

Senza Sordino

Official Publication of the International Conference of Symphony & Opera Musicians

VOLUME XVI



JUNE 1978—NO. 5

GRANT PARK GETS NEW SHELL—ICSOM ORCHESTRAS LEND A HAND

After months of controversy and negotiation, the Grant Park Music Shell is under construction and will be ready for the opening concert in June. (*The support of ICSOM was a major factor in overcoming opposition of seemingly overwhelming political strength. The letters and telegrams from ICSOM orchestras were mentioned several times by Chicago Mayor Michael A. Bilandic and others in meetings of those supporting the Park District and special interest groups opposed to it.*)

This is the fourth attempt to build a new shell since the old one (a facility conductor David Zinman likened to New York's 57th St. men's toilet) was built in 1934. Persistent and vigorous work by the orchestra and manager Robert Wilkins, and the national interest of the ICSOM orchestras made this attempt different.

The orchestra's efforts began during the summer season of 1976 when two committees were formed from the orchestra. One was a public relations committee. This group did a ten-question survey to get the personality, location, and habits of our audience.

restaurant, skating rink — a much more elaborate and expensive plan for which no land or money had been acquired. This plan, called Lakefront Gardens, would depend on private, city, and Federal funds; somewhere between 10 and 50 million dollars.

3. Mid-September. The Plan Commission voted to approve the Park District plan, but there was considerable antagonism from editorials calling for more study, from civic groups which wanted *no* shell in Grant Park, from those who wanted to gain control of the concerts, by architects who wanted to design a shell, and from politicians who wanted a grander monument to themselves.
4. Early October. Mayor Bilandic asked that the decision be set aside when a court fight seemed likely.
5. Late October. The first meeting of all the factions with the Mayor was called. (*The orchestra was not invited. The committee sent telegrams insisting that the orchestra viewpoint must be represented, but not until the morning of the meeting were we invited.*)

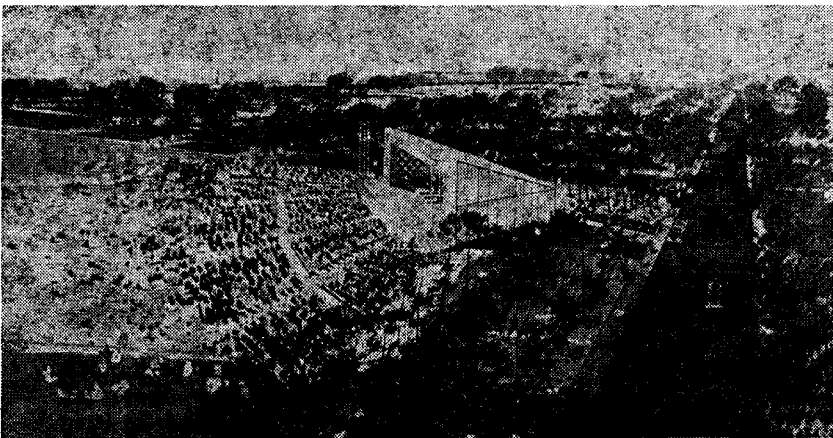
The Mayor set up two sub-committees. The first was an Interim Committee to find a suitable place for the Grant Park Symphony 1978 season. The Orchestra Committee chairman was appointed to this group, and the Architectural Committee chairman was appointed to the second sub-committee, a group set up to re-evaluate the estimates of the Lakefront Gardens project. Both sub-committees were heavily weighted against the new shell.

6. Early November. In the second meeting with the Mayor the Interim Committee recommended the repair of the 1934 shell until Lakefront Gardens could be built. Our chairman claimed that the report was not reflective of the orchestra's viewpoint, that in fact we would not support *any* interim plan that did not include a new facility for the '78 season.

At this point the orchestra emerged as a third force. All the factions saw that they needed the orchestra's support to raise the money for the larger project.

The interim solution (for who knows how long) is the Park District's music shell. It will be a rectangular shape, demountable, with translucent walls resembling Japanese Shoji screens. There will be permanent seating for 4,000 people with lawn seating for 30,000 more. The acoustics were designed by Klepper, Marshall, King Associates, Ltd. of national renown. There will be air-conditioned dressing rooms, green room, and offices below ground level, an incredible increase in comfort and convenience to the musicians.

