

Senza Sordino

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Senza Sordino: Thriving at Thirty

by Debbie Torch, Editor

When ICSOM was founded thirty years ago, one of the first activities of the organization was to establish a newsletter for musicians in the ICSOM orchestras. The name *Senza Sordino* was coined by flutist Joan Bennett, a committee member of the Chicago Symphony. Violist Bob Coleman was the first editor of *Senza*. His career included positions with the Chicago Symphony, the University of Connecticut, and the Dallas Symphony, from which he retired in 1992. As this issue marks the thirtieth anniversary of *Senza Sordino*, I decided to interview him about the context in which the first issues were produced and his experiences as *Senza* editor.

Using war as a metaphor, Coleman depicted the nasty and bitter orchestra workplace of the 1960's as being "under siege." Disputes raged between the orchestra and management, the orchestra and the union, and even among

Senza Sordino Editors

Robert Coleman, Chicago Symphony (1962-63)
Reinhardt Elster, Met Opera Orchestra (1963-65)
Sam Denov, Chicago Symphony (1965-66)
David Smiley, San Francisco Symphony (1966-70)
Vance Beach, Los Angeles Philharmonic (1970-72)
Henry Shaw, Cincinnati Symphony (1972-82)
Tom Hall, Chicago Symphony (1982-86)
Deborah Torch, San Antonio Symphony (1986-

members of the orchestra. Having been fired twice for his activism (and reinstated both times), the outspoken Coleman enthusiastically embraced his position as editor of the fledgling publication.

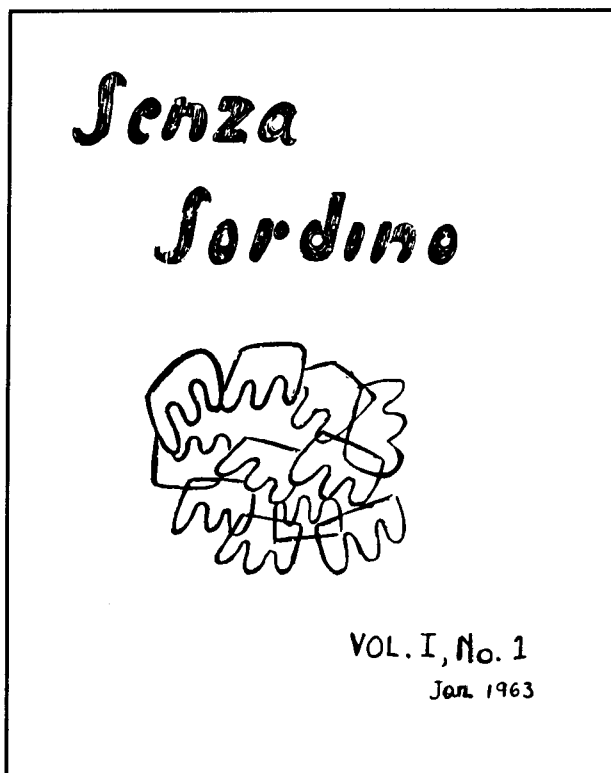
The newsletter started out as a forum to discuss "warfare" and reflected the militance of the time. "The adrenalin really flowed—everyone was excited, angry, and emotional. We had the sense that we were making history," he recalled.

Reaction to the newsletter was very favorable, especially from orchestras that were in negotiations or work stoppages.

Senza was a group effort, with Coleman receiving assistance in production, printing, and mailing. Work proceeded on a small scale, with only enough copies printed to give one to each ICSOM orchestra member. *Senza* was produced on a shoestring budget; even so, a union print shop was used. "We believed in unions very much—we just didn't believe in ours!" Coleman quipped. (Today, 5700 copies are printed and sent not only to ICSOM orchestras, but to many subscribers, libraries, government offices, unions, legal firms, critics, and foreign orchestras. The newsletter is now typeset using desktop publishing—and, of course, still printed at a union shop.)

Coleman noted that *Senza Sordino* has gradually become "more calm, reasoned, and generally helpful. Starting on a jugular plane the way it did, it could easily have gone downhill."

One of the most gratifying moments of Coleman's career came in 1980 when he returned to the Chicago Symphony for a summer season. "A lot of people who were not in the orchestra when I had been there before came up to me and said, 'We really want to thank you and all of the others who joined the fight, because you have given us a good contract.' I was very moved that our work had not been forgotten, that people appreciated how others had fought for benefits enjoyed today."



