

Senza Sordino

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DRAMA, TENSION CHARACTERIZE SYRACUSE SYMPHONY NEGOTIATIONS

Upon completion of an entire season without a contract, and following the most frustrating and fruitless negotiations in our history, the musicians of the Syracuse Symphony were forced to go on strike on September 8, 1982. The issue was as basic as they come: the survival of the individual musicians as well as of the institution itself. For over nine months, management had been insisting on a 19% salary cut for 1982-83, this on the heels of a wage freeze for 1981-82. The cut was to be accomplished by completely eliminating opera and summer services, a total of eight weeks. Given the depletion of the small endowment and the ballooning size of the accumulated deficit, there was no question as to the magnitude of the problem, but there was violent disagreement over the solution. In our opinion, the orchestra was being improperly and unprofessionally managed, and the long-term solution to stability was in the development of a detailed revitalization program.

In October of 1981 we embarked on a series of off-the-record negotiations with members of the board's executive committee. Two of our key proposals were the direct participation in management by musicians possessing expertise in specific areas, and the musicians' election of orchestra members to serve on the board of directors and its executive committee. During the winter, it seemed that substantial progress was being made, but in early February the management broke off these discussions and indicated that any further meetings would be at the bargaining table. On March 1, to further polarize the situation, they refused to send out binder contracts or letters for the 1982-83 season. The musicians then voted to engage Len Leibowitz as legal counsel.

Incredibly, only two negotiating sessions were held during the spring and summer, leaving all issues unresolved. On September 7, the day before the start of the season, we met in a 16-hour bargaining session which broke down at 3:30 the next morning with management counsel comparing us to PATCO and Custer's men at Little Big Horn and threatening to cancel the season if we struck. Despite some movement on their part, we were still faced with large cuts and no remedy for the management problem. On September 8, instead of rehearsing, the musicians considered the Symphony's final offer and after lengthy discussion rejected the proposal, 70-1.

The strike, which the management never believed possible, was on.

The strike created an immense explosion of media coverage which was overwhelmingly favorable to the musicians. We had polished our image prior to the strike, and the newspapers were already supporting us and supporting a proposal before the county legislature to increase our \$160,000 annual grant to \$450,000. The strike jeopardized the funding increase. During the second day of the strike, a message was sent to our committee by the

LEGISLATIVE ACTION REPORT

Carolyn Parks

(Carolyn Parks, french hornist with the Kennedy Center Orchestra and that orchestra's ICSOM delegate, has been appointed by ICSOM Chairman Frederick Zenone as ICSOM's Director of Legislative Action, replacing Lewis Waldeck.)

Every day we hear of dwindling support for the arts. From government agencies, corporations, and foundations we hear discouraging words about their ability to provide funding. When choices are to be made between necessary services and "frills" like music, we hear that there's just not enough money for both. What we don't hear is any effective, coordinated advocacy for our symphonies and opera and ballet companies as vital elements in our society.

To develop such advocacy, ICSOM delegates last August resolved that an ICSOM Legislative Action Committee be appointed. ICSOM leaders are in the process of implementing that resolution.

We have conferred with AFM President Victor Fuentelba and his director of legislative action, Ned Guthrie; we are confident that we will receive assistance and cooperation from them. We have been in touch with the AFL-CIO legislative branch and their Department for Professional Employees, and we expect help from them.

Now we need the cooperation of all the ICSOM orchestras.

Each orchestra must appoint its own legislative action liaison officer. While this may seem a difficult task, I think you will find in each orchestra a person who has already taken an interest in communicating with legislators and who has experience in expressing views to government representatives.

We need good communication between member orchestras and our national ICSOM committee. We all need to be informed of state and national issues that directly and indirectly affect our orchestras. We must gather newspaper reports and editorials concerning such issues. We must know the names of legislators who support our artistic activity. *Close cooperation is vital; each orchestra must help.*

I urge you to act quickly in selecting your legislative action liaison and to inform me of your action by writing to Carolyn Parks, 3730 Brandywine Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20016.