There are many whose work on this project was essential to our success. Concert Manager Robert Wilkins was an extremely effective liaison between the orchestra and the shell planners. His research into the design and acoustics, his dedication to the project from its beginning, and his responsiveness to the orchestra was unflagging.



Grant Park Shell—artist sketch

1500 surveys were returned and tabulated. The information was invaluable in refuting numerous charges of our opponents, in speeches, and as ammunition for the Park District itself.

The second committee was an architectural committee. This group had many meetings, both alone and with the manager and the Park District architects, and was quite effective in the planning of the shell. The persistence of the Orchestra Members Committee also played a great part in the outcome.

The Chicago Plan Commission studied the shell proposal for months. At this point events began to occur in rapid succession:

1. Early August, 1977. Sub-committee of the Plan Commission held a public hearing. No opposition was raised. 45 orchestra members attended.
2. Early September. Opposing groups announced a different plan for a new 20-acre park containing a music shell, res-

Mitch Miller was also vigorous in his support. He made numerous calls, wrote letters, and always spoke forcefully to the audiences about the need for a new shell.

We appreciate the timely intervention and mediation of this dispute by Mayor Bilandic, the enterprise of Park District Superintendent Edmund Kelly, and the support of Local 10-208 officials. Particular recognition should go to orchestra committee chairman, Michael Green for his superb leadership.

The orchestra is elated. According to Wilkins, the music shell presently under construction would have been but another in a series of futile plans were it not for the orchestra's efforts. Clearly, the Grant Park Symphony, in its new partnership with ICSOM, has won a great victory.

Jean Berkenstock,
Grant Park Symphony ICSOM Representative

M.A.F.O.F. UPDATE

The principles which have motivated the Music Assistance Fund Orchestral Fellowships reviewed in the February issue of *Senza Sordino*, have been endorsed by the members of the Indianapolis, North Carolina and Seattle Symphony orchestras. The Rochester Symphony Orchestra recently passed a resolution affirming their desire to participate in the program and are in contact with Dr. Thompson. Other orchestras showing interest in the program are the Baltimore Symphony and the National Symphony Orchestra. Dr. Leon Thompson states that he anticipates full placement of six or more grantees beginning with the 1978-79 season.

The Orchestral Fellowship Program is made possible by a grant of \$30,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts, with a matching grant of \$20,000 from the Exxon Corporation and of \$10,000 from the Arwood Foundation.

NATIONAL AFRO-AMERICAN PHILHARMONIC IS BORN

Motivated by the fact that of the 1000 musicians in the major symphony orchestras of the nation only 38 are black, the National Afro-American Philharmonic orchestra was recently formed in Philadelphia. It is now awaiting incorporation. The 100 player group will draw from black musicians throughout the nation, although for its first concert, players will be primarily from states east of the Mississippi.

The orchestra is sponsored by the Rev. Leon H. Sullivan, minister of the Zion Baptist Church and James Frazier Jr., minister of music at the church. Frazier conducts the orchestra. He had conducted the Philadelphia Orchestra children's concerts at Robin Hood Dell in 1973-4.

The first performance of the group was at the Academy of Music on May 22nd. Mr. Frazier expressed the hope that the orchestra might tour the larger cities of the country using Philadelphia as a base. Musicians assembling to form the group are being housed at the Temple University Dormitory. Aid as needed is being provided by the black churches of the community.

Mr. Sullivan said, "we have to use this orchestra to demonstrate significantly the capability of black musicians and to demonstrate significance of the number of blacks with these skills by assembling 100 in this orchestra." Mr. Frazier remarked that "we are in business to go out of business. Ideally what this orchestra does will convince other orchestras to offer more opportunities to minority musicians." He states further that his criterion for selection of personnel will be ability.

The Institute is being patterned after those at Tanglewood and Aspen. Funding will be sought from the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington.

