

Senza Sordino

Official Publication of the International Conference of Symphony & Opera Musicians

VOLUME XXI, NO. 1



NOVEMBER, 1982

WHAT IS ICSOM?

To persons long affiliated with the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians, and to the delegates who regularly attend its annual meetings, the purposes and values of the organization may be clear and self-evident. For those new to the ranks of symphony, opera, and ballet orchestras, for those who have never gotten actively involved, for those outside the profession, and for those who, especially at dues-paying time, question the worth of ICSOM, periodic review and explanation may be in order.

ICSOM was formally established in 1962, the culmination of meetings in Chicago and Cleveland of delegates from U.S. and Canadian orchestras, musicians who shared serious concerns. At that time, most musicians in major symphony orchestras were employed little more than six months annually at a yearly salary that was barely a living wage, about \$4,000. Among 49 professional groups listed in the 1960 census, musicians ranked 40th in annual income. Only one orchestra (Boston) participated directly in the negotiation of its own contract, and no orchestras had the right to approve the contracts negotiated for them by union representatives who, often being ill-informed about symphony orchestra matters, concluded agreements which incorporated token salary increases and minimal improvements in working conditions. No orchestra could hire its own attorney to participate in negotiations. Communication between orchestras about problems with managements and local unions was random and informal.

ICSOM actively addressed these problems. Vowing dedication to "the promotion of a better and more rewarding livelihood for the skilled [orchestral] performer and to the enrichment of the cultural life of our society," ICSOM held annual meetings at which delegates worked to achieve certain prime objectives: the right of orchestras to form committees, elect their own officers, and conduct their own affairs; the right to representation and legal counsel of choice at the bargaining table, and the right of general orchestra membership to ratify contracts; establishment of a strike fund to assist players during a work stoppage; fifty-two week employment; significant increases in wages and pension benefits; exchange of information on the qualification of conductors; and government aid to the arts. Delegates discussed matters which are still of concern: electronic reproduction of music; tour conditions; auditions, probation, tenure, and dismissals; occupational health problems; adequate life and health insurance coverage; discrimination on the basis of sex, race, and age; and more.

Largely through the efforts of ICSOM, many goals were reached. Salaries, job security, and working conditions improved considerably. By 1965, most orchestras had gained bargaining representation and contract ratification rights. Many orchestras could retain legal counsel. By 1971, six orchestras had year-round seasons; today, fifteen do, and the median length is over 40 weeks. An ICSOM Emergency Relief Fund

was established in 1965; this loan fund has grown to over \$70,000. An AFM Symphony Strike Fund was established in 1970 and to date has disbursed over \$1.5 million to 23 different orchestras which were on strike or locked out.

Although at first the accusation of dual unionism and dilution of union authority strained relations between the American Federation of Musicians and the special member group, ICSOM eventually achieved recognition in 1969 as an official conference of the AFM. An AFM Symphony Department, long sought by ICSOM, was created in the same year. ICSOM has become directly involved in negotiating national recording and media contracts, most recently the Symphony/Opera/Ballet Audio-visual Agreement between the AFM and orchestra managements. ICSOM's Media Committee regularly reviews transactions made under this agreement, the first to provide musicians with revenue participation.

Today ICSOM comprises 47 member orchestras. (Canadian orchestras now have their own organization, OCSM.) Exchange of information takes place at the annual convention, five days of workshops, addresses by guest speakers, special reports, deliberation, and delegate recommendations for action by ICSOM's Executive Committee. ICSOM's official publication, *Senza Sordino*, publishes negotiation reports and articles of general interest six times a year, reaching not only member orchestras but also managers, board members, critics, union officials, foreign orchestras, libraries, and many government and arts organizations across the country. Interim bulletins are issued when rapid dissemination of information to members is necessary. The ICSOM wage chart, originally printed in *Senza Sordino*, is now published annually by the AFM; the current chart provides information on more than 90 collective bargaining issues.