The cover page of Volume 1, Number 1

1992-93 Wage Chart of ICSOM Orchestras

Compiled by
Stephanie Tretick
from data provided by
ICSOM delegates

| Orchestra | Weeks | Annual Minimum Salary | +Max Seniority (35-yr Cap) | EMG | Pension | Average Services Weekly | Vacation Weeks | Relief Weeks |
|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Alabama | season cancelled | | | | | | | |
| Atlanta | 52 | 48100 | 49920 | 3900 | 22000 | 8 | 8 | 2 svc: str |
| Baltimore | 52 | 53560 | 56680 | | 19500 | 8 | 8 | 16 svc |
| Boston* | 52 | 63960 | 67860 | | 25500 | 8 | 9 | 3 |
| Buffalo | 46 | 33000 | 34610 | | 12420 | 8 | 4 | 3 |
| Chicago Lyric [†] | 22 | 27005 | 27815 | | 8% EPW ^p | 7-8 | \$ | 0 |
| Chicago* | 52 | 65000 | 70200 | | 30000 | 7.5 | 8 | 2 |
| Cincinnati* | 52 | 55000 | 57000 | 2250 | 17000 | 8 | 9 | 16 svc: str |
| Cleveland | 52 | 62400 | 68640 | 3744 | 27000 | 8 | 9 | 1 |
| Colorado* | 39 | 24180 | 25740 | 1170 | 5% DCP ^p | 8 | 4 | 7 svcs |
| Columbus | 42 | 32550 | 33390 | | 0 | 8 | 3 | 6 svc (unpaid) |
| Dallas* | 52 | 51740 | 53560 | 2860 | 20880 | 7.84 | 8 | 10 svc: str |
| Detroit* [§] | 52 | 60632 | 62712 | 1040 | 24000 | 8 | 8 | 8 svc |
| Florida Orch* | 40 | 23500 | 24900 | 200 | 5% 403b ^p | 8 | 3 | 0 |
| Florida Phil* | 40 | 26950 | 26950 | | 5% EPW ^m | 8 | 2.5 | 0 |
| Florida Sym | season cancelled | | | | | | | |
| Grant Park* | 10 | 7,725 | 7,725 | 634 | 8%EPW ^m | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| Honolulu* | 42 | 27616 | 28876 | | 7% EPW ^p | 8 | 3 | 0 |
| Houston [§] | 52 | 49400 | 50700 | 2080 | 19000 | 8 | 8 | 4 svc |
| Indianapolis | 52 | 43290 | 45370 | | 28800 | 8 | 8.5 | 3 |
| Kennedy Center [†] | 28 | 28200 | 29600 | | 7% EPW ^p | 11 | 4% ^p | 0 |
| Los Angeles [§] | 52 | 64480 | 68380 | 2000 | 27600 | 8 | 9 | 1 |
| Louisiana | 35 | | | | 7% | | 3 | |
| Louisville* | 45 | 24358 | 25033 | 1800 | 250 | 7 | 4 | 9 svc |
| Met Opera | 52 | 62712 | 62712 | | 35000 | | 5 | 5 |
| Milwaukee* | 48 | 45240 | 46632 | 840 | 50 | 8 | 6 | 3 |
| Minnesota | 52 | 61490 | 63050 | 1300 | 27000 | 8 | 8 | 6 svc; 7 str |
| National | 52 | 58240 | 68640 | | 25000 | 8 | 9 | 1: str |
| New Jersey | 28 | 21700 | 22260 | 420 | 7% EPW ^m | 7 | 2 | 0 |
| NYC Ballet | | | | | EPW ^p | | 3 | 0 |
| NYC Opera | 29 | 27550 | 29580 | 2200 | 9% EPW ^p | 5.5 | 3 | 0 |
| New York* | 52 | 63960 | 68380 | | 35000 | 8 | 9 | 1 |
| North Carolina | 41 | 26650 | 27470 | | 7% 403b ^m | 8 | 4 | 0 |
| Oregon* | 43 | 29285 | 29285 | 506 | 7.5% EPW ^p | 7 | 2.5 | none |
| Philadelphia* | 52 | 64480 | 69680 | 1500 | 31500 | 8 | 10 | 1 |
| Phoenix* | 37 | 23200 | 24495 | 1300 | 3% ^m | 8 | 3 | 8 svcs |
| Pittsburgh | 52 | 63180 | 66300 | 2080 | 25000 | 8 | 9 | 0 |
| Rochester | 46 | 34678 | 35518 | 532 | 5%DCP ^m | 8 | 6 | 0 |
| St. Louis | 52 | 53560 | 55640 | | 26000 | 8 | 8 | 1 |
| St. Paul Chamber | 40 | 45200 | 46350 | 1200 | 9% ^p | 8 | 4 | 1: str |
| San Antonio* | 39 | 22698 | 24258 | | 3.75% EPW ^p | 7 | 3 | 0 |
| San Diego | 33 | 24750 | 24750 | 1980 | 5.5% ^p | 8 | 2 | 0 |
| SF Ballet [†] | 21 | 23630 | 24730 | 950 | 10% EPW | 6.5 | 10% ^m | 0 |
| SF Opera* | 27 | 45865 | 46665 | 1376 | 8.5% ^m | 6 + reh | 4 | 3 days |
| San Francisco* | 52 | 64480 | 68380 | 1300 | 28000 | 8 | 10 | 1 |
| Syracuse* | 35 | 20428 | 20822 | 1287 | ^p | 7.52 | 4 | 0 |
| Utah | 52 | 31980 | 33280 | | 8% EPW/40 ^m | 8 | 9 | 0 |

