

Senza Sordino

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WINDS OF CHANGE

Part II — Henry Shaw

In April of 1973 the results of a survey concerning itself with public attitudes towards the arts were revealed. The most significant conclusions reached were that public interest in the arts is at a very high level; that the Establishment in the arts has not been doing its job in informing the American public about the financial crisis confronting arts institutions, and that Americans would be willing to pay a tax to support our cultural institutions. The survey, *Americans and the Arts*, was conducted by the National Research Center of the Arts, Inc. a highly respected research organization. The study was a joint effort on the part of the Associated Councils on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts and Philip Morris, Inc.

3005 interviews averaging an hour and a half each and directed towards a representative cross section of Americans 16 years and older, form the basis for the survey. A sample of 3000 is considered a statistically sound base for nationwide surveys and is projectable to the entire U.S. population at a 95% confidence level and a sampling error of ± 2 per cent. 400 questions were asked with the intent of determining the attitudes of the American public towards the arts and the extent of public support for, and involvement in, sundry arts activities. Of particular significance were the following statistics and conclusions.

65% of the public feels it can not satisfy its cultural needs at home alone and, therefore, over fifty million Americans attend musical performances of all kinds. In all, 71.3 million attend visual arts exhibits (this includes museums, arts shows, historical houses, antique, craft and furniture shows). Together more attend visual arts exhibits than attend spectator sports. In the twelve months preceding the survey, 71% of the public indicated that it had attended at least one live performance of theatre, dance, music or one museum.

Public attitude towards those who devote themselves fully to the arts is gratifying. Artists are highly thought of and professional musicians outrank bankers and businessmen in terms of public respect. A large majority, about 75%, disagreed with the statements that "symphony concerts were just for highbrows" and that "unless you understand a great deal about music there is no point in going to hear a symphony orchestra play." Another finding was that nine out of ten Americans believe it is important to the quality of life in the community to have facilities such as museums, concert halls and theatres, and 80% believe that these facilities are important to the business and economy of the community.

It comes as no surprise that the survey clearly indicates that cultural opportunities are important for children and that their exposure to the arts and involvement in arts activities in school alongside the basics of the educational system, is desirable.

Only 18% of the American public thinks that cultural organizations "lose money" and the sad conclusion is that such misconceptions affect the public views concerning private and public support. Alarming was the fact that 71% of the public thought that musicians earned more than most salaried people. A majority thought that opera was self-supporting and a plurality thought that symphony orchestras were mostly self-supporting. These misconceptions concerning the financial situation of arts organizations indicates, at best, a clouded image on the part of the public and points to a communication failure by the arts organizations. Louis

Harris said that the study serves as a warning to the Establishment in the arts that it is not doing its job well in informing the public regarding the arts' financial problems and in bringing the arts to the people. He said that "when the arts are brought to the people, the people do respond and that the time has come for the arts people to come out of their elitist shells and let the people in."

The public seemed to favor government support for arts institutions where they felt a tradition for such support existed and agreed that general corporate support of cultural activities in their communities was desirable. Mr. Harris was critical of the private sector of the economy, asserting that an earlier study of corporate support for the arts in New York State showed that business contributions amounted to only 4% of the total.

Finally, the study showed a willingness on the part of the public to pay additional taxes if such money was used for support of the arts and cultural facilities. Almost one half of those interviewed indicated that they would be willing to pay \$25. a year more in taxes and one third indicated they would be willing to pay \$50. for such purposes. But perhaps of greatest significance was the fact that two thirds of the American public would be willing to pay a \$5. cultural tax, and as many as half of those reporting incomes of under \$5000 yearly said that they would be, likewise, willing to pay \$5. for the arts and cultural facilities. Based on the replies of this 64% of the population (93.1 million people), \$165.5 million dollars a year could be generated in this manner for arts support.

In retrospect, it is not surprising that the American public has indicated a positive disposition towards the arts institutions and the performer. for the public has indicated that the quality of life is of paramount importance and understands that persons promoting arts activities or engaged in professional performance are contributing to a more meaningful and enjoyable life.

