

Senza Sordino

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Introspection At ICSOM

As ICSOM approaches its 40th birthday in the year 2002, it has begun a ritual of maturation—ICSOM has set about to inspect itself, review its history, assess its present, and rechart a path for its future.

In looking back to the past, it is clear that ICSOM has been a wildly successful organization. ICSOM was founded in the 1960s by a group of orchestra musicians who were union activists and dissidents, seeking first to harness their union into their service, and then use that new union strength to better the conditions of their employment.

The incredible strides that orchestra musicians have made over the last forty years is testament to the success of ICSOM on both the union and employer fronts. Within the union, the voice of ICSOM has been increasingly heard and respected throughout the AFM hierarchy. Many orchestra musicians are now serving in leadership roles in their local unions, as delegates to the AFM Convention, and in other capacities of national union influence. We have entered a period of relative calm with the AFM, dialogue between the AFM and ICSOM having reached a level of reason and respect, if not always complete agreement. The biggest remaining issue in ICSOM's relationship with the AFM is the formalization of the role of the player conferences, including ICSOM, in the governance of the AFM. Although all is not perfect in AFMland, we have come a long way from the day when an AFM official said about ICSOM, "We will crush you like ants."

Our relationships with our employers, although still rocky in some places at some times, has also been revolutionized in the last forty years. In the embryonic days of ICSOM, musicians could be fired at the drop of a hat, working conditions were controlled solely by whim of management, wages were uniformly low, and there

were no orchestras with year-round seasons. Musicians in the New York Philharmonic drove cabs during the off-season to make ends meet; Cleveland Orchestra members sold encyclopedias and Fuller brushes door-to-door. Now there are 19 orchestras in the U.S. with 52-week seasons,

and dozens more with shorter seasons that also pay a reasonable living wage. All ICSOM orchestras, now fifty-strong, have benefitted from ICSOM's help over the years to achieve major gains in pay, working conditions, benefits and job security. Working in an American orchestra today is a safe, rewarding and respectable profession, largely due to the efforts of ICSOM.



Ronald J. Bauers MBA, MPA, CMA; Professor, University of Nebraska; consultant to the SSD on orchestra finances

So, are all of the problems of orchestra musicians now solved? Where does ICSOM go from here? These were some of the questions asked at ICSOM Conference 2000 in Louisville, Kentucky during the last week of August. ICSOM Chair Robert Levine set the agenda in his opening remarks, putting ICSOM under the dissecting microscope and identifying five traditional functions of ICSOM—advocacy,

representation, gathering and providing information, advising, and networking. He urged the delegates to think about the applicability of these five functions to the present and future ICSOM, and to think about how ICSOM might, or might not, need to change in the new millennium.

The microscope saw more use the next day, this time to study numbers, dollars, and what to do with them. Ron Bauers,

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ICSOM President Dave Angus

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orchestra financial analyst, explained the intricacies of orchestra financial statements and financial management, and William Thompson, public relations expert, described how to use that financial data to make the musicians' economic case to the public, including orchestra donors, audience, and government.

Further dissection of ICSOM and the role it plays in our industry followed on Friday, beginning with Paul Boulian and Fred Zenone of the Symphony Orchestra Institute picking up where Robert's opening address left off, leading a session titled, "ICSOM's Role in the Orchestra Industry." Paul and Fred asked provocative questions to stimulate discussion among the group about the place ICSOM will hold in the music industry of the future.

The working musicians' influence on the union was the topic of a panel on "Making Your Local More Democratic." Panelists from locals in New York, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh and Honolulu described the role that working musicians played in reforming their locals, in most cases ousting corrupt or unresponsive regimes. In each case reform was accomplished a little differently—in New York, the movement was started by club date musicians, later joined by theater musicians; in Los Angeles by theatre and recording musicians; in Pittsburgh by symphony, opera and ballet musicians; and in Honolulu by union staff members. In all cases, however, no matter which group within the union spearheaded the charge, all working musicians benefitted.

ICSOM then took a break from its inward probing to look outward toward the labor community in Louisville. ICSOM Conference participants flexed their labor muscle and joined a Jobs for Justice rally for the nurses at Audubon Hospital, who have been fighting for 11 years to get a union contract. A brass quintet



Louisville orchestra member Judy Wilson shares her local knowledge with Virginia Symphony ICSOM delegate John Paul Lindberg while cruising the Ohio River.



