

# Senza Sordino

Official Publication of the International Conference of Symphony & Opera Musicians

VOLUME XXVI, NO. 1

GCMU 15

© OCTOBER 1987

## Union Networking Takes on Global Proportions

While president of the AFM, Victor Fuentealba attended the FIM (International Federation of Musicians) meetings in Europe this past spring. He was approached there by the delegation from Japan, who informed him they had heard of the distressing situations in Oakland and San Diego last year, and had a contribution on behalf of the Japan Musicians' Union. They presented Fuentealba a check for \$5,000 along with the following letter:

Musicians' Union of Japan  
Showa Building 2F  
4-8 Udagawa-cho  
Shibuya, Tokyo 150

August 2nd, 1987

### MESSAGE TO OUR COLLEAGUES

Dear friends of the Oakland and San Diego Symphony Orchestra:

We have learned, from the articles in "International Musicians", that you are facing the great difficulties. Also, you are fighting for the reorganization of the orchestra in both cities.

We had the same experience, fifteen years ago, that is, the disbandment of the Japan Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra by a commercial TV and Radio company, and we succeeded reorganizing it by the power and sympathy of the audience, citizens and musicians of nation-wide and abroad.

Thus, we feel your difficulties are ours, and believe that the future of your orchestras has large influence on the future of all symphony orchestras in the world.

One of our sections, Symphony Orchestras and Opera Chorus Branch, is running a campaign for the funds for your fights. As the result, about one thousand musicians of orchestra and chorus responded to the appeal.

Although the amount is small, we would like you to accept it as their wishes of solidarity of symphony and opera musicians.

We believe that ICSOM and AFM will be of your great support. And we, too, extend our fraternal support to you to the day of your overcoming.

*Shinji Matsumoto*  
Shinji Matsumoto,  
Representative of  
the Executive Committee  
Musicians' Union of Japan

ICSOM replied:

松本様及び日本の音楽家の皆様へ

本誌の「在りて」の「交響楽団の寛大な寄付金」を受け取り、ICSOM 本誌の音楽家一同大変感謝しております。八月に行なわれた 1987 年 ICSOM 会議において、フエンテアルバ氏 (MR. Fuentealba) から、あなた方からの手紙並びに小切手の披露されました。その手紙に読み上げられた時、参加していた合衆国の代表的な本誌の音楽家一同喜びのあまり拍手が起りました。あなた方から團結心を示され、私共一同大変感激しております。また、あなた方からの心遣い、又金銭的援助を受け、苦闘の中、同様一同勇気付けられました。

全くあなた方にお礼申し上げます。世界中有心者の本誌の将来は親密な関係にあると思っております。ICSOM の音楽家一同、日本の皆様とより深いつながりを育むことを思っております。感謝の気持ちをお返し、私共の時季通信センザソルディーノ (Senza Sordino) を送りたいと思っております。あなた方から日本の本誌の情報を送りたいという率でございます。

ご多幸をお祈りいたします。

*Melanie Burrell*

Translated into Japanese by Yaeko Ariga, San Antonio, Texas

(To find out what this means, please turn to page 2.)

## New York Philharmonic Raises a Ruckus in Caracas

During a recent South American tour, musicians of the New York Philharmonic were able to aid the members of the Orquesta Venezuela. A dispute has been festering in Caracas since January 1987.

After consulting with legal counsel Leonard Leibowitz, the New York Philharmonic orchestra committee met with representatives of the Orquesta Venezuela. The South Americans explained the dispute, which centered around the Minister of Culture appointed by the President to oversee the orchestra. Concerns of the Minister of Culture included the misuse of funds appropriated by the government and the suppression of minority ideas within the orchestra. Both issues had been taken to court, only to be thrown out. The Minister of Culture wanted the board of directors, which had formerly been musicians only, to include general representation from the city. The musicians had not been paid since January, yet they had continued to perform.

The members of the New York Philharmonic issued a statement supporting the position of all musicians in the Orquesta Venezuela, and called for a happy and quick resolution to the local problem. Presidents of many and varied unions attended the press conference, and the statement received prominent media coverage. Management of the New York Philharmonic co-operated in allowing the statement to be circulated at the New York Philharmonic concert. The musicians of the Philharmonic donated \$1,000 to aid the Orquesta Venezuela in its struggle. Although the dispute has yet to be settled, the New York musicians were successful in getting the attention of the media, thus generating public pressure for a solution.

Information for this article was provided by the orchestra committee of the New York Philharmonic.

D.T.

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## ICSOM to Increase Service to Member Orchestras

Motions and resolutions passed at the 1987 conference resulted in the formation of new committees which will address concerns of the ICSOM membership. One topic of study will be affirmative action. ICSOM is acutely aware of the absence of significant numbers of minority group musicians in our orchestras. Although ICSOM has participated in various programs designed to attract and train minority group musicians for orchestra careers, our efforts have not had enough impact. The affirmative action committee will investigate all aspects of minority group membership in orchestras, including history as well as avenues available for increasing that membership.

A representation study committee will explore means of effective and cost-effective representation of ICSOM orchestras within the AFM, evaluating what problems orchestras experience in their locals.