* Notes

^pPension or vacation contribution based on personal salary.

^mPension or vacation contribution based on minimum scale.

[§]Relief weeks or services for strings, 2nd winds.

[†]Chicago Lyric, Kennedy Center, and San Francisco Ballet receive a money bonus rather than vacation weeks.

Boston: at least 22 wks = 5 svcs.

Chicago: \$1K bonus paid 7/1/93. Radio=\$5525/yr add'l. '93 retirees will receive \$40K pension. 1 sub +2 summer programs additional relief.

Cincinnati: salary figures reflect negotiated 2-week lay-off.

Colorado: seniority is not paid in addition to overscale.

Dallas: Rule of 85 applies with 30 years of service.

Detroit: additional relief of 2svc/yr/5yrs seniority, up to 8 svc/yr. EMG for radio only.

Florida Orch: pension = 5% as of 4/1/93.

Florida Phil: 2-tiered orchestra; 10 players earn less than shown on chart. Salary includes annual travel bonus.

Grant Park: still negotiating at press time; 1991-92 figures given.

Honolulu: 20-yr. cap on seniority.

Louisville: pension is yearly figure. Management will match player contribution up to \$450 per yr.

Milwaukee: pension paid monthly per yrs svc, no max.

New York: each player receives at least \$1040/yr overscale in addition to figures in chart.

Oregon: vacation pay = \$1703 add'l.

Philadelphia: pension=\$900/mo/yrs svc + add'l \$2000 after 35 yrs svc.

Phoenix: 17% cut from 11/30/92 to 2/28/93; possibly will be recouped at end of '93 season.

San Antonio: salary reflects pay cut of 11.2%.

SF Opera: strings get off 1 opera every other season.

San Francisco: violas and cellos get 1 additional relief week every other year.

Syracuse: pension is 10% of final yearly wage.

1991-92 ICSOM Orchestra Recording Sessions

| Orchestra | 2 Hr | 3 Hr | 4 Hr | Location Hrs | Total Hrs |
|------------------|----------|------------|-----------|---------------|----------------|
| Alabama | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Atlanta | 0 | 3 | 8 | 0.0 | 41.0 |
| Baltimore | 0 | 9 | 0 | 27.0 | 54.0 |
| Boston | 0 | 9 | 8 | 23.5 | 82.5 |
| Buffalo | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Chicago Lyric | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Chicago | 0 | 16 | 3 | 38.0 | 98.0 |
| Cincinnati | 0 | 14 | 0 | 0.0 | 42.0 |
| Cleveland | 0 | 18 | 0 | 0.0 | 54.0 |
| Colorado | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Columbus | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Dallas | 0 | 11 | 0 | 3.0 | 36.0 |
| Detroit | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0.0 | 14.0 |
| Florida Orch | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Florida Phil | 0 | 4 | 0 | 12.0 | 24.0 |
| Florida Sym | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Grant Park | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Honolulu | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Houston | 0 | 2 | 4 | 0.0 | 22.0 |
| Indianapolis | 0 | 4 | 0 | 12.75 | 24.75 |
| Kennedy Center | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Los Angeles | 0 | 10 | 0 | 0.0 | 30.0 |
| Louisville | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0.0 | 8.0 |
| Met Opera | 0 | 32 | 7 | 0.0 | 124.0 |
| Milwaukee | 0 | 6 | 1 | 22.0 | 44.0 |
| Minnesota | 0 | 5 | 1 | 0.0 | 19.0 |
| National | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0.0 | 18.0 |
| New Jersey | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| NYC Ballet | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0.0 | 9.0 |
| NYC Opera | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0.0 | 15.0 |
| New York | 0 | 4 | 3 | 29.0 | 53.0 |
| North Carolina | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Oregon | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Philadelphia | 0 | 6 | 3 | 3.0 | 33.0 |
| Phoenix | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Pittsburgh | 0 | 7 | 4 | 0.0 | 37.0 |
| Rochester | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.0 | 4.0 |
| St. Louis | 0 | 9 | 7 | 0.0 | 55.0 |
| St. Paul Chamber | 0 | 7 | 5 | 41.0 | 82.0 |
| San Antonio | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| San Diego | 0 | 3 | 2 | 17.0 | 34.0 |
| SF Ballet | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| SF Opera | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| San Francisco | 0 | 4 | 3 | 0.0 | 24.0 |
| Syracuse | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Utah | 0 | 2 | 0 | 6.0 | 12.0 |
| Total | 0 | 201 | 64 | 234.25 | 1093.25 |