The Nashville contingent – Laura Ross (L), Nashville Symphony union steward, and Deidre Bacco, ICSOM delegate – enjoy their first ICSOM mixer. Two weeks earlier, Laura had been named ROPA Secretary Emerita, having resigned as Secretary of ROPA in anticipation of her orchestra's joining ICSOM.

composed of ICSOM musicians Charles Schlueter (Boston), Brian Rood (Kansas City), Dave Angus (Rochester), Michael Moore (Atlanta), and Ron Horton (Louisville) performed with marvelous effect at the rally. (See page 6.)

The last day of the Conference looked squarely into the future—into cyberspace—with discussion of the newly negotiated orchestra Internet agreement. While there were differing views expressed about the new concepts embodied in the agreement, it was understood that this experimental agreement blazes a trail through a rapidly changing new media frontier, and that whatever doesn't work can and will be changed at the next negotiation. Lengthy discussion produced consensus that the hasty Internet agreement ratification process was not effective for many orchestras, and the AFM media negotiators agreed that they would try to avoid such a rushed process in future ratification votes.

All current ICSOM officers were reelected to their positions, and the Nashville Symphony and the Virginia Symphony were inducted as new members of ICSOM. Near the end of the Conference ICSOM took another step into the future by approving its reorganization as a non-profit corporation.

(Heretofore ICSOM had operated as an unincorporated association.) This change will clarify ICSOM's relationships with the IRS and the AFM, reduce ICSOM's exposure to liability, and eventually provide a mechanism for project expansion and greater accessibility to charitable funds. Speaking of funds—the near-final act of the ICSOM Conference was to raise \$1040.00 for TEMPO, the AFM's political action committee.



After the labor rally, ICSOM Conferencers unwound at the ol' ball game. This was a AAA minor league matchup, the Louisville home team defeating the visitors from up north of the river – another ICSOM city – Columbus.



Florida Philharmonic Settles Under Duress

On Saturday, October 21, the management of the Florida Philharmonic issued an ultimatum to their musicians: Accept management's final offer, in toto, without further negotiation, by the next day, Sunday, or the board would dissolve the organization on Monday. The Florida Philharmonic strike ended that Sunday, the musicians taking the only course left open to them. The contract that was agreed to, extracted by management holding a gun to the heads of musicians and a community held hostage, contained increases in wages, but also concessions by the musicians in many areas.

This story was submitted by the Florida musicians as Senza Sordino was going to press, but just before the sudden settlement. The rest of the story—management threats to cancel the season, the musicians' offer of binding arbitration, and management's refusal of arbitration in favor of dissolution—will appear in the next issue. – Ed.

On September 25, hours after last-minute negotiations were held in an effort to reach an agreement prior to the first services of the season, the members of the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra negotiating committee called for a strike. We, the musicians, wanting to begin to equalize our salaries with our colleagues in other American orchestras, and also wanting to effect structural changes in the organization, responded overwhelmingly in favor of this action.

Some History

Two years ago, in our last negotiations, the musicians played regular orchestra services without a contract for nearly two months. At the end of this period of "play and talk" we were motivated, by both management's plea for "a little breathing room" and their promise that "once our financial house is in order" it would be our turn, to accept their offer. It was understood that greater increases in our wages would be forthcoming. We accepted a contract that froze wages for a year, then allocated a four-percent raise during the contract's second year. Importantly, this ratification vote barely passed; the orchestra members came within four votes of calling a strike.

Act One

Following this opportunity to take advantage of two years of breathing room, management did post some successes. The FPO posted operating surpluses in four of the past five years. Defying national trends which report ticket income slipping, the FPO's Marketing Director reported that the FPO's per-concert income jumped nine percent last season. Also, management projects a 1.4-million-dollar increase in the new year's budget, and the FPO Board announced significant progress toward adding 50 million dollars to the institution's endowment.

In spite of this "good news," management showed no signs of making progress in their ability to negotiate with the musicians. The first negotiating meeting in 2000 consisted of feel-good messages about "shared sacrifice," about how we are "one big happy family," and about the "great risks" involved with offering the musicians any more money. Management appeared at the table unprepared, without a written proposal, and proceeded to offer a one-year agreement with a two-percent increase in wages and the

status quo in all other areas of the contract. Any further discussion of the union's other concerns would take place "next time." After all the energy spent by the union committee in researching, interviewing and writing a comprehensive proposal, this was their complete response to us.