(Continued on page 2)

ICSOM COMMITTEES STUDY AUDITIONS, CONDITION OF PRINTED MUSIC

Two resolutions adopted at the 1982 ICSOM convention are currently being acted upon by special committees. The resolutions, to examine current audition practices and to investigate problems with printed symphonic music, resulted from studies prepared by Gordon Peters, percussionist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. ICSOM delegates received copies of these reports to duplicate and disseminate to their orchestra members, and all ICSOM musicians should be familiar with these studies.

Copies of the report examining the condition of printed music were sent to 23 major music publishers; 12 responded (favorably). Eugene Moon, president of the Music Performance Committee of the Music Publisher's Association, has discussed the report with his colleagues and assures that attention is being given to the problems cited therein. The Journal of the Conductors' Guild of the American Symphony Orchestra League will also be publishing the report in an upcoming issue.

The problems of dealing with notation which is inaccurate, illegible, confusing, or improperly marked or edited can be costly artistically and financially. Documentation from all parties affected by these problems should be sent to Gordon Peters, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, 220 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60604. Peters urges orchestra librarians to notify publishers immediately when problems occur because music is not in first-class condition and to send copies of correspondence to him. Peters, currently serving as a committee of one, would welcome hearing from orchestra musicians interested in helping with this study.

ICSOM's concern over reports of unfair audition practices led to the appointment of a committee to study the problem. ICSOM Chairman Frederick Zenone has named Brad Buckley (ICSOM vice-chairman and St. Louis Symphony delegate), Penny Anderson (Pittsburgh Symphony), Michael Nutt (Los Angeles Philharmonic), and Gordon Peters to compile information on current audition policies and procedures. The committee plans to have a report in a future issue of *Senza Sordino*. Their goal is to develop constructive guidelines which will help all orchestras, no matter how varied their audition procedures, to perpetuate and elevate their artistic standards by selecting—fairly—the finest players available.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Two prominent members of the ICSOM family have recently assumed new positions of prestige in the labor field. Treasurer John Palanchian is now the vice-president of AFM Local 802 in New York, and Lewis Waldeck is the new head of the AFM Symphony Department.

Palanchian and three other candidates of the MEMBERS Party were voted into office in November in an unprecedented election sweep. John, violinist with the New York City Opera Orchestra and ICSOM treasurer since 1972, assumed his Local 802 office in early January.

Waldeck, also of the New York City Opera Orchestra, is now running the AFM Symphony Department. The Symphony Department was established in 1969 as a result of ICSOM's request to have an active professional symphony musician representing the orchestra players' point of view to the national federation. The position was filled by Ted Dreher until his retirement, when Robert Crothers took over on a temporary basis. We are pleased that Lew's sole responsibility will be with symphony/opera/ballet orchestra activities; his time will not be divided among other AFM office duties. A fuller report on Lew's plans for the Symphony Department and the services it will offer to orchestra musicians will appear in a future issue of *Senza Sordino*.

SYRACUSE SYMPHONY

(Continued from page 1)

county executive stating that if all the weekend concerts were lost—Thursday's concert had already been canceled—he would withdraw his support for the additional funds; this would effectively have scuttled the proposal. We later learned that he had delivered the same message to the symphony management. Apparently this was sufficient motivation for them to request another session.

The meeting started Thursday evening at 8:00 in a very strained and somewhat hostile atmosphere. At 3:00 A.M. the entire management team departed with only their attorney willing to stay. We continued to meet until 10:30 Friday morning, reaching agreement on management involvement but failing to come to terms on economics. We left the room devoid of hope. During the next three and a half hours, negotiations resumed over the phone at management's request while the hours during which the remaining concerts might be salvaged ticked away. Each phone call became more tension-filled until 2:00 P.M. when the Symphony's attorney called with a final offer of a 42-week session with the previous year's economic provisions, contingent upon our being able to rehearse and perform the two remaining subscription concerts.

