands' Ring Cycle" takes a behind-the-scenes look at how the members of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) Local 16 prepare the setting for the San Francisco Opera production of Richard Wagner's Ring Cycle, "Der Ring Des Nibelungen." The hour-long documentary shows the stagehands operating the tricky, snapping jaws of a huge hydraulic dragon and wading through fog, smoke and darkness as they maneuver looming, 1,000-pound sets. The Joe Else film, which won the 1999 Sundance Filmmakers' trophy, will be shown on PBS stations in October and November. Check local broadcast listings or the Independent Television service website at www.itvs.org. (from *America At Work*, a publication of the AFL-CIO)

LABOR DAY 1999

Unions have always understood that the challenge is not just about getting jobs, but about expanding opportunity and leaving no one behind. Unions gave life to Social Security, the 40-hour work week, the minimum wage, overtime pay, pension and health protections, and more. Unions made these protections a core part of America—so much so that many today may even take them for granted. But the labor movement was on the front lines in the fight for every single one of them.

— *U.S. Secretary of Labor Alexis M. Herman*

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