ICSOM will soon mail the *American and the Arts* booklet to every congressman with the hope that they will absorb the message inside its covers. George Washington once said, "the arts and sciences are essential to the prosperity of the State and to the ornament and happiness of human life. They have a primary claim to the encouragement of every lover of his country and of mankind." He most assuredly would be chagrined could he know that in the hallowed halls in which national budgets are hammered out, only 2¢ out of every \$10,000 in tax money is allocated for support of the arts in this country. This figure was current at the time the survey was being conducted. The public's cultural appetite, reflected by the cultural explosion in this country and reinforced by this most significant survey, makes that pitiful allotment offensive and flies in the face of the common good. The acceptance of the principle of government subsidy for the arts is now well entrenched. A new facet in the form of a voluntary tax now seems feasible. We accept the fact that the financial problems faced by arts organizations are of a serious nature. Cultural survival is a matter of concern for every American, no less the musician. ICSOM therefore, expresses and promotes the following viewpoints.

We must reevaluate our views concerning arts governing bodies to the extent that their elitist structures must be altered to allow wider representation of the community at large.

As musicians we must strive for a policy-making role in the profession to which we contribute a lifetime.

We must spearhead a campaign for public money in the form of a voluntary tax.

We must support a program of education of the public dictated by revelations in the Americans and the Arts survey.

We must recognize that the impetus for change is not apt to come from arts governing boards no matter how liberal; that it must come from the American Federation of Musicians, ICSOM and orchestra committees, but mostly by pressure brought to bear by over 3000 symphony orchestra musicians sensitive to the problems within their profession.

The survey, *Americans and the Arts*, may be glowingly optimistic but it will take more than encouraging words to continue to satisfy the growing cultural needs of our citizenry. With the expansion of cultural activities comes an increased burden on arts organizations. We will all be pressed to meet the challenge.

SAN DIEGO MUSICIANS "PAY" FOR POOR MANAGEMENT

On December 15, 1974, the musicians of the San Diego Symphony met and ratified a contract which ended a three and a half month labor dispute. The vote to accept management's "final offer" was 34 to 32.

History

The Master Agreement which expired on August 31, 1974 was that of a metropolitan orchestra. It guaranteed a minimum of 112 services at \$26 per service—\$2,912 yearly. It offered no fringe benefits. The orchestra was on call 365 days a year on 72 hours notice. 27 of the 75 members earned the minimum, while the rest earned salaries ranging up to \$11,000 annually. The Association spent a total of \$425,000 on orchestral salaries, 40% of their \$1,000,000 budget. During the 1973-74 season a "core" orchestra was formed with 37 players, chosen by the music director without audition, and with a minimum guaranteed salary of \$6,006. Initially, the "core" concept had the musicians' approval because of a promise to add 20 musicians in the 1974-75 season and to include all personnel by the 1975-76 season. This promise never became a reality. The musicians were informed that in order to honor the core contracts the Association had to obtain loans from 14 banks, using Ford Foundation grants as collateral, to cover a deficit of \$272,000 caused by the "core" operation and prior years' "mistakes".

Negotiations

In August 1974 negotiations commenced with the hope of consummating a new Master Agreement by August 31st, the contract expiration date. The orchestra committee along with Marvin Howard, secretary of Local 325, and legal counsel Susan Salisbury, faced the Association's General Manager whose lack of experience and authority created immense problems. The committee's first proposal, which was the result of extensive orchestra polling and months of preparatory work was disregarded. We were presented instead with management's first offer—a three-year pact guaranteeing \$3,904 in the third year (1976-77). This was rejected by the committee. A subsequent \$5,000 annual wage for 150 services was in turn rejected by management. By October, after cancellation of two concerts, the Association sought to have the orchestra work on a concert-to-concert basis for the expired contract minimum and a no-strike clause while continuing negotiations. This was unacceptable to the committee and the musicians.

In November management proposed to change the contract year and offered an 18-month contract guaranteeing \$4,000 per year from December 1974 to December 1975, and \$2,415 for an additional 69 services until June 30, 1976. This offer was rejected on November 6th by a vote of 58-8.