Many wasted weeks passed without meetings before management finally submitted their first written proposal. This proposal included a list of nineteen "take-backs" concerning, among other things, concessions in non-renewal language, scheduling, and health insurance. It also included a new and improved financial proposal—a three-percent wage increase—valid only if we accepted these take-backs! The orchestra committee immediately met with the musicians, a strike authorization vote was passed, and the various strike committees were assembled.

Act Two

The musicians of the FPO had been organizing themselves and taking precautions in the event of a strike for some time. During the past season, an internal strike fund was set in place and through payroll deductions from each musician's paycheck, nearly \$25,000 was collected. The additional bonus derived from instigating these payroll deductions comes from management's certain awareness that this contingency fund exists. In addition, we hired a public relations/financial arts consultant (William Thompson) who focused on the ongoing media campaign, and we hired an attorney (Leonard Leibowitz) who has a strong style and proven track record. Therefore, when management's "last, best, and final offer" (now a five-percent wage increase and fewer take-backs) was received, the musicians reaffirmed their allegiance to the negotiation committee, and prepared to actively go on strike.

Since September 25 we, the musicians, performed the free community concerts that were originally scheduled—only now we performed them under our own banner. During the first week of the strike, musicians performed seven concerts, and more free concerts in the community followed. Through these concerts, constant press releases, and constant contact with reporters, the union kept the public informed, and the resulting letter-writing campaign contributed toward pressuring the board and management.

After three weeks, the first negotiation meeting since calling the strike occurred on Monday, October 16. At this meeting the management offered a five-year agreement which included a five-percent increase in wages the first year and four-percent wage increases in each of the following four years. However, upsetting non-renewal language, changes in health insurance which would potentially cost us more than the increase in wages, and more pro-management language which had previously been removed from the table accompanied this proposal. Arguably, the new offer was worse than the offer which had initially prompted the strike. An evening meeting of all the orchestra members again overwhelmingly reaffirmed the musicians' collective determination to continue the strike.

*Geoffrey Hale
ICSOM Delegate and Orchestra Committee Co-Chair
Florida Philharmonic Orchestra*

Theater Musicians Face Daunting Challenges

Marsha Schweitzer, *Senza Sordino* Editor

The annual Theater Musicians Association (TMA) Conference took place August 28 and 29 in the recording studio of Local 47 in Los Angeles. I was able to attend on behalf of ICSOM on my way back to Honolulu from the ICSOM Conference.

The biggest issue among theater musicians remains *Pamphlet B* (the national touring theater agreement) and the schism that it has created between musicians who travel with the shows and those who are hired locally. AFM President Steve Young called *Pamphlet B* “the Bosnia of the AFM,” causing as it has a collision of the traditional locally bargained theater minimums (a union practice dating from the days of silent movies and vaudeville) with the more streamlined touring practices of today’s international theatrical producers. Both the travellers and the local musicians claim the same turf, the rightful ownership of the theater work, and a strong case has been made by musicians on both sides of the argument. TMA has been working since its inception in 1996 to heal the wounds of *Pamphlet B* and find a way to bring theater musicians together. Those who spoke on this issue at the TMA Conference, both from the local and the travelling perspective, were impressive in their ability to keep negative emotions down and tolerance for opposing viewpoints up. Everyone understood that, despite our internal differences, the real enemies are not fellow AFM members, but the threat of nonunion theater and—The Machine.

“Employers are squeezing the life out of live theater. We must band together to combat this.” – Art Linsner, President, TMA

As ugly a problem as humans displacing other humans is, far more sinister is the “virtual pit orchestra,” a computer-generated electronic orchestra that can alter its speed on command, and thus overcome the heretofore biggest obstacle to robotically accompanying stage singers. The purveyor of the product, Bianchi & Smith, says that its creation was meant to “enhance” traditional acoustic instruments, not replace them, but the actual situations in which this device has been used prove otherwise. There have been problems with the technology—balance is difficult to control, and there is significant lag time in the response of the computer, requiring the stage performers to follow, not lead, the device, which broke down completely on at least one occasion. Director of the AFM Touring/Theatre/Booking Division Mark Heter said, “It is a machine; it has no intuition; it never will. There are real problems with coordination. . . . It doesn’t work.”

A national tour of the musical *Annie* is now underway using the “virtual pit,” and TMA and the AFM are setting up informational pickets in each city where this show appears. Many ICSOM cities are scheduled on the tour, and ICSOM musicians are

welcomed to join the action. One musician said, “All over the country, the issue is replacement of humans, downsizing the orchestra for greater profits. Unless the public balks, they might succeed. You can’t replace the human spirit with a machine.”

