

EDITORIAL

According to the New York Times "economists have been exploring the statistics of culture. The arts market, they report, is one of the fastest growing markets of all." "Last year Americans spent nearly \$400 million at theaters, Opera, and concert halls."

It would seem that more symphony and opera board members—top professionals in finance and business—could or would find a way to utilize the above mentioned market potential to provide long overdue and well deserved salary increases for the musicians in their orchestra. The massive resistance commonly used against orchestra proposals might, if redirected in a positive effort, produce ample funds to raise salaries from their present beer levels to vintage wine levels—for the champagne quality services provided.

One explanation to the above problem can be found in the recently released Rockefeller Fund Report on the Arts. (Boxed)

The report suggests that board members be screened as carefully as the performers. Several examples supporting the validity of this suggestion can be cited. They are remarks made by high ranking board officers during crises with their musicians in the recent past:

ROCKEFELLER FUND REPORT on the Arts

On the matter of *Organization*:

- Board members should be as carefully screened as performers.
- Officials should be receptive to change and innovation. Full time paid chief executives and presidents should be considered.
- Too often the dilettante mentality—belief that all that is needed for success is talented artists—prevails. But a good orchestra, a good theater, a good opera or dance group cannot be established or run by well-wishing volunteers."

- *The musicians are nickeling and diming us to death.*
- *Bickering over a lousy \$6,000 is irritating everybody. The musicians are cutting their throats over penny-ante stuff.*
- *It's not our fault they became musicians instead of truck drivers.*

These remarks by the custodians of great musical cultural organizations are incongruous. They reveal a lack of communication and understanding that is appalling. The annual salary of many a highly trained symphonic musician is less than a "lousy \$6,000".

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

The Rockefeller Fund Report says "full-time paid chief executives and presidents should be considered."

Helen M. Thompson, Executive Vice-president of the American Symphony Orchestra League, suggests training and preparation for "those who have at least some experience in music performance to take their places as adult patrons, board and

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THE RENAISSANCE OF 1965

Culture is the latest big business in the country. Last year's \$3 billion market will double itself by 1970, if not sooner, the experts predict. From 1953 to 1960, spending on the arts rose about 130% more than twice the amount that was spent on recreation in general and six times as much as on sports.

At the theaters, bookshops, opera houses, civic centers and the galleries, the ferment in the arts has reached proportions of a national phenomenon. Interest in culture, say researchers in the field, has become the newest status symbol, and conspicuous esthetics may become the norm, to the surprise of no one.

—N.Y. Times, Nat's Economic Review, 1/11/65

SENZA SORDINO

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• MONTREAL

Mr. George Zazofsky, President of the ICSOM, met last fall with Mr. Barry Tuckwell, Chairman and 1st hornist of the *London Symphony Orchestra*, and several other men in the orchestra. These gentlemen are very interested in the ICSOM and plan, in cooperation with the other major orchestras in London, to send one or more delegates to the next ICSOM meeting to be held in September, 1965 in Toronto, Canada.

• MONTREAL

The *Montreal Symphony* deficit for the season of 1963-1964 was \$17,000. The budget for the 1964-65 season passed the million mark at \$1,150,000.

In the recent past, the orchestra quadrupled its presentations in one year. More than 300,000 adults and 65,000 children attended these greatly extended programs.

• ISRAEL

The *Israeli Philharmonic* has a playing season of 10 months—then the orchestra gets 2 months paid vacation (said to be 1 1/2 times regular pay). There is no permanent conductor—all guests such as Paray, Celibidache, Solti, Barbirolli, Dorati, Munch, Steinberg, etc.

Because of the large number of ticket holders (approx. 40,000) the orchestra is required to play each program about 12 times—8 times in Tel-Aviv, 3 times in Haifa, and once in Jerusalem. The halls in Tel-Aviv (Mann auditorium—the orchestra's permanent home) and in Jerusalem are almost always sold out. About 225 concerts are given each season. With rehearsals this adds up to a very busy schedule.

• MONTE CARLO

The *Monte Carlo National Orchestra* has signed for a tour of Canada and the U. S. in February and March of 1966. Under the direction of the permanent titular conductor, Louis Fremaux, the Monacan musicians will give more than 40 concerts in the New World. Among the cities on the itinerary are Montreal, Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Miami.

Victor Alessandro

Conductor of the San Antonio Symphony

In an interview with the sports editor of the San Antonio News, Mr. Alessandro finds that symphony musicians are "far beneath the study pace of less complicated things—like football."

Mr. Alessandro explains: "I'm referring to the study. The homework. A good college or pro football team is far advanced in technical study over us. They have first class movies made of every performance—sometimes films made of just workouts—and they study them carefully. When they make an error they know exactly who did it and why. They work for long hours to correct each error. They have end coaches, line coaches, backfield coaches, defense coaches, offense coaches, and head coaches. They're far advanced over musical groups."