Management's last "final offer" was made on December 15th. The Orchestra Committee received a copy of the offer 15 minutes before a scheduled orchestra meeting even though the Association knew of the meeting four days prior. The approval of the Committee was sought and denied unanimously. *Prior to the vote, to the complete surprise of the Committee, our negotiating attorney, Susan Salisbury, and the Secretary of Local 325, Marvin Howard, both strongly recommended the acceptance of the Association's offer. Needless to say, the Committee was shocked.* The offer was ratified by a vote of 34 to 32. The new contract reads as follows:

December 16, 1974 to August 31, 1975 . . . 100 services . . . \$32.
per service . . . \$3200. per year.

September 1, 1975 to August 31, 1976 . . . 120 services . . . \$35.
per service . . . \$4200. per year.

(Continued on page four) (second column)

SECRETARY'S MESSAGE . . .

At the New Orleans Conference in September, a resolution was passed to amend the ICSOM By-Laws, raising per capita dues \$2., across the board. This resolution has now, in fact, been ratified by two-thirds of ICSOM member-orchestras. We hope the appropriate payments will be sent to Treasurer John Palanchian soon—not only to uphold the promptness principle, but to give the very real and needed boost to our Emergency Relief Fund, the sole "beneficiary" of this dues increase.

Also at New Orleans, a strong recommendation for greater continuity in the ICSOM delegation was voiced by this correspondent as well as others in the ICSOM executive body. All constituent orchestras are, of course, autonomous, and so the final choice of term-length for their delegates rests with them. But we would hope that realization of the need for stability—i. e., a delegation with minimal change from year to year—would influence that choice. Last September, such a great number of new delegates attended the conference, that much time was taken in simple repetition of items already discussed a year earlier. Perhaps a 2- or 3-year delegate-term would minimize this turn-over, and afford delegates the needed time to acquaint themselves with the problems and with each other—and later perhaps, enable them to contribute some of the acquired expertise to ICSOM.

Without question, the Conductor Evaluation Program—a mere idea a dozen years ago—has reached a maturity and dimension probably far beyond the hopes of those who originally conceived it. The fact that several orchestras, including some of the largest, have used this means to choose a music director is ample testimony to its usefulness. The list of participating orchestras has doubled in the last 2½ years. When your orchestra is ready to address itself, please write or call if you need information. This program is still my responsibility, albeit a temporary one.

Phil Sipser's talk on the Pension Reform Act of 1974 was a highlight of the New Orleans meeting, and more timely it simply could not have been. (The Act was signed by the President only a few hours before we arrived in New Orleans.) The talk was tape-recorded, and I shall be sending duplicates to all ICSOM orchestras shortly. As decided at the last conference, such ICSOM tapes will now be sent at no charge.

Finally, a plea and exhortation: PLEASE send new delegate name/address information to this office as soon as possible. The delegate list, now in preparation, will have little significance if its contents are obsolete before distribution. This request is especially directed to the orchestras who could not send a delegate to the conference last September. If I don't hear from you, I'll assume that your last delegate on record—and his past address—are current.

Stan Dombrowski
Secretary, ICSOM

(Editor's note—Stan Dombrowski was elected to the Executive Board of his local union in Pittsburgh last month—the first time a symphony member has held such a post there in years.)

JACK BENNY, VIOLINIST, PASSES

The nation recently mourned the passing of Jack Benny. He will be remembered as a hard working, compassionate, master of clean humor who excelled at virtually all forms of entertainment, however, he was a man whose life took special shape when he could play his violin. His love for the instrument resulted, during the span of his illustrious career as a comic, in his rubbing elbows with many of the greats of the musical world. Casals, Szigeti and Stern to mention a few. Although Jack Benny relied on his scratchy violin playing for laughs, he fulfilled a life long dream, to play the violin "seriously" as a soloist, when, in 1953, he recruited musicians from the Los Angeles Philharmonic and CBS to play before a national television audience.

