

# Senza Sordino

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## ICSOM REORGANIZES IN LOUISVILLE THE 1984 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Delegates from orchestras across the country gathered at the Louisville Hyatt Hotel from August 27 through 31 for ICSOM's annual conference. All but three orchestras were represented. The New York Philharmonic and Boston Symphony were both touring abroad but sent proxies. The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra joined ICSOM, increasing the number of member orchestras to 48.

Louisville Mayor Bill Wilson welcomed delegates to his city and proclaimed August 25-31 ICSOM week in Louisville.

American Federation of Musicians President Victor Fuenzalba attended the conference for a day and addressed delegates, citing continuing good relations between ICSOM and the Federation, noting the participation of the ICSOM Media Committee in negotiating new recording and audio-visual agreements, and praising the effective work of Lew Waldeck in the Symphony Department.

### Chairman's Address

ICSOM Chairman Frederick Zenone reported his activities during the past season and his perception of health and malaise in our orchestras and in ICSOM. He observed that as more orchestras have made gains in income and working conditions there has come an unfortunate decline in their communication with other orchestras.

Fred also warned that as orchestras make substantial economic gains the public is, rightly or wrongly, perceiving orchestra musicians less as deprived but deserving artists and more as artistically elitist and financially middle-class. This perception could erode public support for orchestras and orchestra musicians unless, as our prosperity increases, we musicians are seen as taking an increasingly responsible community service role and as being actively involved in serving the entire orchestral institution. Managers and trustees must realize the value of such musician involvement.

Of particular concern during this past term of office were problems in ICSOM's structure, administration, and communications.

We have become very successful in ways unimagined a few years ago. ICSOM is now widely recognized as the national voice of the orchestra musician. Our scope of activity has widened to include relationships with many agencies outside ICSOM: the AFM in media negotiations, the Symphony Department, and the Congress of Strings; the American Symphony Orchestra League; the Major Orchestra Managers Conference; continental and British orchestras; and groups sponsoring medical conferences. We have decided to work with these agencies and they have decided to work with us. These relationships require constant attention and care if they are to be productive. If we want to communicate with these organizations' top executives, we must provide them access to ours.

Looking within ICSOM, we see that orchestra committee leaders are very busy with local affairs. At one time their participation and leadership in ICSOM would have been taken for granted, but many of these persons are no longer serving as ICSOM delegates. As a result, we are losing touch with them and with the issues of concern to their orchestras. Having too little information about the needs of our constituent orchestras, our service to them is severely compromised. Orchestra leaders must also have access to ICSOM's top executive.

The role of ICSOM chairman has become too big for one individual to handle. Fred reported that he and the executive committee had sought solutions this year to the lack of plans for succession to replace officers who were burning out, the lack of orchestra leaders assuming roles in ICSOM, and the decline in effective service to member orchestras.

### A New Organizational Structure For ICSOM

Accordingly, the executive committee recommended organizational changes which were discussed and then overwhelmingly approved by the delegates: ICSOM now has a president but no vice-chairperson. Area vice-chair positions have been discontinued; four members elected at large will fill out the nine-member governing board.

The ICSOM chairman will remain the chief executive officer and will be primarily responsible for liaison with the AFM and other professional organizations. The ICSOM president will be primarily responsible for communications with, and services to, member orchestras and for internal programs such as conductor evaluation. The president will be advised by a newly created President's Council consisting of orchestra committee leaders selected from a broad spectrum of ICSOM orchestras; these persons need not be ICSOM delegates. Chairpersons of ICSOM committees will also advise the governing board. Committees either already in existence or created during conference include those concerned with media activity, audition practices, musicians health and medical problems, hearing damage, awards, transportation of instruments, and liaison with foreign orchestras.

New officers were chosen. Fred Zenone was re-elected chairman, Nancy Griffin secretary, and Tom Hall editor of *Senza Sordino*. Melanie Burrell was elected ICSOM's president, and Pittsburgh Symphony delegate Penny Anderson was elected treasurer. The four former area vice-chairs were elected to one-year terms as members of the governing board; they are Bernice Beckerman (Houston), Cathy Compton (Detroit), Michael Nutt (Los Angeles), and Donald Whyte (New York Philharmonic).

Having served six years as an officer of ICSOM, the last two as vice-chairman, Brad Buckley this year declined to seek office. Throughout the conference appreciation was expressed for

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## LOUISVILLE CONFERENCE (Continued from Page 1)

Brad's devoted and effective service to ICSOM. Brad will continue to serve as chairman of the media committee and administrator of conductor evaluations.

