

Senza Sordino

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RALPH MENDELSON PASSES



Ralph Mendelson

Ralph Mendelson has died at the age of 52, untimely and mourned by a host of colleagues who had the privilege to be touched by his life.

A violist with the New York Philharmonic for 26 years he contributed not only as a consummate musician but involved himself in the often complex issues that face musicians in the goal of building a profession that is more rewarding. He was a member of various chamber groups prior to his death including the New York Chamber Quintet and the Musical Arts Trio. He was also on the music faculties of both Hunter College and Kingsborough Com-

munity College.

In every regard Ralph gave of himself unselfishly whether in his activities as a member of the New York Philharmonic or for us, collectively, by his superb leadership in ICSOM. In the field of labor matters as they affect and influence the symphony profession, Ralph was one of our most knowledgeable and articulate spokesmen. He became active in ICSOM shortly after its inception, was elected Vice-Chairman in 1970 and Chairman of ICSOM from 1971 to 1974. He served as a member of the Board of Trustees of the A. F. of M. Symphony and Opera Strike Fund from its birth.

Those of us who worked closely with him in those years grew to know him as an astute, introspective and highly intelligent person, totally dedicated and totally involved. Ralph Mendelson will be missed by us.

We offer our condolences to his wife, Marilyn and to the others in his family with whom we also mourn.

ICSOM CONFERENCE IN MINNEAPOLIS THIS YEAR

Its Conference time once more. This year the host city is Minneapolis. Shortly material will be sent to all ICSOM correspondents giving full information concerning the meeting. The Conference will begin with registration on Monday morning, August 27th and end on Friday, August 31st. It will be held at the Sheraton-Ritz Hotel, 315 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis.

Featured will be four workshops, a separate caucus for major, regional and opera and ballet orchestras. There will also be a caucus to discuss the impending recording negotiations.

Orchestras are urged to choose delegates who will take the time to make a Conference report upon their return home and who will be responsible for carrying out delegate duties for the coming year. Many projects have been slowed to a crawl this year as the result of a lack of promptness on the part of many delegates in responding when information has been requested.

The Conference agenda, in general, will follow the order below.

- I A—Meeting called to order
B—Roll call of orchestras
C—Introduction and presentation of guests
D—Minutes of 78 conference
E—Applications for membership and actions thereon
- II Reports of Officers and representatives
A—Chairman's report
B—Vice Chairman's report
C—Secretary's report

- D—Treasurer's report
- E—Senza editor's report
- F—Counsel's report
- G—Strike fund report
- H—AFM convention observer's report

III Committee reports

- A—Electronic Media committee
 - 1—Public Television negotiation
 - 2—Forthcoming recording negotiation
- B—Music Assistance Fund Orchestral Fellowship
- C—Minority musicians committee

IV Unfinished Business

- A—Up to date by-laws
- B—Conductor Evaluations
 - 1—Status of file
 - 2—Proper procedures for dissemination
- C—Tax Shelter Annuities up date
- D—Status and progress of administrative research assistant

V New Business

- A—Proposed increase in counsel's fee and renewal of counsel's contract
- B—Discussion and evaluation of ICSOM's role in orchestra labor disputes
- C—Sound off session

VI Nomination and Elections

- A—Area Vice chairpeople and Senza Sordino editor

VII Selection of Site for 1980

VIII Good and Welfare

THE SWISS SYMPHONY MUSICIAN A Comparison of Employment Conditions

by Henry Shaw

The charts in this article are part of the material entitled, EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS OF THE SWISS SYMPHONY, OPERA AND RADIO ORCHESTRAS. The data was provided by Ted Dreher, A.F. of M. Symphony Department, a welcome contributor to these pages. A great deal of interesting orchestra news passes through Ted's office. Much time was expended in re-evaluating Swiss Francs into U.S. dollars, but when the work was finished I thought that the figures were interesting enough to bring to your attention.

The latest figures available from the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics comparing Swiss and U.S. cost of living, is dated May 8, 1978; suitable enough for these January, 1978 charts. They show that where the basic price of goods and services in Washington is indexed at 100, it is indexed at 212 for Geneva — better than a 2 to 1 cost of living ratio. Also of value in reading the chart figures is to bear in mind the U.S. State Department quarter allowances in Geneva for its staff. A family of two persons with less than an \$18,000. annual salary would have received \$11,400 yearly for housing expenses; the same family, if salary had been \$18,000 to \$32,999 would have received \$15,100 yearly.