Since 1968, ICSOM has retained its own legal counsel, now the firm of Sipser, Weinstock, Harper, Dorn, and Leibowitz, to advise on an organizational level and to be at the disposal of orchestra committees at the local level. Their New York office is a repository for arbitration awards and collective bargaining agreements for orchestras across the nation. I. Philip Sipser and Leonard Leibowitz have been retained by many orchestras to assist them in difficult negotiations.

Officers of ICSOM have served since 1976 as musician representatives on the panel of the National Endowment for the Arts, an indication of the prestige and respect ICSOM has achieved.

Since 1976, ICSOM has been involved with the Music Assistance Fund Orchestral Fellowships, a program which assists talented minority group instrumentalists in gaining valuable professional experience by playing in major symphony orchestras as extra musicians. ICSOM members adjudicate auditions to select suitable performers, and several ICSOM orchestras have chosen to have a qualified musician play with them for a season.

For ICSOM today, there are new issues, new problems, new goals: securing financial subsidy for the arts, especially in difficult economic times; improving quality of educational concerts; diversifying services to the community and developing new audiences; expanding repertory and developing chamber music and solo roles for the orchestral performer; alleviating adversarial attitudes between management and musicians and achieving greater player participation in affairs of the orchestra, especially in the selection of music directors and managers; promoting the role of symphony orchestras and the arts in general in modern society. Solving problems and reaching goals will most effectively be accomplished, as in the past, through cooperative effort, with ICSOM providing means for exchanging ideas and ways to implement them.

ICSOM is a family of orchestras, a family increasingly diverse in size, financial stability, managerial adeptness, artistic accomplishment, and professional stature. What some orchestras attained years ago, other orchestras are still striving to achieve. The largest and smallest orchestras may be very different in many ways, yet they meet and work together in an organization whose existence is predicated on principles of solidarity, team effort, and mutual support.

The dynamics and values of ICSOM often parallel those within the symphony orchestra itself; no member is unimportant, and none can stand alone. No member orchestra can afford to isolate itself and remain aloof from united support, certain of survival as others succumb. No orchestra has achieved improvements over two decades solely on its own enterprise, knowledge, and unity. The same collaboration which won the gains of the past must help defend and retain those gains today.

ICSOM is a volunteer organization supported entirely by a voluntary dues structure. The quality of services it offers varies in direct proportion to the involvement of its membership. It will falter in direct proportion to apathy and complacency; it will flourish in direct proportion to enthusiasm and dedicated participation.

May it long continue.

ICSOM TREASURER PALANCHIAN SEEKS UNION OFFICE

John Palanchian, violinist with the New York City Opera Orchestra and ICSOM Treasurer since 1972, has accepted the MEMBERS Party nomination for Vice President of Local 802, the nation's largest local. A change in the Local 802 by-laws now allows working musicians to serve as board members, and the MEMBERS slate includes John Ware of the New York Philharmonic and Robert Haley of the New York City Ballet Orchestra.

ICSOM has long urged working musicians to become more involved in the affairs of their locals. Earlier this year, five Rochester Philharmonic musicians succeeded in winning positions on the seven-member executive board of Local 66 in Rochester. John Palanchian's candidacy is another example of dedication to furthering the orchestra musician's point of view in union affairs.

We wish him well.

MILESTONE

One year after ICSOM delegates to the Milwaukee convention passed a motion opposing the discriminatory hiring practices of the Vienna and Berlin Philharmonic Orchestras comes a report that the latter has, for the first time in its 100-year history, accepted a woman musician. Madeline Karuzzo, 26, was chosen over 12 men who also auditioned for the first violin section position.

LEWIS WALDECK NAMED ICSOM NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Lewis Waldeck, tuba player with the New York City Opera and that orchestra's ICSOM delegate for five years, has been appointed by the Executive Committee to direct ICSOM's political activities in support of the arts.

Lew has served on the NYCO Orchestra committee for many years and is a member of ICSOM's Media Committee, which negotiated the recently ratified Symphony/Opera/Ballet Audio-visual Agreement. In the political field, he has worked in a number of campaigns on local, state, and national levels.