Another manifestation of the dehumanization of musical theater was the recent Tony Award for Best Musical going to *Contact*, a self-described “dance-play.” Letters of protest were sent



Theater musicians gather at Local 47 in Los Angeles.

by Local 802 President Bill Moriarity, a group of Broadway orchestrators, and a Tony nominator, Jack Goldstein, who resigned his post in protest. Goldstein wrote, “I believe that all theatre is a live performing art. Musicals are characterized by the presence of a book, singing, an original score, and an orchestra.” Goldstein noted that all of the elements need not be present at once for a show to qualify but that *Contact* contains none. Maura Giannini, TMA Director for Broadway, wrote in the *Pit Bulletin*, “. . . we are fearful of the fallout from the fact that the esteemed individuals who vote for the Tony Awards elevated a production with no original music, no book, no singing, and most importantly, no orchestra, to the level of Best Musical.”

The TMA Conference appointed a committee to develop a public education plan to combat the acoustic desensitization of audience. Both the stage and the pit are now so heavily amplified in a typical show that the distinction between the sound of a live orchestra and an electronic one is lost. The public is being acculturated to the sound of increasingly electrified music and is forgetting what a real live orchestra sounds like. It has been a slow, insidious process that, if not reversed, will mean the end of any public resistance to electronically reproduced or computer-generated music.

Unlike ICSOM, which is composed of member orchestras, TMA has individual members. The only requirement for TMA membership is AFM membership, and ICSOM musicians are invited to join TMA. Dues are \$35 per year, payable to **TMA, 175 W Washington Street, Chicago IL 60602**. ICSOM pit orchestras and symphony orchestras who also perform opera and ballet share much in common with theater musicians and could benefit from TMA membership.



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Dear Marsha Schweitzer:

I was delighted to receive your email! Yes, I'm the first editor. The early days of *Senza Sordino* were hairy and scary—with many an ineptitude. If you've seen the earliest issues, you know how amateur they were! When I look back over them, now, I cringe at their primitive quality, but I also feel rather proud that they were done at all. *Senza Sordino* has become a very professional—and useful—bulletin since those days.

By the way—while I would love to be given credit for the inspired title of the periodical (and I sometimes am given credit) historical honesty requires that I give the credit where it is due: to a flutist named Joan Bennett, who was in the Chicago Symphony at that time and who was one of my helpers in editing the early editions. Several of us were trying to come up with a name for the fledgling, when she suggested “Senza Sordino.” It was, of course, perfect!

I thank you very much for contacting me. It brings back memories of raging hormones and elevated blood pressure; I was one of five people who were fired TWICE from the CSO! The first time, the management stated baldly, to the Press, that we were being fired for our “labor activity.” When our attorney (and the reporters for the Chicago papers) pointed out that the management was confessing to a violation of Federal law, they hired us back. One year later, they fired us again, this time giving “musical reasons” as the cause. Since only the conductor could fire for “musical” reasons, the reporters (recognizing the same five names) went to Fritz Reiner and asked him why he was firing us. He replied that this was the first he had heard about it! (His exact words were, characteristically, “Hmph! There are some people I would like to get rid of—but not THEM!”) When the management heard that he had said this, they had to hire us back again! Sounds funny, now, but it was not so funny then!

Best regards,

Bob Coleman

*ICSOM Emeritus, Chicago and Dallas Symphonies
The Very First Editor of Senza Sordino (1962 - 1963)
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The Recently Reelected Tenth Editor's Note: Mr. Coleman reminds us just how much courage it takes to be a labor activist, even in a business like ours, associated with the delicate and supposedly peaceful realms of artistic truth and beauty. Having recently been elected to a third term as editor of this august journal, I am also reminded of what an incredible honor it is follow in the footsteps of ICSOM's early leaders like Mr. Coleman who made real, tangible sacrifices so that those of us who now hold good jobs in good orchestras could practice a profession that is not only honorable, but also respectable. I have an orchestra job now because Mr. Coleman was willing to risk his—twice. Thanks, Bob.

♪ ✨

Hi Robert –

Just wanted to thank you for inviting me to participate in the ICSOM conference. Everyone was so friendly and welcoming and I enjoyed the engaging presentations and individual conversations on the state of orchestras in the country.