A conductor evaluation committee will review the conductor evaluation forms and recommend whether the forms should be revised.

## Union Networking

*Cont. from Page 1*

Dear Mr. Matsumoto and Musicians of Japan,

Musicians of the ICSOM orchestras are very grateful for your generous donation to the Oakland and San Diego Symphony Orchestras. Mr. Fuentealba presented your letter and check at the 1987 ICSOM conference in August. Musicians from the major orchestras of the United States cheered and applauded when your letter was read aloud. We are thrilled by your show of solidarity. Receiving your moral and financial support has encouraged and inspired our colleagues in their difficult struggle.

We agree with you that the futures of all orchestras in the world are connected. The musicians of ICSOM would like to develop closer ties with our colleagues in Japan. Therefore, we would like to give you a complimentary subscription to our newsletter, *Senza Sordino*. We hope you will send us information about orchestras in Japan.

With our best wishes,

Musicians of ICSOM  
Melanie Burrell, Chairperson

The situations in Oakland and San Diego generated correspondence from SNAM, the Musicians' Union of France. The following is a loose translation of the letter SNAM president Pierre Allemand wrote to the players in San Diego:

Dear Colleagues,

In reading the December issue of *Senza Sordino* we learned that the season of the San Diego Symphony Orchestra had been canceled and that your new orchestra has ensured that the mission of the symphony would not have to be abandoned.

We congratulate you on your initiative in not leaving the city of San Diego without an orchestra and without concerts, and we hope that positive solutions will be quickly found to bring everything back to normal.

We are certain that ICSOM and the AFM will be of great help to you in getting your orchestra back on track as soon as possible, and we offer you our strongest moral support.

Dear colleagues, with our best wishes,

Pierre Allemand  
President of Syndicat National des Artistes Musiciens de France

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## New Officers Elected

Elections for members-at-large were held during the 1987 conference. The one year vacancy created by Penny Anderson's resignation as treasurer also needed to be filled. The four ICSOM delegates elected as members-at-large are James Clute, Minnesota Orchestra; Richard Decker, Syracuse Symphony; Tom Hall, Chicago Symphony; and Michael Nutt, Los Angeles Philharmonic. Florence Nelson, New York City Opera delegate, was elected treasurer.

## The 25th Anniversary: Gold Mine of Information is Tom Hall's Present to ICSOM

In honor of ICSOM's 25th anniversary, Tom Hall, Chicago Symphony Orchestra delegate and former editor of *Senza Sordino*, gave the 1987 conference a unique present. Drawing on minutes of past conferences, past issues of *Senza Sordino*, and various special reports of delegates, Tom has compiled more than 50 pages of information into a document titled "The First 25 Years of ICSOM." Each orchestra has a copy in care of its delegate. In perusing his report, you will discover which conferences your orchestra attended; who all the past delegates and officers have been; when various orchestras joined ICSOM; and topics of the times over the last 25 years. The report provides an overview of the growth of ICSOM's membership, accomplishments, and influence.

The review of ICSOM's history is fascinating and instructive. In the section called "Issues: Threads that Run Through the Years," we find that our predecessors were as concerned during the sixties and seventies as we are today with topics such as communications, ICSOM-AFM relations, job security, media activity, discrimination, and occupational health problems.

In summing up the accomplishments of ICSOM during its first 25 years, Tom reiterated the importance of our contributions as members. "The continuing success of ICSOM is dependent upon its constituency. The community of orchestras will falter in direct proportion to the apathy and complacency of its members; it will thrive in direct proportion to enthusiasm and dedicated participation." His most generous gift to us of time, energy, and knowledge in the form of "The First 25 Years of ICSOM" will truly enhance our ability to understand where we have been and where we are going.

D.T.

## Founding Father of ICSOM Graces Conference

As the only person in the room who had been present at the founding of ICSOM, Henry Shaw was a special guest at the 1987 conference. Henry's long association with ICSOM includes service in many capacities. After three years as area vice-chair for the midwestern orchestras, he was editor of *Senza Sordino* from 1972-82. In his address, Henry shared his perspective as a founding father of ICSOM. He singled out events over the last 25 years which have proved crucial in shaping ICSOM's growth and development.

## AFM Presence at ICSOM Conference

Days before he left office as president of the AFM, Victor Fuentealba gave the ICSOM conference his overview of the recent AFM convention and the problems facing the Federation.

Acknowledging one of the greatest concerns expressed by the ICSOM membership, he described attempts to deal with the work dues problem. According to Fuentealba, the difficulty with work dues is that the problem is not uniform in all locals. A solution which would work in one jurisdiction would give no relief in another.

He expressed concern about the financial health of the Federation. Changes in the industry have all but eliminated many of the sources of employment for professional musicians, and consequently, revenue for the union. Fuentealba maintained that the locals do not always acknowledge problems with finances and with the work dues situation.

Fuentealba also addressed problems of structure within the Federation. The majority of our membership plays casual gigs. The Taft-Hartley Act has restricted union control over the activities of booking agents. Thus, in the eyes of the casual player, the union doesn't have clout, and there is no incentive to belong. Fuentealba stated, "As far as the U.S. is concerned, the country is a right-to-work state for most of the working music industry." For the first time in many years, AFM membership is below 200,000.