Lew will be assisting ICSOM orchestras in the formation of legislative action committees and will be providing information on legislation which would directly affect the livelihood of orchestra musicians and the cultural life of the United States. Regular reports are expected to appear in *Senza Sordino*.

Congratulations to Lew. We know he will do a fine job.

UTAH MUSICIANS RATIFY ONE-YEAR PACT

The Utah Symphony Orchestra ratified its 1982-83 contract on September 1. For the first time in the orchestra's history, the musicians hired legal counsel to negotiate our contract; our lawyer was Danny C. Kelly of the prestigious firm of Van Cott, Bagley, Cornwall and McCarthy. Also for the first time, the Utah Symphony management allowed access to their financial statements, allowing us to realistically appraise our money situation. Yet another first was management's use of a professional negotiator, Ross Thoreson, their new Vice President in charge of personnel (a board position).

Orchestra support for our negotiating team was very high all through the long negotiations, which began in November, 1981.

Financial gains include:

Increase of \$25 per week (from \$425 to \$450)

Increase in per diem from \$21 to \$25 a day

Continued phasing out of B contract players

A defined contribution pension plan in addition to AFM EPW

A lump sum, one-time payment ranging from \$1,500 to \$10,000 per player based on years of service to compensate for lack of pension to date

Increase in paid vacation from 4 weeks to 6 weeks

Slight increase in family insurance coverage

Retirement fund pension concert

Non-financial gains include:

Ballet/opera services back to 2½ hours from 3 hours

Better arrangements for orchestra splitting

Orchestra Committee consultation on tour schedules

Establishment of an artistic advisory committee

Eliminated blanket waiver clause

Minor improvements in working and touring conditions

The major disadvantage of the contract is the one-year term. Management felt that, due to current financial conditions, they could not commit to any future dollar figures beyond this season. They did propose a three-year agreement with the financial package being negotiated each year, but we found that proposal unacceptable.

Management has been going through many changes, including having two chief operating officers in the last ten months. Because of this instability, they were unwilling to make any long range goals or commitments. Management and musicians are re-evaluating the Symphony's objectives in the hope of finding mutually agreeable solutions during the negotiations this year.

Lisa Allyn

Utah Symphony ICSOM Representative

BRAVO, HENRY, AND THANKS!

In this first issue of *Senza Sordino* under new supervision, it is only fitting to offer some words of gratitude, however inadequate they may be, to the man who over the last ten years has done such a superb job of publishing these pages. Looking back through the past sixty issues, one is truly astounded at the number and variety of articles which Henry Shaw has not only edited but also actually written, with considerable insight and eloquence, for the ICSOM newspaper. He has certainly established and consistently maintained a standard of excellence that will be an inspiration for his successors.

Such accomplishment comes as no surprise to those who know Henry Shaw. For thirty years he has served as Assistant Principal Second Violin in the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. He has long served on his orchestra's committee, eight years as chairman. Either as a delegate or ICSOM officer, he has



Henry Shaw and Tom Hall at the Los Angeles conference.

attended every annual conference but two since 1962, probably an unequalled record. He served as Regional Vice-Chairman of Central Orchestras from the time the post was created until his election as Editor of *Senza Sordino*. In recent years he has been on the Orchestra Panel of the National Endowment for the Arts. In all his endeavors, in his typically quiet and unassuming way, he has proven a model of reliability, dedication, clear thinking, sound judgment, and seemingly eternal youthfulness.

For all you have been and continue to be, Henry, and especially for your contribution as Editor of *Senza Sordino*, our deepest gratitude. And, Oh yes, please don't forget to submit those articles you've promised for future issues!

REPORT INDIANAPOLIS SYMPHONY SETTLEMENT

When the 1982-83 ISO season began under an extension of the old contract, the outlook for a settlement without a strike was not good. In July, the players had overwhelmingly rejected management's "final offer," and a subsequent bargaining session had produced nothing of any substance. During the first week of the season, the orchestra committee had been approached by the organizers of the Indianapolis International Violin Competition and were asked to give assurance that any strike would not interfere with the three concerts that had been scheduled for that event. After considering the harm that

would be done to that project by a strike, and noting the large number of subsequent strike targets that followed the competition, the committee decided to play the competition services while setting an unofficial deadline for the contract extension. In some quarters, this was seen as an act of good faith on the part of the union, and indeed, the management called for a meeting before the end of the designated period. It was at this meeting that real bargaining took place for the first time in months.

