

# Senza Sordino

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## CODE OF ETHICAL AUDITION PRACTICES UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY ICSOM, MOMC

Printed in this issue is the code of ethical audition practices, unanimously approved in August by delegates to the annual ICSOM conference, unanimously approved in April by the Major Orchestra Managers Conference, and approved in October by the AFM.

This document is the direct product of action taken by delegates to the 1982 ICSOM conference in Los Angeles. Prodded by an examination of auditions practices and problems, prepared by Gordon Peters of the Chicago Symphony, delegates mandated establishment of a committee to further study audition practices and abuses and to recommend improvements.

The topic was subsequently taken up in meetings of the Major Managers-ICSOM Liaison Committee where this code of ethics was conceived and formulated.

It is important to understand what this document is and what it is not. It is essentially a document of persuasion. There are no "shalls" but lots of "shoulds." Those who have endorsed it assert thereby that they will conduct their auditions in accordance with the principles articulated therein. The tacit assertion is also that they think others should do likewise.

However, such a code is not a contract. No one is involuntarily bound by it. It contains no provisions for punitive action. It does not presume to tell orchestras that they will run their auditions a certain way, or else. This is consistent with ICSOM's policy of not intruding upon locally bargainable practices.

One will not find any mention of screens, for example. Orchestras are divided on whether the use of screens is desirable and on the extent to which they should be used. While the use of screens, which protects the anonymity of applicants, may serve to prevent discrimination on any basis other than musical merit, the code prefers to articulate the principle rather than dictate the mechanism.

This code of ethics is not a document for management alone. It is a code for everyone, orchestra musicians included. As an example: One area of concern in formulating this document was the sharing of information about musicians who audition. Audition committees, as well as managers and personnel managers, must guard against inadvertently and casually sharing information about a musician's presence and performance at an audition, which could jeopardize his current position or be damaging to his future career.

Much thought has gone into the preparation of this code. Provisions have been formulated, debated, amended, deleted, reconsidered, added, debated again, and ultimately dropped or retained. In the belief that the first document will become even better over time, a provision for regular review has been written into the code.

This code is a significant achievement. Its joint formulation and unanimous endorsement by national representatives of orchestra musicians and managers constitutes the first time both groups have acted in concert rather than autonomously in addressing such a major issue. Both organizations also jointly encourage their constituencies to use this code as a point of departure, a guideline and baseline for the review and development of local policies and practices for conformity to ethical principles.

## ROPA IS FORMED

The first conference of the Regional Orchestra Players Association was held in Columbus, Ohio, from 7-9 September. The orchestras of Charlotte, Columbus, Fort Lauderdale, Fort Wayne, Fort Worth, Jacksonville, Nashville, Richmond, Sacramento, San Jose, Spokane, Tulsa, and Wichita were represented. The Memphis Symphony would have been represented, but the orchestra was on strike.

AFM president Victor Fuentealba addressed the conference and expressed his enthusiastic support for ROPA. AFM Symphony Department director Lewis Waldeck and ICSOM chairman Frederick Zenone led delegates in discussions on the relationships of musicians, managers, unions, and boards; on the role of orchestra committees; and on negotiations and work stoppage preparations. Officials from seven local unions with jurisdiction over ROPA orchestras also attended.

ROPA is a communication organization for regional orchestras (American Symphony Orchestra League classification). Many ROPA orchestras are currently experiencing significant growth and are realizing the benefits of communicating with each other about the positive and negative factors of this growth. Core-orchestra operations create unique problems for ROPA orchestras, and ROPA will be responsive to the needs of full-time and part-time musicians. Committees have been established to examine core-orchestra and other problems, particularly in the areas of auditions and media activity. Immediate goals include increasing membership, enacting by-laws, and disseminating information about contract negotiations and settlements.

Officers of ROPA are Nathan Kahn (Nashville), president; Bruce Schultz (Tulsa), vice-president; Elizabeth Pistolesi, (Charlotte), secretary; Leonard Byrne (Spokane), treasurer; and Dana Karr (Nashville), newsletter editor.

The 1985 ROPA conference will be held in Fort Worth, Texas.

*Thanks to Nathan Kahn for preparing information on ROPA. ICSOM extends its wishes for success to this new organization of regional orchestras as it seeks to address the problems of its constituent members.*

## ICSOM COMMITTEES

*ICSOM carries forth a number of projects to further the welfare of the orchestral musician. On-going concerns are addressed by standing committees; immediate and short-term concerns are addressed by ad hoc committees. So that our musicians may know these committees and those who serve on them, we present a current summary.*

The President's Council is newly established as part of the organizational restructuring, mandated by delegates to the 1984 annual conference in Louisville, to address the need for regular and increased input from member orchestra committee leadership. The council will meet with the president and with the full ICSOM governing board to discuss developments, trends, and concerns in the orchestra field.