One hour later the orchestra assembled and ratified the offer during a 45-minute meeting. Immediately following the ratification, a 2-hour rehearsal took place, allowing just enough time to get through the music and take a short dinner break before the 8:30 performance. We were greeted with tumultuous applause by our subscribers, and though the negotiating team had not slept in the 38 hours prior to the concert, none fell asleep during the performance. (This cannot be documented.)

The term of the contract is two years, one year retroactive. Length of the season remains at 42 weeks; wages remain frozen at \$302 per week. If the \$450,000 county funding is not provided, the Symphony has the right to renegotiate the contract. At present signs for approval are positive.

Two musicians will be elected to the board of directors; one will serve on the executive committee. A management review committee will be established, consisting of four persons designated by the board and four by the orchestra. This committee will completely review and evaluate all management operations and will jointly formulate binding recommendations for changes to be implemented by the board of directors by January 15, 1983.

Our deepest gratitude is due to the negotiating team and to Len Leibowitz for helping us through this critical time.

Steve Lawlis
Syracuse Symphony ICSOM delegate

A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

On November 30, 1982, the members of Local 11-637 in Louisville, Kentucky, met to vote on a proposal put forth by the executive committee. The motion was to decrease work dues from 4% to 3% and to increase the membership dues to \$50 a year for everyone except life members. The motion carried by a large majority and became effective January 1, 1983.

Prior to this action, we in Louisville had an unequal yearly dues structure, and the Louisville Orchestra musicians were contributing more than their fair share to finance the union. We are indeed proud of our president, Herb Hale, our executive committee, and our entire membership for addressing these inequities and equalizing our financial burden.

Pat Brannon, ICSOM Representative
The Louisville Orchestra

1982-83 SYMPHONY WAGE CHART

Most orchestras that guarantee income for recordings or other electronic services, pay such income in weekly increments. To facilitate comparison, the weekly salary in such orchestras are broken down into two figures. It should be noted that various other orchestras are active in the electronic media field, though no guarantee is provided by contract. This activity is not reflected in the annual guaranteed salaries of those orchestras on this chart.

Orchestra	Weeks	Weekly Minimum Salary + E.M.G.	Annual Guaranteed Salary
Alabama	31	\$306.	\$ 9,486.
Atlanta	50	{460.} + 20. {510.}	26,260.**
Baltimore	49	460.	22,540.
Boston	52	700. + 20.	37,400.**
Buffalo	40	455.	18,200.
Chicago	52	720.	37,440.
Cincinnati	52	585. + 30.	31,980.**
Cleveland	52	{640. {680.	34,320.
Dallas	52	540. + 10.	28,600.**
Denver	40	{380.} + 15. {405.}	21,190.**
Detroit	52	625.	32,500.
Florida	31	323.	10,013.
Grant Park*	9½	488.	4,636.
Honolulu	38	370.80	13,090.
Houston	52	530. + 20.	28,600.**
Indianapolis	46	{450. {465.	21,045.
Kansas City	40	200 services (approx.)	12,000.
Los Angeles	52	680. + 57.	38,360.**
Louisville	39	266. + 28.	11,466.**
Milwaukee*	46	{460. {502.50	22,095.
Minnesota	52	{594.} + 25. {614.}	32,708.**
National*	52	{570. {620.	29,840.
New Jersey		112 serv. @ 71.43	8,000.
New Orleans	40	512.36	20,494.
New York Phil.*	52	700. + 75.38 ¹	40,319.**
North Carolina	36	450.	16,200.
Oakland		141 services @ 56. (40 players) 107 services @ 56.	7,896. 5,992.
Oklahoma	32	354.46	11,342.
Oregon	39	{A contract—242. (160 serv.) {B contract—336.36 (210 serv.)	
Philadelphia	52	700. + {30. + {FM Tapes	38,940.**
Phoenix	37	{295. {305.	11,095.
Pittsburgh	52	{625. {650.	33,150.
Rochester	48	{470.} + 10. {490.}	23,520.**
St. Louis*	52	525. + 25.	28,600.**
San Antonio	38	395.	15,010.
San Diego	31	430.16	13,334.96
San Francisco	52	660. + 25.	35,620.**
Seattle	44	435. + 5.	19,360.**
Syracuse*	42	302.	12,684.
Toledo	36	A contract—277. (35.50 per serv.)	
	40	B contract—277. (35.50 per serv.)	
Utah	52	450.	23,400.
Chicago Lyric Opera	17	650.	11,050.
Kennedy Center Opera		647. (no guarantee)	
Met. Opera	48 ¹	677.30 ²	32,510. ³
N.Y.C. Ballet	25 ¹	575. ²	14,375. ³
N.Y.C. Opera*		(negotiating, no date available)	
San Francisco Ballet		85 perf @ 92. 100 hrs. reh. @ 17.60	9,580.