The factor that seemed to put it all together was the willingness of the management to agree to nearly all of our proposals but only in the context of a four year contract. Once that principle was accepted, a series of compromises resulted in an agreement acceptable to both sides. The ISO management has attained four years of cost certainty with rather modest increases in the initial year. The players achieved a substantial increase in the length of the season, a strengthened pension, and better fringe benefits, including a long-sought after program of seniority pay. The details of the agreement are as follows:

length of season (was 46 weeks):

1st year	46 weeks
2nd year	47 weeks
3rd year	48 weeks
4th year	50 weeks

wages (were \$435 per week):

1st year	23 weeks at \$450; 23 weeks at \$465
2nd year	24 weeks at \$480; 23 weeks at \$490
3rd year	24 weeks at \$510; 24 weeks at \$520
4th year	25 weeks at \$550; 25 weeks at \$575

seniority pay (new in this contract):

1st three years:	\$5 per week for 10-20 years; \$10 for over 20 years
4th year	\$10 for 10-20 years; \$20 for over 20 years

vacation (was 3 weeks):

1st year	3 weeks
2nd year	4 weeks
3rd year	4 weeks
4th year	5 weeks

The monthly pension benefit is \$20 times years of service, increasing to \$25 in the fourth year; there is no maximum. Life insurance is up from \$3,000 to \$15,000 in the first two years and \$25,000 in the last two years of the contract. Medical insurance is up from \$200,000 to \$1 million covering all dependents, premiums paid by the employer. Details of a dental plan are to be negotiated. Long term disability payments, new in this contract, equal 60% of monthly salary to a maximum of \$2,000.

On the whole, the players are quite happy with what was achieved through bargaining. A concern of the union bargaining team was the position in which the ISO would find itself at the end of this contract, and we feel that the fourth year will give us a solid base for further progress in the next contract. A retrospective look at our bargaining experiences reveals that our unity was the single most effective weapon in our arsenal, and that without it our gains would not have been so great.

The counsel and leadership of Leonard Leibowitz was instrumental in the success of our bargaining. Thanks also to the orchestra committee of Dan Carroll, Dan Corrigan, Bob Goodlett, Art Schildbach, and Jack Brink, our chairman from Local 3. Finally, the degree of support from the Local and its officers, President Tom Berry and Secretary-Treasurer Hal Bailey, was noted by the orchestra and will be long remembered.

Dan Carroll
Negotiating Committee Member

NEW NPR AGREEMENT

Agreement has been reached between the AFM and National Public Radio on a new contract which will run from October 1, 1982, to September 30, 1985. The most significant feature of the accord is NPR's agreement, in the face of substantial budget cuts over the next few years, to maintain the 1981-82 production level. This is the first production guarantee ever obtained in a national contract.

In the first year of the contract, wages remain the same; "concerts, operas, festivals, etc." pay \$35.70 per broadcast. There will be an 8% increase in the second and third years: on October 1, 1983, to \$38.55; and on October 1, 1984, to \$41.63.

The production level for the 1981-82 season was \$342,000. If NPR fails to match this figure in 1982-83, 5% will be added to the wage hike in the first year, effecting a 13% increase to \$40.34. In the second year, the production figure is raised 8% to \$369,360; the same 5% penalty provision applies to this figure.

Relations during the three negotiating sessions were friendly, and it was clear that both sides of the table were anxious to reach an agreement amicably. AFM President Fuentealba was extremely cooperative; he was careful to consult with the ICSOM Media Committee and to represent our position at the bargaining table every step of the way.