### President's Council:

Ralph Curry (Cleveland Orchestra)  
 Paul Ganson (Detroit Symphony Orchestra)  
 Laurence Glazener (Metropolitan Opera Orchestra)  
 Donald Koss (Chicago Symphony Orchestra)  
 Ellen McGlone (San Antonio Symphony Orchestra)  
 Rip Prétat (Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra)

A committee on medicine for musicians was formed at the 1984 ICSOM conference. This committee is currently preparing a survey of all the members of the ICSOM orchestras concerning performance-related medical problems they have experienced. The survey will be a valuable guide for further research into the care and treatment of musicians' health problems.

### Committee on Musicians Medicine:

Cathy Compton (Detroit Symphony Orchestra), chair  
 Carol Beck (Grant Park Symphony Orchestra)  
 Bernice Beckerman (Houston Symphony Orchestra)  
 Karla Holland-Moritz (San Diego Symphony Orchestra)  
 Doug Howard (Dallas Symphony Orchestra)  
 Judith Litt (Oregon Symphony Orchestra)  
 Rip Prétat (Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra)

A sub-committee on sound levels was also formed at the 1984 ICSOM conference. The purpose of this committee is to gather complete information on the extent of the problem of excessive on-stage sound levels in each ICSOM orchestra and to stimulate research to develop effective solutions to this problem. The sound level committee has prepared a questionnaire which all ICSOM orchestra members will receive a little later this season. The committee encourages full cooperation in completion of this questionnaire.

### Sound Level Committee:

Karla Holland-Moritz (San Diego Symphony Orchestra), chair  
 Bernice Beckerman (Houston Symphony Orchestra)  
 Richard Decker (Syracuse Symphony Orchestra)  
 Nancy Griffin (Seattle Symphony Orchestra)  
 Paul Murphy (Minnesota Orchestra)  
 Henry Shaw (Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra)

ICSOM's media committee has long been active in participating in AFM negotiations of national recording and audiovisual agreements.

### Media Committee:

Brad Buckley (Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra), chair  
 Laurence Glazener (Metropolitan Opera Orchestra)  
 Donald Mugeridge (Los Angeles Philharmonic)  
 Donald Whyte (New York Philharmonic)

Another committee newly established at the Louisville conference is one which will study the problems of transporting musical instruments, especially on planes and trains, whether musicians are traveling independently as individuals or on tour with orchestras.

### Transportation of Instruments Committee:

Ralph Curry (Cleveland Orchestra), chair  
 Craig Brown (North Carolina Symphony Orchestra)  
 June DeForest (Chicago Lyric Opera)  
 Nancy Griffin (Seattle Symphony Orchestra)  
 Jerry Montgomery (Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra)

Irving Segall (Philadelphia Orchestra) will chair a committee to administrate ICSOM awards. There are presently two: The Ralph Mendelson Memorial Fund award and the George Zazofsky ICSOM Scholarship of the Congress of Strings.

The governing board has appointed Henry Shaw (Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra) to chair a nominating committee which will present candidates for offices to be filled at the next annual conference.

ICSOM chairman Frederick Zenone and president Melanie Burrell are *ex officio* members of all committees.

Fred will be assisted in foreign orchestra liaison work by Michael Nutt (Los Angeles Philharmonic) and in the study of multi-employer insurance benefits by Charles Underwood (Baltimore Symphony Orchestra).

Melanie will be assisted in the administration of the legislative action program by Carolyn Parks (Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra) and in administration of the conductor evaluation program by Brad Buckley (Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra).

## SUMMER SEASON HIGHLIGHTS: SYMPHONY SOFTBALL

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Grant Park Symphony Orchestra softball teams met on August 6. The CSO pulled off a triple play in the top of the opening inning to stave off a Grant Park threat and went on to win 19-9 in seven innings. The CSO win continued an undefeated string, the team having beaten the Ravinia trustees and Ravinia staff in traditional games on the grounds of the orchestra's suburban summer home. The CSO team has not lost to the trustees since 1974, but did suffer only its fourth loss in fifteen seasons in a rematch with a revamped Ravinia staff team.

The Syracuse Symphony SSOx, playing in two established Syracuse summer leagues and finishing first in one, met a host Philadelphia Orchestra team on August 17 for the northern New York softball championship. [Editor's note: How Philadelphia got into the New York league I don't know.] The day ended indecisively; Philadelphia held on to win the first game 7-4, but Syracuse pounded a demoralized Philadelphia squad 13-4 in a second game which had to be shortened to 4 innings when the Philadelphia players requested relief due to the questionable excuse of having to play an evening concert. The day ended with the Philadelphia players graciously inviting the SSO members to an excellent concert of Mahler's Symphony No. 1.