Of the ten swiss orchestras charted, five are radio orchestras employing from 36 to 42 musicians. Lack of space dictates that chart data only of Swiss symphony orchestras employing a number of musicians comparable to U.S. orchestras, be used.

CHART 1 GENERAL INFO. AND WORKING HOURS

Orchestra	Category 1	2	3	4	5
BASEL	98	32-36	6	1-var.	6
BERN	87	32	5	1-var.	6
GENEVA	115	32	5	1½	7
ST. GALLEN	53 (14)	35	5	1¼-var.	4
ZURICH	167 (8)	32	6	1-var.	0

- 1—Number of musicians permanently employed. ()—Permanent Extra
2—Services per four weeks.
3—Weeks of paid holiday.
4—Days of rest per week. (Var.)—No defined day.
5—Additional days of rest.

CHART 2 SALARY, ALLOWANCES

Orchestra	Category 1	2	3 a	3 b	4	5	6	7
BASEL	\$26,213	YES	12	\$8,957	\$668	\$556	\$58	\$63-135-S, 69-R
BERN	21,253	YES	13	5,291	696	452	116	174-S, 87-174-R
GENEVA	24,070	NO	25	11,179		487/835	69 ¹	145-I
ST. GALLEN	20,735	YES	15	4,419	1,042	469	116	58-S, 116-R, 58-I
ZURICH	25,550	YES	15	6,853	361	382	0 ²	145-S, 145-174-R

- 1—Basic salary including 13th salary (Assumed to mean that players are paid on a four week basis.
2—13th salary.
3—Seniority allowance, a. Years after which maximum increment is achieved; b. Maximum yearly increment.
4—Family Allowance.
5—Allowance per child. (Geneva, \$835 maximum.)
6—Dress allowance. ¹ Every third year, suit free of charge. ² Every two years, suit free of charge.
7—Allowance for strings-S; Reeds-R; Maintenance of instr.-I.

CHART 3 SOCIAL BENEFITS

Orchestra	Category 1 a	1 b	2	3
BASEL	8.6%	11%	M 65 F 60	\$20,687
BERN	7.2%	8.2%	M 65 F 62	14,771
GENEVA	8.8%	11%	M 65 F 65	14,268
ST. GALLEN	7.5%	8.5%	M 65 F 62	12,528
ZURICH	8%	9.1%	M 65 F 62	18,171

- 1—Amount in % of salary or fixed sums (excluding old age ins.) paid by a. Musician; b. orchestra society.
2—Age at which musicians are pensioned off.
3—Maximum yearly pension.

PRINCIPAL PAY

- Basel—(\$26,213 min.)—Concertmaster negotiates special agreement. Other principals, \$3983 to \$3339 above min.¹
Bern—(\$21,253 min.)—Concertmaster \$6261 above min. Other principals \$3709 to \$2936 above min.¹
Geneva—(\$24,070 min.)—Concertmaster negotiates special agreement. Other principals, \$4982 to \$2588 above min.¹
St. Gallen—(\$20,735 min.)—Concertmaster \$7766 above min. 1st Cello separate agreement. Other principals \$2985 to \$2035 above min.¹
Zurich—(\$25,530 min.)—Concertmaster \$5210 above min. Other principals, \$4335 to \$3506 above min.¹
¹—Percussion, piccolo, E-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, Eng. horn, contra bassoon are paid a lower overscale pay.

The Basel orchestra musician, after adding various allowances and seniority pay was paid in 1978, \$36,530 a year. This was comparable to a \$19,000 salary in the U.S. when considering cost of living statistics. The Geneva orchestra musician earned \$33,653 yearly adding similar benefits; comparable to a \$16,825 U.S. yearly salary.

Pension benefits compare favorably except that Swiss plans are contributory. Principal and overscale pay reflect the general rule in European orchestras. Like conductors, principal players do not command the salaries that are paid to them by U.S. symphony orchestras.

To the extent of the data available, working conditions would seem similar to those in our orchestras.

Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra
John F. Kennedy Center
for the Performing Arts
Washington, D.C. 20566
February 21, 1979

Secretary Mikhail A. Suslov
USSR
Moscow
Staraya Ploschad 6
Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party

Dear Sir:

With profound indignation, the orchestra of the Kennedy Center Opera House in Washington, D.C. has noted that the Moscow Philharmonic, currently touring the United States, is playing without Veronica Rostropovich and other members of that orchestra who have been detained by your government.

As musicians, we must speak out in protest over this deplorable action. The holding of artists as hostages for political considerations is outrageous and intolerable. Such a policy is a flagrant misuse of cultural exchange.

Be assured of our solidarity with our colleagues whom you have detained. We shall do everything in our power to bring this shameful situation before the public eye. Our efforts to expose the grim reality of your government's behavior will be relentless.

The Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra Committee:
Gene Montooth, Carolyn Parks, Julie Giacobassi, Edward Kiehl.

THE ORCHESTRA OF ILLINOIS IS BORN

by Henry Shaw

In a precedent-shattering move, the members of the Lyric Opera orchestra established a new organization named the Orchestra of Illinois. The decision was reached in 1978. In budgetary terms, however, the orchestra became operative with the 1979 season. The orchestra is unique among the family of ICSOM for it is a cooperative operating as are the London Symphony and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestras. It is a State orchestra in the same sense as those of New Jersey, Minnesota, North Carolina, Oregon, Florida and Utah.

The Orchestra of Illinois will service not only the Chicago Lyric Opera and Grant Park seasons as the musicians have done in the past, but will not begin filling in the gaps in the season with various other musical endeavors. Included will be highest quality orchestra concerts; educational concerts; clinics and festivals at a low cost; Youth concerts with emphasis on the operatic literature designed to develop future audiences.

With the incorporation of the orchestra in May, 1978, a governing board of orchestra musicians was elected and by-laws approved. Board members are; Robert Bauchens, President; Jim Berkenstock, Vice-President; Lisa Von Pechmann, Secretary and Elizabeth Cifani, Treasurer. Other members are Tom Crown and Ardash Marderosian. The musicians, through the board are participants in artistic decision-making and, as a group, share responsibility for financial well-being. Robert Harris, who formerly held similar posts with the Cedar Rapids and Oklahoma Symphony Orchestras, was named General Manager.

A second board of lay members from the business and professional community provides financial advice, fund raising support and expertise in a number of related areas. In addition, a Guild of volunteers gives broad support for ticket sales and fund raising efforts.

Tom Crown writes:

It is difficult to summarize in a few words the feelings involved in being a member of the Orchestra of Illinois and in having been a part, as a member of its board of directors, in the organization of the orchestra.

The idea of forming a co-operative or self-governing orchestra, using the members of the Lyric Opera Orchestra as a core, had been discussed for several years. However, the actual incorporation under the statutes of the State of Illinois finally took place on May, 1978.

After this incorporation our time was spent on writing By-laws, meetings with potential funding board members and donors, worrying about when we would receive the I.R.S. tax-exempt status, engaging conductors and soloist for our first spring season (three pairs of concerts in March and April, 1979), planning an advertising campaign, obtaining a hall to perform in, hiring a full-time manager, renting an office, applying for non-for-profit bulk mailing rate, etc., etc., etc.

Now that our first concert series is over we can look back and see some things we should have done and didn't do and some things we did that we shouldn't have done. The important thing was, however, to present ourselves to the public as a new orchestra and to establish our artistic credibility before the public. I feel from the enthusiastic response of the audiences, and from the reviews, we did establish ourselves as a major symphony orchestra and a cultural asset to Chicago and Illinois.

In spite of some minor disagreements among orchestra members on a variety of topics the feeling of playing with a self-governing orchestra was, to say the least, exciting. This excitement was shared by all three of our conductors and most of the soloists.