This annual mini-chart of orchestra wages has been prepared by Henry Shaw.

LEGEND FOR SYMPHONY WAGE CHART

**Annual Guaranteed Salary includes Electronic Media Guarantee or Recording Guarantee.

Grant Park*—Figures are for 1981-82 season.

Milwaukee*—Four weeks cut from 1982-83 season. Wages frozen for first 24 weeks at \$460.

National*—1982-83 Wage increase to \$620 will commence August, 1983.

New York Phil.*—N.Y. Phil. guaranteed \$1,000 in recordings/TV and \$2,916 for 52 broadcasts.

St. Louis*—Wages frozen at 1981-82 level.

Syracuse*—Wages frozen for remainder of contract.

Met. Opera*—¹Plus 4 weeks supplemental unemployment benefits at half salary.

² Does not include rehearsal pay above contract allowance.

New York City Ballet*—¹Includes 2 weeks supplemental unemployment benefits.

² Does not include rehearsal pay.

FLORIDA SYMPHONY MUSICIANS RATIFY TWO-YEAR PACT

On October 20, 1982, the master agreement between the Orlando Musicians Association and the Florida Symphony Society was signed. Only after the orchestra members rejected management's "last and final offer" was the Players' Organization Committee able to do some serious negotiating with the Society on a number of crucial issues involving compensation and working conditions. Unfortunately, this first opportunity to discuss and work out issues face to face came less than 10 days before the season was scheduled to resume.

The contract was originally to have been a three-year agreement, but both parties felt that two years would be more practical. The wage commitment would be set now and honored for two years, and a better package could be negotiated in 1984, based on the anticipated success of the orchestra with its new music director and a lowered deficit.

The FSO's new package calls for 31 weeks at \$323 in the first year, 32 weeks at \$342 in the second year. Vacation remains at one week. Dark weeks (shutdown weeks when the orchestra is not in session) were eliminated. Per diems, overtime, and doubling were increased slightly in the second year. Audition committee members will receive a restricted per diem but no other compensation.

Sectional rehearsals were more clearly defined. A new section of the contract covers harrassment and hazards, including fireworks (!). A policy covering musicians who become ill on tour was added. A spring revision of the master schedule will be made available. The orchestra committee will meet with the music director and general manager every six weeks to discuss artistic matters. Selection of audition committee members is structured to include members of the family (woodwinds, brass, strings, percussion) where the vacancy exists. FSO members are now considered finalists when auditioning for higher positions.

Personal leave was not increased, although new wording was added in the musician's favor. Monday as a day off was given up to allow Monday evening rehearsals (to a maximum of five) in exchange for two free days off in the week of, before or after those Mondays. First time moving expenses remained at \$100. The Society made no commitment for a pension plan, seniority pay, severance pay, or dental insurance, the cost of which has increased sizeably this year with the change to a new insurance company.