Asked about the traditional game between the Syracuse

# CODE OF ETHICAL PRACTICES FOR NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AUDITIONS

## Purpose and Scope of Code

It is of utmost importance to musicians, managers, and conductors that auditions be conducted in accordance with guidelines ensuring competition that is fair to all who audition while providing the best results for orchestras seeking musicians.

Therefore, the American Federation of Musicians (AFM), the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians (ICSOM), and the Major Orchestra Managers Conference (MOMC) propound the following ethical and fair audition practices to which all parties should adhere, subject to local contractual considerations.

## I. Preparation for Auditions

1. Notices of auditions should be given only for genuine vacancies, including newly created positions, which the management intends to fill as a result of those auditions, with no pre-determinations having been made as to who will be hired. Musicians taking such auditions should only do so with the intention of accepting the position if it is offered.

2. Auditions should be advertised in appropriate places, including the *International Musician* and the AFM central auditions office. Notices should be clear and complete, specifying the position intended to be filled by the auditions, the person to contact in response to the notice, and the dates that applications are due and that auditions will be held. Notices should appear far enough in advance of auditions for interested musicians to apply and to adequately prepare.

3. All applicants should be sent written responses to their applications. Invited applicants should be sent clear instructions setting forth the date, time and place of the audition, the complete audition repertoire (excluding sight-reading repertoire), and parts for announced excerpts not generally available. All parts supplied by the orchestra should be legible and identical for all candidates.

4. Applicants should be given notice that if they choose not to attend the audition they should promptly notify the personnel manager or other designated person.

## II. Conduct of Auditions

1. In preparing for and conducting auditions, all participants should be aware of policies and procedures governing

those auditions, including this code.

2. Although the existence and composition of an audition committee and the nature and extent of its participation in auditioning and hiring is determined locally, musicians' involvement should at least include the initial screening of applicants.

3. Applicants should not be disqualified from auditioning on the basis of information about them obtained from current or previous employers or from other institutions to which they have applied.

4. Auditionees should be given sufficient time and, to the extent possible, adequate private facilities in which to warm up and practice.

5. Parts supplied by the orchestra for auditions should be in good condition, legible, and clearly marked as intended to be played at the audition.

6. There should be no discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age, creed, national origin, religion, or sexual preference; steps ensuring this should exist in all phases of the audition process.

7. There should be reasonable accommodation for the handicapped.

8. Auditionees should be given opportunity and encouragement to comment, anonymously if desired, to the audition committee and management about the audition process.

9. Auditionees should be notified of their status in the audition process immediately upon such determination. Candidates under active consideration after auditions are completed should be so notified and given an estimated time of final decision.

10. Auditionees should be informed prior to auditions of the orchestra's policy regarding reimbursement of auditionees' expenses for additional stay or travel incurred at the request of management.

## Administration and Review of Code

A joint committee of representatives of the Major Orchestra Managers Conference, ICSOM, and the AFM Symphony Department shall be established to oversee and review this code periodically.

Symphony and Rochester Philharmonic, Syracuse sources responded that the Rochester team avoided scheduling the game this year, probably due to their decisive losses to Syracuse the last three years.

The Florida Symphony reports that the strings and percussion won out against the winds in their annual spring softball game. It should be noted, however, that the winds won in the first thirteen years. Everyone enjoyed the traditional post-game refreshments (beer).

How about some news from the famed New York Philharmonic Penguins and the Cincinnati Symphony Fantastiques?

Thanks to Dick Decker of Syracuse and Anne Bartlett of Florida for providing material for this article.

## Season's Greetings from Senza Sordino



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## SETTLEMENT SUMMARIES

*Settlements are reported in detail in ICSOM bulletins which are sent immediately to member orchestras; basic summaries and interesting new provisions are noted in Senza Sordino. Orchestras are encouraged to file bulletins as a basic source of information.*

Effective the beginning of the 1984-1985 season, the musicians of the **Baltimore Symphony Orchestra** have agreed to a delay of the \$70 across-the-board increase in wages provided for in the master agreement. The wage freeze is expected to remain in effect until December 22, 1984, and the musicians expect that the \$620 minimum scale agreed upon will be reached by the August 1985 expiration of the contract. The wage freeze is necessary to relieve management of costs equal to the amount which a citizen's group, the Friends of the Symphony, failed to raise in order to fund the musicians' compensation, pension, and fringe benefits. The contingency provision agreed to during the last negotiations and under which management is not held responsible for money to be raised by the Friends of the Symphony is not a precedent for future collective bargaining agreements, and the musicians do not intend to enter into any more contingency agreements.