Mr. Alessandro feels that symphonies won't be able to catch up for a long time, "But", he says, "if we had the money, I'd love to put a tiny tape recorder on or near each instrument during a performance. Then, and only then, would we be able to determine exactly who did exceptionally well and who committed errors during a difficult selection." Mr. Alessandro says that several hundred errors can be committed in just 2 or 3 seconds at some concerts. He concludes: "... it makes no difference which orchestra you're talking about. There's that much margin for error, and when you're dealing in the possibility of hundreds of errors in a 2 second period, just imagine how many boots you might get during a lengthy selection. No, I'm afraid we're not nearly far enough advanced. Certainly, not as far as professional football."

A View of Conducting Technique

"(Conductors) also possess their own brand of technique. Evidently there is such a thing as technique, but if there is, then how is it that a man who has never conducted or studied conducting is capable of giving an acceptable performance without warning and on the spur of the moment? No one can expect a comparable feat on any instrument." —Gregor Piatigorsky

ICSOM

- Orchestras should elect their representatives to the next meeting of ICSOM *now*, and make all necessary arrangements in advance.
- The next meeting of ICSOM will take place in Toronto, Canada, early in September, before most orchestra seasons begin. Therefore, the representative should be prepared to reflect the opinions of his fellow orchestra players, and to vote in their behalf.
- The following changes in ICSOM by-laws were proposed by a member orchestra. These amendments will be voted upon at the September meeting in Toronto. Orchestra committees are urged to study them and discuss them with their orchestra colleagues.

1. Article IV, Sec. 4: Add.....



Alan Rich

Critic of the New York Herald Tribune

A very different point of view is expressed by Mr. Rich in a recent article entitled: *In Defense of Wrong Notes*. Mr. Rich says: "... Lately there has come about a rather distorted attitude toward the value of technical perfection in the total scheme of a musical performance."

Mr. Rich feels this mania for perfection has been fostered largely by the recording industry. He finds that "Symphony orchestras do not play in person the way they do on records, even setting aside the distortions in total sound introduced by the so called 'high-fidelity' recording process. They are more human in person, and in being so they are more prone to the weaknesses of the flesh." After recalling some concerts in which artists goofed, Mr. Rich concludes that none of the "errors" have anything to do with the artistry of the people involved, but have a great deal to do with their humanness and fallability. He says, "Superior persons tend to rise up in overwhelming wrath when a horn-player at a symphonic concert bumps an occasional note, or when a pianist or singer runs into an air pocket on the way to his goal. A baseball player who can finish a season with a batting average of .400 is a rare and wonderful phenomenon, but in music we demand 1.000 or there is no contest.

(P.S. The .400 hitter will make more money than the 1.000 singer could ever count.)"

"Leave it to the ignorant and stupid who judge by counting only the faults. I can be grateful for even one wonderful phrase."
—Casals

TWO VIEWS ON TECHNICAL PERFECTION

NOTICES

- "except that not more than one member of any one orchestra shall serve on the Executive Committee at the same time."
2. Article V, Sec. 3: Delete the words "Printed in full and", so that it reads, "...cause the minutes of each meeting of the ICSOM to be distributed...."
 3. Article V, Sec. 6-B: After the words, "shall be in keeping with", add, "Section 6 above and with".
 4. Article VIII: Add, "Section 2-B—The Executive Committee may not borrow funds on behalf of the ICSOM." (This new section to be inserted between Section 2 and Section 3.)

"It is quite evident that music will have a very much greater effect on moulding people if they take part in the performance themselves. Indeed, it is difficult, or even impossible, for those who do not learn to do things themselves to be good judges of them when they are done."
—Aristotle

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committee members of musical organizations." She says "generally speaking, the greatest power over our arts organizations is placed in the hands of those who have the least professional experience in music," despite the "selfless dedication of these civic-minded board members." "The very destiny of our performing arts organizations is controlled by the lay boards, and precious little is done about training people for these important positions of heavy responsibility."

More positions at managerial levels could be filled by those experienced in music performance. There are certainly older musicians with intelligence and aptitude who could be invaluable in bridging the present no-man's land that exists between too many orchestras and their boards.

WHAT CAN THE AFM DO?

The ICSOM has repeatedly (and futilely) urged the AFM to establish a symphonic department headed by an experienced symphonic musician.

Miss Thompson recommends that the AFM differentiate between the professional and the avocational musician by having two classes of membership. She feels this step "would have far-reaching effects psychologically in up-grading concepts of artistic excellence and professionalism in the music world." "... there is a difference in holding a union membership card and qualifying as a professional musician."