### Special Presentations

One full day was spent discussing retirement financing. Phil Sipser, ICSOM legal counsel, presented an illuminating explanation of the basics of pension plans. A written summary of his talk will be transcribed and edited into a pension primer which will be made available to member orchestras. Phil also presented a workshop on more advanced concepts in pension planning. Judy Mazo of Martin Segal, pension actuaries, spoke to delegates about tax-deferred savings plans allowed by amendments 401(k) and 403(b) to the Internal Revenue Service code.

Continuing last year's theme of new directions in developing broader perspectives of the orchestral institution, Stephen Klein, executive director of the Denver Symphony, spoke to delegates about the philosophy and practice of musicians, management, and board members working together to solve problems. While the communication mechanisms established in Denver have worked very well there, success is also due to people who work well together having made a commitment to the cooperative stance. Joint committees like those established in Denver may not work in orchestras where managers, trustees, or musicians prefer or cannot avoid an adversarial relationship. Nonetheless, Denver provides orchestras with a model for an alternative to antagonistic confrontation.



photo: Gary Smith, Saint Louis Sym. Orch.

**Denver Symphony Executive Director Stephen Klein (center) discusses issues with delegates (l. to r.) Ralph Curry (Cleveland), Jim Klute (Minnesota), Ellen McGlone (San Antonio), and Larry Bocaner (National Symphony).**

Lew Waldeck and Lynn Johnson of the AFM Symphony Department attended conference. Lew told of his work in helping in the formation of the Regional Orchestra Players Association (ROPA), an organization patterned after ICSOM and founded with the encouragement of the AFM. Lew made available a survey prepared by the Australian Broadcasting Company regarding noise-induced hearing loss; delegates will duplicate questionnaires for orchestra members to fill out and will return the completed forms to the Symphony Department. Lynn is compiling a list of doctors who have served as tour physicians for US orchestras touring abroad. Lew expressed concern about the wide-spread and indiscriminate use of propranolol (Inderal) by musicians to alleviate the symptoms of stress and nervousness; he is preparing an article for *Senza Sordino*.

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*"In the past three years it has been my privilege, as it was for my two predecessors, to be an observer at the annual ICSOM conference. I strongly urge all presidents of AFM locals who have an ICSOM orchestra in their jurisdiction to make the effort to attend these meetings.*

*This convention is not a social gathering; it is a working conference. The information and data you accumulate about orchestras across the nation will prove to be extremely helpful during local negotiations. The opportunity to compare notes with individuals and committees about a great variety of activities will help you in many areas.*

*There is no doubt in my mind that once you attend an ICSOM conference you will gain a better understanding of this important group of musicians in your union.*

*Please! Make a strong effort to be a participant at the next ICSOM conference."*

Dick Renna, President  
Saint Louis AFM Local 2-197

## WELCOME TO ICSOM, SAINT PAUL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

The newest member of ICSOM is a distinguished organization well-known to music lovers in the US and abroad. The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra has been in existence for fifteen years and is the only full-time professional chamber orchestra in the United States. It comprises 34 contracted members who earn a minimum salary of \$30,250 annually for a 40-week season which includes up to 10 weeks of touring. The SPCO has performed in South America, eastern Europe, and the Soviet Union.

The SPCO broadcasts regularly over the National Public Radio Network and has recorded for RCA, CBS, and Philips. In 1980 the orchestra was awarded a Grammy for its recording of Copland's *Appalachian Spring*.

Although the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra does not meet the minimum size requirement for ICSOM membership, it was the unanimous opinion of the membership committee, and of the delegates who entertained its recommendation, that the SPCO would be a most welcome addition to our ranks.

Delegate Carole Mason Smith provided the following response:

*"The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra is very enthusiastic about being accepted into ICSOM. Our membership feels the opportunity to communicate with other member orchestras and to have access to vital information will be extremely helpful. We hope to give as much as we gain."*

*"Before I came to my first ICSOM conference this year, I had no idea what to expect. I soon found out that it is very hard work but also very rewarding. I met colleagues from other orchestras and heard about their lives. We related to each other, finding out that ultimately we are all in the same boat. It was a pleasure to be part of this convention, and I urge others to participate. I gained experiences for a lifetime. Special thanks to the Louisville Orchestra members for hosting us so graciously."*

Marcel Farago  
Philadelphia Orchestra ICSOM Delegate

## SETTLEMENT SUMMARIES

The **Alabama Symphony** is working under a new three-year contract. Wages which were at \$330 per week rise to \$380-\$425-\$475, an increase in minimum annual wage from \$11,200 to \$19,000 over three years. Regular season length remains at 34 weeks, but there will now be 3 guaranteed summer weeks in the first year, 6 in the second and third years. A music advisory committee including musicians is new in this contract; the committee will be involved in the selection of a new music director. Other contract provisions remain essentially unchanged.