As *Senza Sordino* went to press, musicians of the **Florida Symphony Orchestra** voted to strike following the management's withdrawal of an offer already mutually agreed upon at the negotiating table.

Following an earlier four-month wage freeze in effect from June to September 1984, musicians of the **Houston Symphony Orchestra** have agreed that scale for the year will remain at \$660 rather than increase in November to \$700. The \$40 increase over the previous year will be deferred and will be paid as funds become available from a stabilization drive.

As of press time the **Louisville Orchestra** strike begun October 8 was still in effect. Critical issues in the dispute are wages, length of season, and board threats to retreat to a per-service orchestra. The enormous costs of the new concert hall and its appointments have been a serious financial drain on the community, and the expense of renting the new hall has contributed to the orchestra's economic difficulties.

On October 10 **National Symphony Orchestra** musicians voted to ratify a new three-year agreement; they had been playing without a contract since September 23. Wages (were \$680) increase to \$755-\$795-\$820/840. Payment of the raises in the first two years are deferred in accordance with an earlier agreement following the fire which destroyed Wolf Trap Farm, site of NSO summer work. Seniority pay is highlighted in the new agreement; the current \$5 per week per year of service increases in the third year to \$6 in the first half-year and \$7 thereafter. Pension remains at \$13,500 maximum until the third year increase to \$16,000; musicians retiring during the term of this contract will receive all pension increases negotiated in the next contract. Insurance benefits remain essentially unchanged. Vacation is 8 weeks plus 1 relief week, 2 relief weeks for strings in the second and third years.

**Philadelphia Orchestra** musicians ratified a new three-year agreement on September 16. Wages (were \$770) increase to \$830-\$880-\$910/950. Seniority pay remains at \$10 per 5 years of service, increasing \$5 every 5 years to a maximum of \$35 for 30 or more years. Broadcast fees (were \$49 per week for 26 weeks) become \$42/\$48/\$55 per week for 39 weeks. Phonograph recording guarantee remains at \$1,500 per year.

Pension remains at \$450 per year of service during the first contract year, then increases to \$500 and \$600 in succeeding years; pension is subject to a 40-year maximum. Increases were achieved in insurance coverage. Overtime rate was increased to time-and-a-half, but will now be paid in 5-minute rather than 15-minute increments.

Leave procedures achieved for the first time include a 6-month sabbatical leave at one-half weekly salary, limited to 2 musicians per year; a professional development leave for activities that will enhance the musician's contribution to the orchestra, available for a maximum of three months (without pay); and two personal leave days per year which need not be accounted for.

## LETTER EXPRESSES CONCERNS ABOUT AUDITIONS

To the Editor:

Two problems with symphony orchestra auditions frequently come to my attention as conductor and administrator of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, training orchestra of the Chicago Symphony. One concerns pre-audition selection of applicants, the other concerns post-audition confirmation of engagement.

How often I hear the complaint from young applicants for symphony orchestra positions, "Just getting heard is the problem!" Many orchestras deny candidates the opportunity to audition because they don't have impressive credentials. The implication is that only those with notable experience have the requisite skills; others can safely be rejected. While limiting the number of candidates facilitates the functioning of audition committees, it raises the question of whether the best players are indeed being heard. Procedural efficiency may result in artistic deficiency. Countless gifted players are not being heard and may be discouraged from entering the symphonic profession.

While respecting the right of orchestras to determine their own audition procedures, including the amount of time to be spent and the method of choosing those who will play, I do suggest that it is in any orchestra's best interests to hear every applicant, even if only by résumé tape.

Those who play and win may face another problem. Post-audition confirmations of engagement and explanations of terms of employment are more often spoken than written. Audition winners may leave conversations with conductors, managers, or personnel managers having heard what they wanted to hear, which may or may not be what was actually said or intended. Lack of written documentation leaves the door open to misunderstandings, false promises, changes of mind.

Authorized orchestra representatives should be prepared to make clear in writing the post-audition status of a winning candidate or of anyone still under consideration for a position. Some written confirmation, a personal contract or letter of agreement, should be issued. If nothing is supplied in writing before he departs, the auditionee should send a letter to management immediately, documenting the conversation, noting those present, stating his understanding of the outcome of the audition and the terms of employment, and requesting correction if any information is inaccurate.

*Gordon Peters*

ANNUAL ICSOM DUES ARE NOW DUE AND PAYABLE. EACH ORCHESTRA DELEGATE HAS BEEN SENT A SPECIFIC BILLING. DEADLINE FOR PAYMENT IS DECEMBER 1984. DELAYS IN PAYMENT CAN CREATE CASH FLOW PROBLEMS. AND ICSOM TREASURER PENNY ANDERSON URGES ALL ORCHESTRAS TO REMIT DUES ON TIME.