We shall always remember his magnanimity in behalf of the symphony musician and be grateful for his countless appearances with the orchestras of this country in the interest of benefitting our pension funds and orchestra general funds as well. Over a period of years he succeeded in raising the amazing sum of over \$4,000,000, for the above mentioned causes. A partial list of the orchestras which benefitted from his philanthropy include the Oklahoma City Symphony, the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Toronto Symphony, the Chicago Symphony, the Kansas City Philharmonic, the New Orleans Philharmonic, the San Francisco Symphony, the National Symphony in Washington, D.C., the Santa Fe Opera Orchestra, the St. Louis Symphony, the Detroit Symphony, the Rochester Symphony, the Denver Symphony, the Honolulu Symphony, the Indianapolis Symphony, the Cleveland Symphony, the Cincinnati Symphony, the Dallas Symphony, the Bloomington-Normal Symphony Orchestras, the University of Miami Symphony, the Hartt Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony, the San Jose Symphony, the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra, Beverly Hills Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, Minneapolis Symphony, Milwaukee Symphony, Seattle Symphony, Portland Symphony, Oakland Symphony, Utah Symphony, Rochester, Minn. Symphony, Phoenix Symphony, San Diego Symphony, Orlando Symphony, Tampa Philharmonic, Corpus Christi Symphony, Austin Symphony and the Fort Worth Symphony.

We pause in memory and appreciation.

(Ed: Thanks to Orrin Howard, Publicity Dep't., Los Angeles Philharmonic for supplying data for this article.)

K. C. PERFORMS AT LEAVENWORTH

On September 4, 1974 the Kansas City Philharmonic under Music Director Maurice Peress performed for the inmates of the Federal Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas.

The orchestra has performed once previously at Leavenworth in May of 1968, very likely the first performance at a federal penal institution. The procedure for getting into the "pen" is a little unnerving. It is comparable to decompression, with a small group of people being searched, then passed into a locked chamber, while the previous group is ushered to the hall by prison guards. The orchestra was a little uptight about where we were performing with a wide variety of ramifications being suggested. Several of the orchestra's "wits" were making the obvious bad jokes, but actually we felt more like the "captive audience."

However, with the final chords of the William Tell Overture the packed house was so enthusiastic that we forgot about everything except making music for this exceptional audience. It was a rare and exciting mood.

At the end of the first movement of the Beethoven Fifth Symphony, Maestro Peress asked the audience if they would prefer to hear the remainder of the Symphony, or something different. The answer was loud and clear . . . to hear *all* of the Symphony.

During our break a small jazz ensemble of orchestra players with Maestro Peress at the piano played several numbers.

The high point of the evening came with a performance of Duke Ellington's Black, Brown and Beige Suite which was orchestrated by Maestro Peress. The response was overwhelming.

After the concert there was an opportunity for the orchestra and conductor to mingle with the audience. Their comments and thoughts about this kind of concert and symphonic music leads us to only one conclusion. Our cultural institutions have to take a part in community involvement by taking our art to audiences with real needs.

It was an unforgettable night that was a two way exchange of excitement. Many continuing relationships were formed and we hope to have many more opportunities like it.

Dale Weddle
Kansas City Philharmonic

Mr. Dale Weddle
The Kansas City Philharmonic
Centennial Building
210 West Tenth Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64105

Dear Mr. Weddle:

On September 4th, we, the inmates of Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary, had the great pleasure of hearing you and the other fine musicians of the Kansas City Philharmonic Orchestra perform for us. There has never been entertainment in this institution that has been more well received or appreciated.

It is with this feeling of appreciation that we, the EDP Department, write this letter of thanks in behalf of the staff, and of all the men of Leavenworth. In our small world of stale mediocrity, your playing was a true breath of fresh air. We would like to extend an invitation for you to return at any time, hopefully with more beautiful classical music.

Sincerely yours,

The Men of Leavenworth

DALLAS SIEGE ENDS

After a series of heated meetings and traumatic confrontations the Dallas management gave the orchestra their "maximum final offer on January 12th" This "gem" was received ten minutes before a scheduled orchestra meeting. The committee was split in the decision to accept or reject and we each presented our own thoughts to the orchestra. An orchestra vote was taken twenty four hours later and the Association proposal was ratified by a very slim margin. The acceptance of a contract was the culmination of meetings which resumed December 1st after the orchestra had received a commitment for back wages which were owed the musicians.

The December 1st Association proposal was for 27 weeks for the 1974-75 season at \$270. a week. They had not changed this offer since last summer. What was now added was 5 optional weeks and a proposal of a second year at \$285. a week for 35 weeks plus 6 optional weeks. However, the optional weeks were "optional" on the part of the Association and it was made clear to us that they were in no way guaranteed. After agreeing on a press black-out we were surprised to read in a newspaper article that the orchestra had turned down \$12,900 a year for the 1974-75 season and \$14,000 for 1975-76. These figures were misleading because they were predicated on optional weeks not guaranteed by management and opera weeks not paid for by the Association. It was not stated that the offer was for a period of two seasons and four months, from January '75 to January '77.