**Honolulu Symphony** musicians are in the second year of a three-year contract ratified last April following 17 months of negotiation, including 8 months of playing and talking. Season length was reduced from 38 to 34 weeks in 1983-84 while weekly wage remained frozen at \$370.80; season length is restored to 38 weeks in the last two years with scale at \$383.78 and \$406.81. Annual wage, \$14,090 in 1982-83, will be \$15,459 in the final season, 1985-86. Offsetting minimal financial gains are complete changes in board leadership and management, establishment of a five-year plan and joint musicians-management-board committee, and a successful endowment campaign.

Musicians of the **Los Angeles Philharmonic** ratified a new 3-year agreement August 15th by a vote of 44 to 39. Wages (were \$735 per week with \$3,000 per year EMG) increase to \$810-\$860-\$910 with a \$2,000 per year EMG in all years. Seniority pay increases 20% to \$12.50-\$25-\$37.50-\$50 for 5-10-15-20 years of service. Pension increases from \$14,400 to \$15,600-\$16,800-\$18,000.

The Association will now pay for insurance on 1 string instrument per player to a maximum value of \$50,000, 2 woodwind or brass instruments to a maximum total value of \$15,000, and any percussion instruments to a maximum total value of \$15,000. Two musicians may take sabbatical leave each year at reduced salary; musicians are eligible after each 12-year period of service.

Revolving string seating has been instituted, excluding the

first 3 stands of first violins and first 2 stands of other sections. String principals must mark bowings at least 4 weeks prior to first rehearsal, and the librarian must have all parts marked by first rehearsal; bowing changes are permitted thereafter only by the conductor.

Following re-opened negotiations provided for in their current three-year contract, **North Carolina Symphony** musicians will receive \$491 a week for 37 weeks in this second year, up from \$468 a week for 36 weeks last season.

On July 28 **Pittsburgh Symphony** musicians ratified a new 3-year contract by a vote of 81-5. Wages (were \$700) increase to \$750-\$790/830-\$875/915, the last 2 years in half-year increments; \$520 per year EMG is new and begins in the first year. Seniority pay increases in the second year from \$1 to \$2 per week per year of service, beginning after 10 years of service to a maximum of 40 years. Pension increases from \$13,500 to \$14,500-\$16,500-\$18,000; musicians already retired will receive a \$1,000 increase in pension.

Interesting side features of the Pittsburgh contract: One chamber music concert will be given a service conversion credit equal to four regular services, a repeat chamber concert as one regular service (maximum of three repeats). Audition committee members will receive rotation credit for participation in auditions. Principal strings will meet to agree on bowings and will receive rotation credit for these meetings. Run-outs to New York and Washington count as 2 services, with the following day free.

On August 27 **San Francisco Opera Orchestra** musicians ratified a new three-year contract by a vote of 34 to 18. Basic weekly rate for a 6-service week is \$800-\$860-\$920; there are 20 weeks in each season. Guaranteed annual wage for fall and summer seasons is \$23,100-\$24,300-\$26,100; accepting optional supplemental work could raise annual wage to \$30,000 in the third year. Daytime rehearsal rate is \$27-\$28.90-\$30.90; evening rate is \$38.09-\$40.95-\$43.80. Additional concerts to be paid at \$80-\$85-\$90. Conductor evaluation forms must be completed, and management must discuss results with the orchestra committee, subject to ICSOM guidelines and sanctions.

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New York City Opera Orchestra  
New York Philharmonic  
North Carolina Symphony Orchestra  
Oakland Symphony Orchestra  
Oklahoma Symphony Orchestra  
Oregon Symphony Orchestra  
Philadelphia Orchestra  
Phoenix Symphony Orchestra  
Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra  
Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra  
Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra  
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Toledo Symphony Orchestra  
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**LOUISVILLE CONFERENCE** (Continued from Page 2)

Gene Frey, president of Cincinnati AFM Local 1 and member of the AFM International Executive Board, attended the conference for the entire week and spoke to delegates about the Congress of Strings. ICSOM now has two COS board positions, including vice-chairmanship, and concomitant fund-raising responsibilities. With ICSOM help, a new structure is in effect and further upgrading is anticipated. One important innovation has been increased emphasis on preparing students for orchestra careers. The COS can be a forum for orchestral musicians to offer master classes. Delegates were urged to encourage their local unions to fund COS scholarships; ICSOM already provides a scholarship in the name of its first chairman, the late George Zazofsky.