PHOENIX RATIFIES NEW THREE YEAR AGREEMENT

The PSO Association and Local 586 of the A. F. of M. signed a new Master Agreement on December 9, 1977. The PSO had been "playing and talking" since September 27, the start of the current season. The "play and talk" agreement was approved by 81% of the musicians on July 20 in lieu of almost certain season cancellation at that time.

The Orchestra Committee, together with Hal Sunday, Local 586 President, acting as our "sole and exclusive bargaining representative," had reached an agreement with the PSO Labor Relations Committee as early as June 3, 1977. Ted Dreher, Assistant to the President of the A. F. of M. was at the table with us for the last two sessions. He concurred with our agreement and joined with us in recommending the package to the membership. Needing a 2/3 affirmative vote for passage, the proposal was rejected by a vote of 30 yes to 299 no. So it was "back to the bargaining table."

The most important non-economic issue which we tried to negotiate into our new agreement was a section on Musical Grievance. We previously had no protection of any kind from the action of the Musical Director as to dismissal, probation, or demotion. Although we did not get a full Musical Grievance clause, we got the door open in that area. Now, before a musician can be dismissed, put on probation, or moved back for musical reasons, the Musical Director must meet with the affected musician, his principal, and a review committee and show cause for his contemplated action by spelling out specific reasons. In most cases, time will be given to the musician to correct any allegations of incompetency before final action is taken.

The new economic package, which includes across the board increases for the first time, is as follows:

	Previous	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80
Ave. Serv. per week.	5	5	5	5
Min. weekly scale . . .	\$145.00	\$165.00	\$175.00	\$195.00
Annual wage	\$4,350.00	\$5,455.00	\$5,950.00	\$6,825.00
Number of weeks . . .	30	33	34	35
Per diem—Food . . .	\$10.00	\$12.00	\$14.00	\$15.00
Lodging	\$10.00	\$12.00	\$13.00	\$14.00

Although our wage scale is small compared to peer orchestras, we are performing an average of only five services per week. Services in excess are paid for as additional services. Our annual increase the first year was 25% with a 56.9% increase over three years.

Some other economic changes are: A non-principal performing as a principal will receive 25% additional salary above his contracted pay for each such service. He does, however, have the right of refusal. Overtime will be paid at time and one-half based on personal rate scale rather than minimum scale. Penalty overtime will be paid for late arrival from run-outs or short tours. Doubling musicians will be paid no less than an additional 20% of his or her personal rate scale.

Other changes in the Agreement include: The Association has agreed to administer a Major Medical policy and an all risk Musical Instrument policy at group rate savings. For the present the musicians involved will pay their own premiums, but at least we have the door open in this area. Sick leave has been increased from five days per year to eight days per year, cumulative to fifteen illness absences, making it possible to accumulate as many as twenty-three sick days at one time. Personal leave and Sabbatical leave are now available under certain conditions.

The climate at the bargaining table was good and at no time did we feel that the Association was trying to take advantage of us or trying to play games. Our negotiations were honest, intense, and constructive and as a result we have a much stronger contract than we had previously. We have an excellent orchestra, musically

speaking, in Phoenix, but we are an emerging orchestra, struggling economically to become fully professional, but still limited too much by small support dollars and limited community acceptance.

We want to thank Ted Dreher, who assisted us greatly by spending some six hours with us at the bargaining table. Ted is a real "pro" and without his help and support, it is doubtful that we would have a contract now. We also wish to thank Leonard Leibowitz and Philip Sipser for their counsel and advice by mail and by phone during our negotiations.

Warren Campbell
Phoenix Symphony Orchestra

SAN DIEGO ICSOM CONFERENCE AGENDA SET

The 1978 ICSOM Conference will be held at the Master Host Inn, 950 Hotel Circle, San Diego, California. Registration of delegates will commence the morning of Monday, August 28th; the first general meeting of the Conference will be held in the afternoon. The five day conference will terminate in the afternoon of Friday, September 1st.

Workshops will again play a significant role on the Conference agenda. Specific subjects will be agreed upon at the conference table, although one can expect to find bargaining techniques, pensions and health and welfare workshops again represented. These bread and butter subjects seem to have perennial appeal.

The Conference agenda will in general follow the order below.