Our three conductors, Margaret Hillis, Calvin Simmons and Akiro Endo seemed to be genuinely pleased to be working with

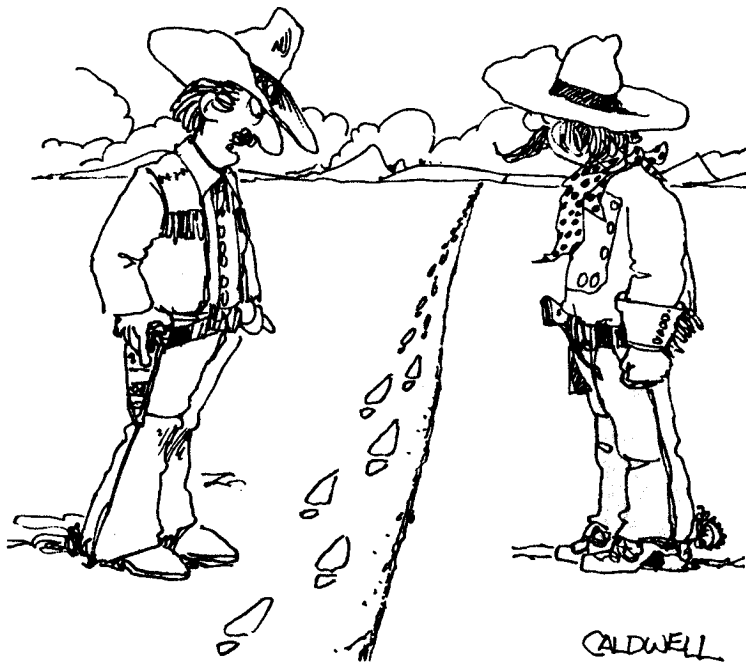
a self-governing orchestra. They were impressed with our enthusiasm and the feeling that we were all in this together with the desire to perform as good a concert as possible rather than as it sometimes is, an ego trip for the conductor and just another job for the orchestra.

Ellen Shade, vocal soloist on our April 10 concert, seemed to be particularly taken with the idea that she had been asked by our orchestra to sing. She had appeared with Lyric Opera's "Paradise Lost" — Penderecki, (Fall 1978 production) and had impressed the orchestra with her artistry. She seemed to know the names of about half of the orchestra members and, at the concert, to be singing for us rather than the audience, although the audience response was overwhelming.

Operating on a limited budget we would not have had the success we did without the help of the individual orchestra members who contributed a total of \$18,000 of their own money as original operating expenses. The people of the J. Walter Thompson Advertising Agency and Fred Hindel handled our advertising largely on a donated basis. The music critics of the Chicago papers wrote a number of articles about the Orchestra of Illinois urging public support. The stage-hands gave much time in preparing the new stage arrangement. We are also grateful for the help we received from the members and management of the Chicago Symphony, Lyric Opera, radio stations WFMT, WNIB, WGN, and WEAW, Robert Seidner of our funding board, and many other organizations and individuals who helped us with their effort, ideas and/or contributions.

The orchestra has made three concert appearances to date; March 27 and 28; April 6 and 8, and April 10 and 11. This three week endeavor in addition to the Lyric Opera season of 16 weeks and the Grant Park season of 9½ weeks is a modest beginning. Present plans call for an increase to six weeks in the 1981 season. Plans also call for an increase in salary to \$550 weekly minimum in 1981, plus health and welfare, pension and vacation benefits. In addition to the 60 fully contracted musicians, twenty extra musicians are employed on a per service basis.

Much credit is due the members of the new Orchestra of Illinois for their enterprise and vision. ICSOM extends its best wishes to the entire organization for the success of this venture.



Let's saddle up, old timer! He won't get very far draggin' that cello!

Permission to reprint received from John Caldwell.
(Cartoon appeared in Saturday Review Magazine.)

CONFERENCE EXPENSE NOW PICKED UP BY THIRTY A.F.M. LOCALS

New York Local 802 reimburses each of the duly elected ICSOM delegates of the N.Y. Philharmonic, N.Y. City Opera, N.Y. City Ballet and the Metropolitan Opera orchestras up to \$500. to cover ICSOM Conference expenses. Each year a new request for reimbursement must be made at a Local 802 Board of Trustees meeting. The Board requests a report on Conference activities.

Thirty of the forty six ICSOM orchestras now receive either full or partial reimbursement of Conference expenses incurred by elected delegates. The Cincinnati Local No. 1 was the first to institute the practice of reimbursement (1961).

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

It is said that *Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned*, however don't sell the musicians of the Los Angeles and San Francisco orchestras short.