Fuentealba noted that orchestras could bring about change in the AFM. The two groups paying the bulk of work dues supporting the Federation and its locals are the orchestras and the recording musicians. Because there are orchestras in every major local in the U.S. and Canada, we have the ability to exert influence on our locals and the Federation.

In closing, Fuentealba reiterated that both the AFM and ICSOM work towards a better working life for professional musicians.

Marty Emerson, newly elected president of the AFM, arrived at the latter part of the conference to meet with ICSOM delegates. He spoke to the ICSOM conference about his 45 years of experience as a player and union officer. In his early union days in Washington, D.C., he participated in negotiations for the National Symphony. His experiences led him to regard symphony players as "the forgotten members of the AFM." He enthusiastically endorsed the formation of ICSOM.

In beginning his term as president, Mr. Emerson stressed "the need for us to work together and be committed to a policy of allowing those who would be affected by decisions to participate in making them." He pledged to continue the services of the Symphony Department. Mr. Emerson stated, "The union should serve its members, not dictate what is best for them."

D.T.

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## Musical Organizations Scale to Summit

In an historic meeting during the 1987 ICSOM conference, representatives of ICSOM, the Regional Orchestra Players Association (ROPA), the Organization of Canadian Musicians (OCSM), and the Recording Musicians Association (RMA) formed a summit committee. The summit committee will greatly expand information-sharing among member groups and will meet during the year. ICSOM Chairperson Melanie Burrell noted, "Each organization has stood separately and will continue to do so, but where we find common goals or needs, we should be in a position to take advantage of each others' expertise and experience. Just as every orchestra in ICSOM is stronger in a working relationship with our other orchestras, so can our national representation gain strength in alliance among ICSOM, ROPA, OCSM, and the RMA."

## Chairperson's Report

Before jetting off to her next conference (the annual meeting of ROPA, just days after the ICSOM conference finished), Melanie Burrell took a few moments to assess her busy first year at the helm of ICSOM. Burrell recounted the intensive efforts of ICSOM to work with other organizations serving our profession. "I see my role as enhancing our liaisons with these groups while guiding activities and policy within ICSOM," she explained.

One of her major endeavors this past season involved membership on the work dues committee established by former AFM president Victor Fuentealba following the 1986 ICSOM conference. Burrell described the many angles explored, to no avail, by the work dues committee. "Ultimately, the committee addressed the minimal services the union can provide to orchestras, and recommended a by-law expressing the need for orchestras to have legal representation during negotiations and grievance-arbitration proceedings."

The by-law was ratified at the AFM convention, although revised to include a phrase empowering the AFM president to determine what is "competent" representation.

Burrell assessed the progress made in meetings of the liaison committee, which works with the elected leadership of the Major Orchestra Managers Conference. She was actively involved in work on the ICSOM medical questionnaire.

Addressing the problem of affirmative action in our orchestras, Burrell reviewed ICSOM's work with the Music Assistance Fund Orchestral Fellowship program. She noted that ICSOM participated in a meeting organized by the American Symphony Orchestra League to discuss affirmative action. "We continue to direct our efforts to the exploration and solution of problems in affirmative action," she pledged.

Within ICSOM, Burrell attended the meetings for negotiating orchestras, involving seventeen orchestras this year. She also arranged a special meeting with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra which led to the inclusion of opera and ballet representation on the media committee as of summer, 1987.

D.T.

## Dues Increase

The present dues structure has been in place since 1980, while the number of ICSOM activities to service member orchestras has been steadily increasing. In addition to the general expenses of running our organization, special activities in 1987 included producing an ICSOM Directory; sharing in funding the medical research panel; participation in the phonograph and audio/visual contract negotiations; a meeting of the opera-ballet sub-committee; two negotiating orchestra meetings involving a total of 17 orchestras; and meetings of the taped resume committee, the sound levels committee, and the liaison committee.

In 1988, there will be several new projects reflecting the interests and desires of delegates to the 1987 conference. An affirmative action committee will investigate the lack of minority players among our membership; a structural committee will explore ways to achieve more effective representation for orchestras within our locals and the Federation; and a beta-blockers committee will work in conjunction with medical personnel to provide information to us at the 1988 conference. ICSOM will add a new scholarship (our third) to the Congress of Strings, this one to be for a minority musician.

ICSOM spends about \$40.40 per person in each ICSOM orchestra. In order to continue our many projects and to protect the stability of the Emergency Relief Fund, we need to increase our dues at this time. The proposed increase, on a sliding scale, was unanimously approved by the delegates, who will now take the proposal back to their orchestras for ratification. Under the proposal, orchestras would pay according to the following structure:

Players' Salaries	Dues
Below \$16,000: .....	\$20
\$16,000-22,999: .....	25
23,000-39,999: .....	30
40,000-above: .....	38

Florence Nelson, ICSOM Treasurer

**Settlement Summaries** will be reported in the December issue of *Senza Sordino*.

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

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Subscriptions: \$6.00 per year