- I.
 - A. Meeting called to order
 - B. Roll call or orchestras
 - C. Introduction and presentation of guests
 - D. Minutes of the 1977 Conference
 - E. Application for membership and action thereon
- II. Reports of ICSOM Officers and Representatives
 - A. Chairman's Report
 - B. Vice Chairman's Report
 - C. Secretary's Report
 - D. Treasurer's Report
 - E. Senza Sordino Editor's Report
 - F. Counsel's Report
 - G. Strike Fund Report
 - H. A. F. of M. Convention Observer's Report
- III. Committee Reports
 - A. Musical Assistance Fund Orchestral Fellowships
 - B. Minority Musician Committee Report
 - C. Electronic Media Committee
 1. F.M. radio tape guidelines
 2. '77 recording contract negotiations
 - a. special sessions
 - b. opera scale
 3. Video tape cassettes
- IV. Unfinished Business
 - A. Pension Funding consolidation
 - B. A.F. of M.—ICSOM Wage Chart
 - C. Negotiations not reported in *Senza Sordino*
 1. completed
 2. still in progress
- V. New Business
 - A. "Sound Off" session
 - B. Renewal of counsel's contract
- VI. Nomination and Election of Officers
 - A. Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer,
Senza Sordino Editor.
- VII. Selection of site for 1979 Conference
- VIII. Good and Welfare

LOOKING AT OURSELVES IN SAN DIEGO

The '78 ICSOM Conference in San Diego will feature a "Sound Off" session, from which we hope to learn what our members in the orchestras are thinking about ICSOM. What it is doing; what it is *not* doing; where we have been; and where you want us to go.

In order for this "Sound Off" session to be productive, we urge you to have an orchestra meeting and to instruct your delegate as to what you want him to say at this conference. What are *your* gripes re: ICSOM? Do you have any ideas that we could put into action to be of better service to our member orchestras? We are 16 years old now and it is time to look critically at ourselves and to evaluate our work. We hope, with your help, to have a constructive, no holds barred, "Sound Off" session.

Irving Segall

SYMPHONY PLAYING STRESSFUL JOB SAYS NIOSH TEAM

A recent issue of the *Detroit Free Press* carried an article written by one of its staff writers, Peter Gavrilovich, under the following caption—*Who Has The Most Stressful Job? (Not The People You Might Think)*. The conclusions reached are the results of a study made by researchers at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) in Cincinnati.

Musicians would readily agree that enjoyment in earning a livelihood holds a high priority for the breadwinner. They would also concur with the conclusion that earning a living can be so stressful that "it can be measured in the frequency with which we visit the nation's mental clinics." A two-year study of several hundred occupations and their mental stress levels form the basis for the research. From these, 130 occupations were selected and rated on the basis of how much stress could be expected were one to pursue one of these avenues as a livelihood. Information obtained from a study of admissions to psychiatric facilities was used. The ratings are both interesting and in some cases surprising. It was suggested that the most stressful occupations seem to have a relationship to the amount of control the individual has over his occupational environment. It would seem that those who do the telling are under less strain than those who are being told.

Health technicians and waitresses ranked one-two on the list. Police ranked 70th and firemen, 82nd. Physicians ranked 106th and government officials 114th. *Musicians ranked fifth.* (For the edification of our esteemed counsellors, lawyers ranked 86th, and, unable to resist the temptation of prejudicial conclusion, managers and administrators ranked 99th—seeming to solidify the "telling and being told" theory).

Erv Monroe, flutist, Paul Ganson, bassoonist and Don Baker, oboist, all members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, were interviewed by Mr. Gavrilovich. The ratings came as no surprise to them. Erv Monroe thought the musician rating too low. Reasons for the stressful nature of music-making were described as "a drive for perfection; the need for precision in performance that leads to taut nerves and stomach butterflies." They spoke of the atmosphere of criticism, both of oneself and each other. The criticism of peers can be devastating. Ganson expressed the view that pressure is not so much from the conductor but as the result of reaction of other people on stage. However, the subject of stress brought about by the conductor elicited the following comment: "musicians must learn to sublimate such stress since it may affect advancement and solo opportunities. One learns early in the game to look calm regardless of one's feelings. If one betrays the least bit of insecurity or fear to a conductor, he's *dead!* If you can't cope with it, you won't make it. Breakdowns are not unusual in this business."