My compliments as well for all your work in bringing the whole show to Louisville. In addition to my personal enjoyment in welcoming you to our city, I believe your membership's involvement with the nurses' fight will have a long-lasting, positive impact. I was very gratified that you and the other ICSOM representatives were able to turn the few days of a convention trip into a contribution to the host city and to working to solve an important labor issue. I don't think the nurses would have had any media turnout without the musicians' involvement in the rally.

Finally, I appreciated the opportunity to speak before your group, both at Tuesday's Governing Board meeting and at the general membership session on Thursday. I hope the sessions on number-driven negotiations will be useful to your members as they encounter similar challenges in their own organizations.

If I can be of service to you or your organization in the future, please feel free to call on me.

*William Thompson
arts management consultant to the musicians
of the Louisville Orchestra & the Florida Philharmonic
LocusMedia@aol.com*

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October 23, 2000 – from Florida Philharmonic committee co-chair Geoff Hale to ICSOM Treasurer Stephanie Tretick concerning a loan of \$10,000 from the ICSOM Emergency Relief Fund:

“Regarding the ICSOM check, we haven't had time to even take it to the bank. We don't need the other \$19,000 but my orchestra cried last night when I announced that you were ready to send it. God bless you all at ICSOM. I remember standing in front of the Conference in '93 with tears in my eyes thanking ICSOM for the \$20,000 that was sent to us during Hurricane Andrew. I still have tears in my eyes from last night and this morning.”

ICSOM delegates and guests took a breather from conferencing on Friday, August 25, to support the nurses of Audubon Hospital in Louisville. Virtually the entire population of the ICSOM Conference marched along five city blocks in downtown Louisville and regrouped at Jefferson Square Park for a labor rally dubbed "Symphony for Justice."

The Audubon nurses began to organize themselves into a union in 1989 in response to abusive working conditions that they felt were compromising the quality of care they could give to their patients. Between 1989 and 2000, Audubon Hospital was bought and sold four times, being owned by Humana, Galen, Columbia/HCA, and Norton in succession. Each management in turn put obstacles in the nurses' organizing path, using legal maneuvers, union-busting consultants, intimidation, and unlawful firings to hamper the certification of the union. The battle, now 11 years old, goes on.

ICSOM Chair Robert Levine said to the gathering, "Through the efforts of ICSOM and the American Federation of Musicians, orchestra musicians throughout the US have enjoyed the rights to organize and to speak freely to their employers without fear of reprisal. We want to see workers everywhere, including the nurses in Louisville, get a chance to speak their minds on important issues and not be silenced by their corporate managements."

The Nurses Professional Organization, an AFSCME affiliate representing the Audubon nurses, says, "The hospitals of our community originated as centers of charity and community concern. They continue to exist as public trusts. They receive significant support in the form of tax relief, bond support, and community charity. They are not private fiefdoms. The community supports and sustains these institutions because it believes them to function for the general good.

"In recent years the behavior of hospital administrators and boards of directors has put that faith to the test. The nursing staff of Audubon Hospital has expressed interest in union recognition in order to maintain a safe working environment which protects



ICSOM Musicians Rally For Louisville Nurses

the health and well-being of the patients and the dignity and rights of the nurses.

"The very fact of the history of anti-labor violations at Audubon documented by a series of NLRB rulings proves that both Columbia/HCA and Norton Healthcare have acted, and Norton Healthcare continues to act, in violation of the basic right of workers to unionize in a free and open environment.

"We ask Norton to stop fighting its nurses and work together to provide a safe and healthy work environment for the nurses and patients. Stop fighting the union effort and begin working for this community."

The "Symphony for Justice" rally was covered on Louisville television news and nationally in the AFL-CIO's August 28 "Work in Progress" and in the *International Musician*.



The audience, in the shade, is transfixed by the performance of the ICSOM brass quintet.

Late-breaking news –

On October 18 the Nurses Professional Organization announced that the NLRB Office of Appeals in Washington DC issued a complaint of unfair labor practices against Norton Healthcare, Inc. over Norton's discriminatory treatment of Wilma McCombs in retaliation for her labor activity. The NLRB had on two previous occasions this year, in August and in May, ruled against Norton for wrongful termination and unlawful discipline of two other nurses who were similarly active in promoting a union for Audubon's nurses.