Len Leibowitz, ICSOM attorney, once again presented his negotiation workshop for new delegates. It was a busy conference for Leibowitz; after staying up all night preparing by-laws amendments reflecting the new organizational changes, Lenny complained of "ICSOMnia."

**Committee Reports**

Reporting for the committee on audition practices, Brad Buckley noted the joint statement by ICSOM, the AFM, and the Major Orchestra Managers Conference encouraging orchestras to consider the use of résumé tapes prior to preliminary live auditions. He also presented the code of ethical audition practices; this document, already approved by the Major Orchestra Managers Conference, was approved by ICSOM delegates and awaits approval of the AFM.

Major activity this year for the media committee was participation in the negotiation of new three-year recording and audio-visual agreements.

Following a report on the AFM Strike Fund by trustee Melanie Burrell, extended discussion led to the establishment of a committee to review Strike Fund membership requirements and to consider mandatory vs. voluntary participation as well as different levels of participation. The committee reported to delegates at the end of conference and recommended retaining current provisions.

Exploration continues into the possibilities of buying insurance at wholesale prices through multi-employer participation. It is important to realize that the purpose of this effort is to reduce costs, not to standardize benefits across the entire spectrum of orchestras or to restructure benefits locally negotiated.

Liaison with British orchestras reported last year has been extended to contacts with continental orchestras. These orchestras have expressed interest in learning about ICSOM, and information is being provided on a colleague-to-colleague basis.

ICSOM Emeritus is underway. Abe Torchinsky, former member of the Philadelphia Orchestra and administrator of this program, has received over 60 names of retired members who have expressed interest in receiving complimentary copies of *Senza Sordino* and the *ICSOM Directory*.

Melanie Burrell and Doug Howard, Dallas Symphony delegate, reported on medical conferences held in Denver and Aspen which focused on the professionally related health problems of musicians. These conferences will be reviewed in a future issue of *Senza Sordino*.

Reports were made by negotiating orchestras. Some orchestras expected negotiations to go to contract expiration and beyond. Reports will appear in ICSOM bulletins as soon as settlements are reached; summaries of all settlements and detailed reports of the more significant negotiations and provisions gained will appear in *Senza Sordino*.

In other action, delegates approved raising the minimum annual salary required for ICSOM membership to \$15,000.

Delegates also approved a resolution urging the AFM to enforce the payment of appropriate union scales for work done by copyists.

**Relaxation**

There were some welcome breaks during the five days of constant note-taking, discussion, workshops, and caucuses. On Tuesday evening the Association of the Louisville Orchestra provided tours of the new Kentucky Center for the Arts, followed by a wine and cheese reception at the orchestra's administrative offices. Wednesday evening found most of the delegates aboard the paddle-wheel steamboat, the Belle of Louisville, enjoying a charter cruise sponsored by Local 11-637 and the board of the Louisville Orchestra.

Special thanks are due to Louisville Orchestra delegate Patricia Brannon, whose charm, hospitality, and hard work won her a much-deserved standing ovation from the delegates. Thanks to you, Pat, and to your Louisville Orchestra colleagues for doing a superb job.

Delegates also applauded enthusiastically when the delegates of the San Francisco Symphony, San Francisco Opera, and Oakland Symphony stood simultaneously to express their desire (and that of the absent San Francisco Ballet Orchestra) to host next year's conference in the City by the Bay. August 14-18 are dates currently proposed.

photo: Gary Smith, Saint Louis Sym. Orch.



LA violinist and ICSOM governing board member Michael Nutt (left) sat in with the musicians of "Mountain Dew" aboard the Belle of Louisville and demonstrated his astonishing bluegrass fiddlin' skills.

**RALPH MENDELSON PRIZE AWARDED**

ICSOM and the Association of Arts Administration Educators have announced the awarding of the Ralph Mendelson Memorial Prize this year to Ms. Lauren W. Lavine, a student in arts administration at Columbia University.

The award, established as a tribute to the late Ralph Mendelson, a violist in the New York Philharmonic for 26 years and chairman of ICSOM from 1970 to 1974, is given annually for the best paper written by a graduate student on labor relations in the symphonic or operatic field. This year's theme was "Democracy in the Orchestras: Effects of the Involvement of Orchestra Musicians in the Administration of their Companies."

Ms. Lavine will receive \$500. Copies of her paper, entitled "A Force for Democracy within the Orchestral Setting: The International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians," are being distributed to the memberships of ICSOM and the AAEE, to selected libraries and foundations, and to others supportive of symphony and orchestra musicians.