Remedies? "Encounter it and forget it. To bomb in front of 4000 people may seem unforgiveable but you can't burn yourself out thinking about a bad situation. Try to develop other interests; if that's escapism, so be it."

ICSOM CONFERENCE TO HOST PENSION PLAN SEMINAR

At the 1977 ICSOM Conference a motion was made and unanimously passed urging the pooling of pension assets of a number of our member orchestras, for the purpose of improving the overall yield (through dividends, bond interest and other investments.)

We wish to emphasize that it is not the intent of the motion to interfere in any way with the administration or structure of an individual orchestra plan, however, increasing its yield can mean a substantial increase in benefits. In fact, we are convinced that bringing some of our pension plans under a single roof could have salutary effects on *all* aspects of such plans. We will explore this matter further at the San Diego Conference in August.

Delegates have been asked to invite at least one management representative (possibly a pension trustee) to attend a "Pension Plan Seminar" which would explore the possibility of bringing some of the Pension Plans under a single roof.

Irving Segall, Chairman

THE MUSICIAN AT 65— WILL FAIRNESS PREVAIL?

Recent studies showing our profession to be a psychologically and physically demanding one may suggest various avenues that might make the job more "workable." For the good of both the musician and the public, any improvement would be welcome. Apparently what the musician may have in mind is light years away from those suggested in an article appearing in the Dallas Morning News recently. It was entitled *Retirement, a Sour Note*. In the article the President of the Dallas Federation of Musicians, Local 147, speaks of the option of working past the age of 65 as an "opportunity musicians might embrace." The manager of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Lloyd Haldeman, however, foresees extension of retirement to 70 as creating "special problems."

Using as leverage facts referred to above, he concludes that playing in an orchestra demands first, physical capability before mental capability and experience; that physical capability is crucial to the job to be performed. He refers to the similarity of the musician and the athlete in regard to physical demands and that, like

the athlete, a musician tends to "burn out" rather quickly, especially in the case of woodwind and brass players. Like the athlete, musicians should be good enough to themselves and everyone else to retire when physical vigor begins to flag.

He suggests that where orchestra playing is concerned, ensemble playing is of paramount importance and that a musician must play "in time and in tune." This, of course, infers that at an older age these facets of performance become a problem. Why faulty ensemble and bad intonation is viewed as the special purvey of the older, and one is to assume, less vigorous player, remains a mystery to me. *From the zealotry with which many conductors usher retireable musicians to the stage entrance one might suspect that the older musician has cornered the market on every bad habit that has afflicted our ensembles.* There is no more correlation between an older player and bad intonation than between a young "vigorous" player and an inability to play softly where instructed.

In any case, the Dallas manager states in the article that he wishes that some of his players would retire at 52. We would hope that, in reference to the age stated, the typesetter has made a typographical error. (I suppose that if he is an *older* typesetter, one can expect it!)

It would seem that the O. J. Simpsons and other professional athletes retiring in their 30s with rather substantial pensions and still half a lifetime to capitalize on the publicity their profession affords, would have little trouble surviving the problems of runaway inflation. However we can not dismiss lightly the fact that musicians are basically middle class, economically, and on the fringe of making it on retirement pension and Social Security. A musician at 65 with 35 years of playing credit has spent the majority of his breadwinning years on part time symphony orchestra employment. A symphony orchestra musician retiring on \$12,000 a year in 1978 will need \$20,000 ten years from now to keep up with a 6% yearly inflation rate. (Statistics extrapolated from the Changing Times magazine, March, 1978).

Anyhow, we are delighted that the difficulties arising from full time symphony employment are recognized but disagree with the conclusion that shorter careers solve the problem. *We* would like to opt for more players and a more generous rotation system, a la the Berlin Symphony Orchestra. It is at least as good a resolution to the problems as those proposed in the Dallas newspaper article. Kudos to the president of the Dallas Local. Let productivity be a reward for competence at *any* age.

Henry Shaw

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

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Subscriptions: A.F.M. Members \$2.00 per year
Non-Members A.F.M. \$5.00 per year