There is no longer a place in our union philosophy for what a noted 802 member describes as the "Esthetics of Mediocrity." The nature of art requires uncompromising quality.

Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra Negotiations

The Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra negotiations began in December, 1963 but didn't get down to brass tacks until late spring in 1964. By mid-July the "final" offer of the Society had been rejected. The orchestra's negotiating team, composed of the committee, the orchestra attorney and Local 3 officers, then held a press conference. This was the first time that negotiations had been brought to public attention. Previously the Society and the union had always carefully avoided publicity.

Two of the local papers gave minimum coverage to the situation, but the Indianapolis Times gave full coverage. The Times music critic and columnist, Mr. Henry Butler, had long supported better conditions for the symphony musicians. His articles were favorable and thought-provoking. In the ensuing overall publicity, the Society was generally presented in a very poor light, and was not happy over the situation.

At this time an agreement acceptable to the musicians would have involved a mere \$6,000 additional cost to the Society. The Society President, however, was quoted in a newspaper as saying: "Bickering about a lousy \$6,000 is irritating everybody. The musicians are cutting their throats over penny-ante stuff." Subsequent offers of \$6,000 from various sources were reportedly turned down by the Society, which preferred to handle the matter in its own way. (Note: Over \$300,000 was raised for an endowment fund for the maintenance of Clowes Hall, where the Symphony performs. Another \$75,000 was raised to send the state university opera group to the World's Fair for 2 days.)

CANTUS FIRMUS

Over the years the Society has apparently always dictated the contract terms. The formula is familiar: The musicians are given a minimal offer; the management goes through the motions of negotiating; later, perhaps, the ante is raised a pittance; and then the management remains adamant until the musicians give in—(fearing their orchestra may fold.)

COUNTERPOINT

At one point the Society complained that it was not dealing with the union but with the orchestra's attorney. Negotiations, however, were in accord with Local 3 by-laws which state that the orchestra may engage an attorney to negotiate, if the committee and union officials are present at all negotiating sessions.

UNION COUNTERPOINT

A potentially dangerous situation developed when the union felt that negotiations had reached an impasse, but the musicians and their attorney felt otherwise. Although the Society had made its "final" offer, the orchestra had left the door open for further negotiations. In light of the favorable publicity the orchestra position seemed excellent. Many members were prepared to hold out past the opening day, if necessary.

Local 3 officials then proposed that Mr. Gilbert Rogers, the AFM Symphony Department, come to Indianapolis. The alleged purpose of his visit was only

to inform the Society that no other orchestras would be permitted to perform in Indianapolis if agreement was not reached with the local Symphony musicians. (The AFM President has handled this type of situation just with written communications.)

DECEPTIVE CADENCE

When Mr. Rogers subsequently arrived he seemed under the impression that he had been called in to negotiate. The orchestra committee explained the conditions under which it had agreed to Mr. Roger's visit. Whereupon Mr. Rogers allegedly intimated that the musicians need not look to the Federation for any future support if he returned to New York without having a chance to do what he had come there to do. It so happened that the orchestra attorney was out of town and unavailable for advice. A meeting between Mr. Rogers and the Society representatives was finally agreed upon, however, he was not to return with any counter-proposal.

ENHARMONIC TRANSPOSITION

Mr. Rogers called a meeting the following day and informed the committee that he had met with the Society negotiators. He reported that he had not negotiated a counter-proposal, but, after discussion, had brought a *verbal* proposal—which he thought might be acceptable to the orchestra. It was finally decided that, if the proposals were precisely written, and if deemed advisable by the orchestra attorney, they could be submitted to the orchestra members.

Upon his return, the attorney opined that a commitment had been made, and should be honored for the following reasons:

1. The Society had dealt with Mr. Rogers in good faith. His *verbal* commitment led them to believe that an agreement was near.
2. Going against the Federation would deprive the musicians of future Federation support.
3. The musicians would receive only adverse publicity, thereby making themselves vulnerable to charges that they were unreasonable and could not agree with the Society—or their own union.

In short, the musicians would be in trouble with the Society, the union and the public.

It was then decided by a split decision to present this proposal to the orchestra. It was ratified by a margin of nearly 3 to 1, and signed last September 3rd.

Coda

Readers of this account may wonder how the orchestra attorney was by-passed, and how the Society may have been led to believe that Mr. Rogers was negotiating in place of the attorney. Readers may also wonder how the committee was apparently misinformed at a critical time, and whether anyone questioned the legality of by-passing the orchestra attorney. These, and other questions remain presently unanswered.

Some mistakes were made and some hard lessons learned. It is hoped other negotiators will profit by the experience.