We would like to thank John Giattino, president of Local 389, and Tom Lang, attorney for the musicians, for their hours of help and support.

Skip Edwards, Chairman
FSO Players' Organization Committee, 1981-82

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

This first issue of 1983 marks the twentieth birthday of *Senza Sordino*.

Volume I, Number 1, appeared in January, 1963. Its 18 pages, typewritten and duplicated on folded legal size paper, are crammed with fascinating items: an editorial on how *Senza Sordino* came to be; a history of four orchestra symposiums in the early 1960's, during the course of which ICSOM was formed; news from the orchestras of Boston, Cincinnati, Chicago, Cleveland, Los Angeles, and others; and humor. An entry headed *Notable Quote Department (Chirp-chirp Division)* reads:

Maestro Skrowacewski, conductor of the Minneapolis Orchestra, having indicated a desire to fire several players, explained that musicians prefer moving around from job to job, "for they are like birds, and do not wish to stay in one place for very long."

The format has changed a bit since Robert Coleman, then of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, put out his three issues, the latter two of which contained the first ICSOM wage chart. It was Coleman who coined the name for the newsletter, Italian for "without mute," symbolic of the musician's voice unconstrained. Reinhardt Elster, then and now of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, published smaller papers for Volumes II and III. Sam Denov, Chicago Symphony Orchestra percussionist, turned *Senza Sordino* into a real newsprint newspaper, with the fanciest masthead ever, for his four issues of Volume IV. Says Denov: "Orchestra players didn't like that format because the paper extended over the top of the music stands; people couldn't read them during rehearsals!"

It was Dave Smiley of the San Francisco Symphony who gave *Senza Sordino* the look it still retains today. Smiley, editor from 1966 to 1970, used a six-page foldout and later switched to the current four-pager, published six times a year. Smiley's untimely death in 1973 was a real loss for ICSOM. Vance Beach, then a cellist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, edited Volumes IX and X, providing some stirring prose and interesting graphic devices along the way. Henry Shaw, whose contri-

bution was noted in last November's issue, held the post of editor for 10 years. It's fitting that the mini-wage chart Henry has prepared so many times before should appear in this anniversary issue.

Looking back over the work of these editors, I can't help but admire them all. We owe them a big debt of gratitude.

Reading through back issues, insights are gained and questions raised.

For example, how old is ICSOM, and how has the numbering of the annual conventions been figured? Alas, inconsistencies abound. Volume I, Number 1, clearly states that ICSOM was formally established and named in October, 1962, at the Cleveland convention. Yet ICSOM's birthday has also been cited (or figured) as being 1960, 1961, even 1963. Volume XI, Number 6 (August, 1973), announces that the 14th conference will be held that year; "Fourteenth Conference," headlines Volume XV, Number 1 (October, 1976). A year later, Volume XVI, Number 1, announces that the 16th conference was held . . . and so it goes. My best figuring is that the Cleveland conference of 1962 has more often than not been used as the first of the sequence, although delegates did meet several times from 1960 on, both with and without union sponsorship, and not under any particular institutional name. The Baltimore convention in August will thus be the 22nd *official* annual meeting of delegates.

It really is helpful to have these back issues, and in order to aid research and to develop ICSOM archives, I am striving to compile complete sets of back issues of *Senza Sordino*, preferably unfolded and in as good condition as possible. Parties willing to part with their old issues, particularly but not exclusively those from Volumes I through X, please contact me at my mailing address, given below.

As the world of the symphony musician has changed over these two decades, so has the reflection of that world in these pages. No doubt that process will continue. Some things haven't changed. Maestro Skrowacewski's ludicrous comparison in the very first issue has had its counterpart during recent negotiations in Detroit, as will be noted in the next issue. More about that then.

Meanwhile, Happy Birthday, *Senza Sordino!*

Tom Hall

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