The settlement in its final form would not have been possible without the ICSOM media survey. NPR was clearly willing to guarantee the 1981-82 production level but could not extract from their records the specific figures for symphony and opera production. The only accurate figures available were from our media survey, and these figures were used to set the production level amount in the contract. Once again, having accurate and up-to-date figures enhanced ICSOM's credibility at the bargaining table.

ICSOM delegates take note! The importance of such information cannot be stressed enough. Some orchestras still have not sent in their 1981-82 media surveys. Even if your orchestra did no media work, we still need your statement on file. To date, we have received only a few media reporting cards. This new form is designed to keep our information much more current; a card should be submitted as soon as your orchestra does any media work, including recording.

Lewis Waldeck
for the ICSOM Media Committee

WELL SAID!

Each ICSOM Conference is a forum for universal concerns. As a representative of the smallest orchestra in ICSOM, it often seems that the contributions of my orchestra to the whole are not significant. However, the role that ICSOM plays in our growth, and in the progress of all orchestras, is of major importance. The gains achieved by any orchestra can be credited in part to the influence and example of orchestras at the next highest level. To our orchestra, the benefits of ICSOM membership are considerable. In addition to our self-esteem, our bargaining strength increases as management recognizes that we have the benefit of facts, figures, counsel, strategy, etc., provided by ICSOM, and this affiliation at the national level strengthens our claim to professionalism. A glance at working conditions data from a decade ago shows how far many of the smaller orchestras have progressed. The spirit of cooperation which characterizes the pursuit of the goals of ICSOM is a tribute to the professional ideals we espouse.

John Hancock
Toledo Symphony

MILWAUKEE MUSICIANS AGREE TO CONCESSIONS

On September 14, the musicians of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra voted to accept a cut for the 1982-83 season. Four weeks will be cut from the 50-week season, and wages will be frozen for 24 weeks at the 1981-82 level (\$460). One of the four weeks cut was a vacation week, three were work weeks. Many of the concerts scheduled for those weeks have been rescheduled. The wage increase of \$42.50 originally scheduled to take effect August 30, 1982, will be postponed until February 28, 1983.

The 1982-83 season is the third and final year of the current master agreement, which allows management to reduce the length of the season or reduce compensation to the musicians if such actions are necessitated by the financial condition of the orchestra. The appropriateness and reasonableness of such action are subject to arbitration.

The original proposal made in May by the board's executive committee included elimination of the one-year-old dental plan, all seniority pay, and two weeks of vacation; it called for a wage freeze for the entire season. A second proposal, approved by the entire board and actually put into effect August 30, included cutting two vacation weeks and two work weeks and called for a reduction of the scheduled wage increase by \$30.20, resulting in an increase of \$12.30 per week for the entire season.

Two vacant positions in the orchestra (one double bass, one second violin) have at least temporarily been eliminated and are being filled by substitute players for the 20-week subscription season only.

The administrative staff will have their wages frozen at 1981-82 levels for the entire year.

The new season had been envisioned as a break-even year when the symphony's five-year plan was incorporated three years ago. In each of the past three seasons, between \$600,000 and \$700,000 had been funneled from the capital campaign drive to cover most of the operating deficit for those years. Yet, because of cuts in local government funding and because of costs for starting the symphony's first independent summer season, the orchestra was faced with a projected deficit for 1982-83 in excess of \$1 million. In the opinion of the MSO Players Council, poor planning and unrealistic projections by management and the board also contributed. The total amount saved through cuts to musicians and staff is approximately \$400,000; the board will continue the capital campaign drive to raise the remainder.

The Players Council of the orchestra, with legal help from Philip Sipser and Leonard Leibowitz, had about a dozen meetings with management and the board before arriving at the final form of the cuts.

Rip Pretat
MSO Players Council Chairman

NOTE NEW MAILING ADDRESS

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 an official conference of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada, AFL-CIO.

Tom Hall, Editor - Mailing Address: 2800 Lake Shore Dr. #4001
Chicago, Ill. 60657.

Subscriptions: A.F.M. Members \$4.00 per year
Non-Members A.F.M. \$7.00 per year
Overseas rate \$9.00 per year

Printed by M. Kallis and Co., Chicago, Ill.