After a long and frustrating period we finally obtained the individual policies of our tax-sheltered annuity from the Connecticut Mutual Insurance Company. To our distress we discovered that what we had suspected was in fact true. The plan had been grossly misrepresented to us as a no load plan when actually, it was a heavily loaded plan with front end loads up to 16½%. There was also evidence that individuals had been unaware that they had been sold types of insurance that they had not requested.

Outraged, we engaged an insurance consultant firm. After our committee had documented available evidence (which was verified by Connecticut Mutual in writing), we and our consultant met with officers of Connecticut Mutual. Obviously, misrepresentations and the unavailability of individual contracts had prevented the comparison of the Connecticut Mutual Tax-Sheltered Annuity Plan with others when we first sought a plan nine years ago.

Connecticut Mutual officers admitted to the high cost of the plan; to its agent's misrepresentations on face of evidence and proceeded to negotiate a settlement that would either satisfy the musicians who wished to remain with the company or to honor a "Special Surrender" letter which would reimburse those wishing to sever relations with the company.

For those staying with the company a new product was offered that appears to be attractive. For those not wishing to retain a TSA plan with Connecticut Mutual, the company will reimburse the musician the total dollar contribution over the nine years plus compounded interest.

Don Muggeridge,
L.A.Phil. Annuity Committee

STRAD BRINGS THREE HUNDRED GRAND

The Stradivarius violin known as the *Hubermann, ex-Kreisler Strad*, has changed hands once again. This time at a record tying \$297,250. Only a Strad cello has brought this price.

The instrument was sold from the estate of the late Swiss collector, Daniel Tschudi to a private buyer it was reported by Ann Marie, Sotheby Auctioneers, London. The violin is dated 1733. Once the possession of Fritz Kreisler, it was sold to Bronislaw Hubermann in 1936. Kreisler had used it for many of his over 200 recordings. It is recognized as one of the prime examples of Stradivarius' artistry.

SORRY!

The article titled HOUSE LIGHTS ON AGAIN AT KENNEDY CENTER OPERA was written and contributed by Carolyn Parks, ICSOM correspondent for the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra. Our apology for inadvertently omitting this fact in the last issue of Senza Sordino.

HOUSTON SETTLEMENT BEATS DEADLINE

The Houston Symphony Orchestra has signed a three year contract as of May 23, 1979, ratified 72 to 14 (three days before expiration of old contract).

- Wages:** (Were at \$365)
1st year \$410
2nd year \$450
3rd year \$485 in first 6 months
\$510 in second 6 months.
- EMG:** \$15 per week each year of contract *included* in the above salaries, or \$780 yearly.
- Pension:** 30 years service at age 60; full vesting in 15 yrs. (Was \$450 monthly minimum with 35 years at age 65.)
1st year \$550 mo. min., \$6,600 yearly
2nd year \$600 mo. min., \$7,200 yearly
3rd year \$650 mo. min., \$7,800 yearly
Still no mandatory retirement.
- Medical:** Greatly improved: maternity leave covered as a temporary illness; \$1.00 for prescriptions, the balance billed to the medical coverage company; beginning dental coverage, no deductible to \$1,000 annually; semi-private room now covered 100%. (Dependents still not covered; still \$100 deductible on medical coverage.)
- Per Diem:** Incidental expense pay on tour or runouts over 60 miles increased to \$12 a day, plus \$20 for meals. A total of \$32, with management paying double hotel rooms, singles paying difference.
- Vacation:** Remains at 6 weeks first two years; 7 weeks in 3rd year. Continued 5-day week all working weeks.
- Insurance:** Life insurance increased to \$15,000. Instrument insurance increased to \$10,000 per person for contracted instrument, 100% paid by management.
- General Improvements:** 1) Orchestra Committee recognized in the contract as the official bargaining agent;
2) Audition clauses: all behind a screen and openings *will* be advertised in the International Musician;
3) Increased pay for extra and substitute musicians;
4) Improved Ballet and Opera rehearsal and intermission time limits;
5) Additional gains in working conditions.

This agreement was ratified on the first vote after only two meetings. Negotiations were between Michael Woolcock, our General Manager, and this year's Orchestra Committee, Paul Ellison, Chair Person, with no legal counsel present.

Kyla Bynum, ICSOM Correspondent
Houston Symphony Orchestra

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