On January 2nd we received an offer which included little change but which demanded many working condition changes in our master contract. This was a bitter blow. The proposal which

was ratified by the orchestra contained acceptance of many of these working condition demands by the Association. The orchestra had been exceptionally generous in exchange for a contract.

The following is a review of the package which was accepted by orchestra.

1974-75 . . . \$285. min. across the board . . . 27 weeks . . . 2 weeks vacation . . . \$7695.

OPERA . . . \$290. min. across the board . . . 6½ weeks . . . \$1885.

We have given the Association an additional 15 services this year, a maximum of eight per week.

Per Diem is \$18.75 a day with hotel paid by the Association.

1975-76 . . . \$300. min. across the board . . . 39 weeks . . . 3 weeks vacation . . . \$11,700.

OPERA to be negotiated.

We have given the Association an additional 21 services this year, a maximum of eight per week.

Per Diem will be \$20 a day with hotel paid by the Association.

Metro Development Clause . . . within 50 miles of the Music Hall, but not in the Music Hall, Back to Back concerts now equal one service providing there are no evening services the same day. Back to Backs and evening performances equal 3 services.

The orchestra can be divided into 2 or 3 ensembles of not less than 25 players.

Moving up to principal or assistant by a section player, or from 2nd to 1st in the wind and brass section will result in extra pay of \$25. for 1 or 2 services plus 25% of salary per service for additional service.

All other provisions of our present master agreement apply.

Thanks especially go to Cleveland for giving us \$495, San Francisco for sending us \$333; Indianapolis did a benefit concert and gave us \$340. (\$100. from their local union); New Orleans for \$660 and the pledge of \$1000 from Houston. Also thanks to Irving Segall for his concern and effort and counsel each week. Our thanks to those who had planned to help this month. We greatly appreciate everyone's moral and financial support. It has been a long siege since last March when our season was suspended. We will be glad to get back to making music once more.

Betty Patterson
Dallas Symphony Orchestra Committee

SAN DIEGO MUSICIANS (Continued from page two)

No retroactive pay was obtained. No fringe benefits were obtained.

During the course of the negotiations an unfair labor practice charge was filed with the NLRB. The claim was that management refused to bargain in good faith by sending out rehearsal schedules while scheduling was still subject to negotiation; failing to designate a representative with sufficient authority to negotiate, and that the music director was attempting to negotiate with individual employees. The Association's lawyer claimed that the San Diego Symphony Association was no longer under the jurisdiction of the NLRB because they were no longer in the \$1,000,000. budget category (owing to their \$272,000. deficit). The charge was dismissed.

Conclusion

Three pairs of scheduled concerts had been cancelled, and almost half of the orchestra musicians stood ready to "tighten their collective belts" once more. Some of the musicians were on food stamps, and many had applied for unemployment benefits. Management saw to it that such benefits were cut off by sending rehearsal schedules to the players. Even though the Association was on the unfair list of the AFM, the state ruled that the musicians were not locked out and therefore not eligible for benefits. During this entire time, the management team, office staff and conductors, continued to draw their entire salaries. It should be noted that office staff salaries are considerably higher than those of the minimum orchestra musician. Both the conductor and the assistant conductor received a 10% raise over last year.

The orchestra fervently carried its case to the public and the news media. In November the Committee met with the Orchestra Committee of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. They pledged supportive action to aid our cause. At the first concert of their San Diego Series, the members of the Los Angeles Orchestra, along with San Diego Symphony members, handed flyers to the audience entering the theatre. Maestro Mehta also spoke dramatically to the audience and strongly urged them to support their orchestra. For their actions and words, we thank the management, the musicians and Mr. Mehta of the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

We also received supportive letters from the New Orleans and North Carolina Symphonics which we gratefully acknowledge. Any orchestra wishing a full report of these negotiations and for our current contract, please contact Sheila Kornbluth, ICSOM delegate, and these documents will be mailed to you.

The Orchestra Committee of the
San Diego Symphony

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