Compiled by
Brad Buckley

Location recordings are made of the orchestra playing live during a concert. The orchestra is paid when the recording is released as a record. This chart shows the number of hours of recording for which each orchestra was paid.

ICSOM Conference Moved

Given the current controversy surrounding the discriminatory legislation passed in Colorado, the governing board of ICSOM became very concerned about holding the 1993 ICSOM conference in Colorado. The ICSOM orchestras were consulted and responded overwhelmingly in favor of moving the conference. We have selected Park City, Utah, for this summer's conference. At a somewhat lower altitude and cost than Vail, Park City is a pleasant resort located about thirty minutes from Salt Lake City.

We hope the situation is resolved soon in Colorado and would be pleased to be able to return there for future conferences.

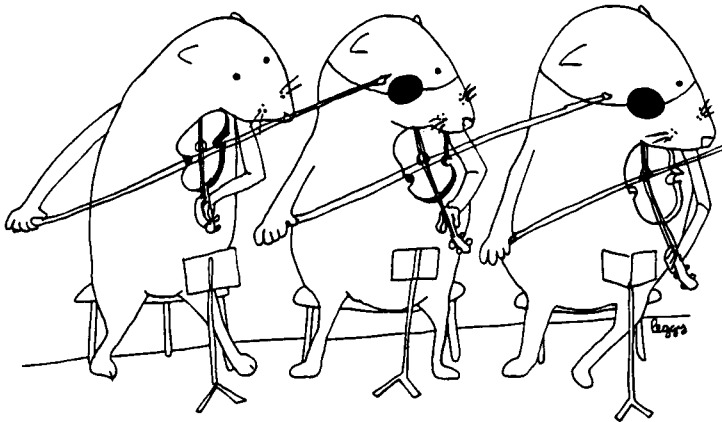
ICSOM Governing Board

Worth Noting

- The ICSOM governing board met in New York on March 1. Agenda included conference planning.
- The ICSOM media committee will meet with representatives of the orchestra managers April 26-27 in New York to negotiate the symphony audio/visual agreement. Attending for ICSOM will be Brad Buckley (chairperson), David Angus (president), Larry Wechsler (Met Opera Orchestra), and Bill Foster (National Symphony).
- Labor consultant Bill Roehl has begun developing an internal organizing program for orchestras, as mandated by the 1992 ICSOM conference. San Antonio was selected as a pilot site. An exploratory meeting took place in March, and a two-day seminar for the orchestra is scheduled for April 13-14.

**The Musician's Survival Manual:
A Guide to Preventing and Treating
Injuries in Instrumentalists**

by
Richard Norris, M.D.



Edited by
Deborah Torch

Published by the
**International Conference of Symphony
and Opera Musicians
(ICSOM)**

The Book

ICSOM's first venture into book publishing was completed this month as *The Musician's Survival Manual: A Guide to the Prevention and Treatment of Injuries in Instrumentalists* went to press. The 144-page paperback, written by Richard Norris, M.D., and edited by Senza editor Deborah Torch, offers information about the anatomy, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of many injuries that befall instrumentalists.

The book retails for \$16.95, but will be available to members of ICSOM orchestras and ICSOM emeritus members at a reduced rate of \$12.95 until July 1, 1993. A \$3.00 shipping and handling charge will be added to all orders. To order, call the distributor—MMB Music in St. Louis—at (800) 543-3771.

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