ICSOM Conference participants give the term "street musicians" new meaning. A column of musicians on the march stretches as far as the eye can see, led by Warren Powell (Florida Orchestra) and Carol Beck (Grant Park). photo © 2000 Daniel Dempster



photo by Stephanie Tretick



AFM President Steve Young addresses the crowd while brassmen Charlie Schlueter (Boston), Dave Angus (Rochester), Michael Moore (Atlanta), Ray Horton (Louisville) and Brian Rood (Kansas City) ponder getting a temperature clause in their contract.

Atlanta Ballet Settles!

Mark G. McConnell

ROPA Delegate, Atlanta Ballet Orchestra

On September 18, 2000, in an amazing turn of events, the members of the Atlanta Ballet Orchestra ratified a new 3-year master agreement after a bitter strike of 11 months. This surprising turnaround was brought about by many things. Probably the pivotal issue was management's failure to engage the orchestra from the Czech Republic. The Czechs were unaware that there was an ongoing labor dispute in Atlanta, and they had no desire to walk into the middle of it. Management suddenly found itself facing the prospect of using tape for their season opener of *Romeo and Juliet*.

The Ballet management conceded all the major issues. We now have pension, guaranteed services for each individual musician, and a fair dismissal clause. Management stated over and over the last year that as soon as anyone got a pension they would have to give it to all employees. I now assume that we have managed to get a pension for not just for ourselves, but for everyone who works for the ballet. How's that for collective action?

Thanks to all of the officers of the AFM, and especially to Florence Nelson and Chris Durham of the SSD. Their support and assistance went a long way in settling this strike. It helped all of us to know that we had the full backing of everyone in the AFM.

Thanks also to Mark Heter, head of the Touring/Theater/Booking Division. He was able to provide considerable pressure on the Czech presenter, and spearheaded the effort to get the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service to deny visas for the Czech musicians.

The untiring efforts of Andrew Cox, Secretary Treasurer at Local 148-462, need to be acknowledged. The local gave us their total support, and for that we are grateful. I'm sure that Andrew will be relieved at not having to talk to me several times a day! Our Attorney, Bob Giolito, kept us out of jail and was an invaluable help.

And last but certainly not least, thanks to all of you who gave us your support. The guest book entries at the Atlanta Ballet website really had an effect, and all of your email helped give us the inspiration to carry on. And thanks to the many orchestras that offered financial help. We will never be able to thank you enough for your generosity.

So ends one of the more difficult challenges to our Union. There are many lessons to be gained from events this last year here in Atlanta, and we know that there is work ahead of us on a national level. We must begin educating young musicians to learn the value of collective bargaining, and somehow let them know of the struggles that so many of us have fought over the years. We must also be constantly vigilant regarding the importation of foreign workers to replace our own Union members. We all know how protective the European musicians are of their own turf; I see no reason that we should feel any different. We must find some way to prevent this type of action in the future. This is most certainly an issue worth being discussed by all of the player conferences.

ICSOM Conference Resolutions

Whereas, With the recent dramatic innovations in technology, sound reproduction has become ever better; and

Whereas, Labor disputes involving pit musicians have become more dangerous by virtue of the use of recordings by employers to displace live musicians; and

Whereas, The jobs of pit musicians are in jeopardy as a result of this displacement; therefore, be it

Resolved, That all symphony, opera, and ballet orchestras seek to have their contracts contain a provision prohibiting the use of tapes, CDs, or other recorded music to displace live music; and, be it further

Resolved, That AFM negotiators seek to include in all national media agreements a similar ban on such use.



Whereas, Milton H. Carter Jr., President of the Musicians' Association of Hawaii AFM Local 677, although not a symphony musician himself, established a policy in union administration that fully recognized the importance of symphony musicians in the life of the union and was dedicated to completely serving their needs; and

Whereas, Milton valiantly led Local 677 and the Honolulu Symphony Musicians through fifteen years of near-constant struggle, including two strikes, a 2-1/2 -year lockout, unrelenting bad faith bargaining and breaches of contract by management, and six landmark labor arbitrations, all decided in favor of the musicians, that established legal precedent to the benefit of all orchestral musicians; and

Whereas, Milton understood the need for community collaborations to fully realize employment opportunities for his members and enhance the quality and security of such employment, and therefore established close and mutually beneficial relationships with the Hawaii State Legislature; the Honolulu City Council; the Hawaii State AFL-CIO; other major unions, in particular, the hotel workers (H.E.R.E.), longshoremen (ILWU), stagehands (IATSE), screen actors (SAG), and government workers (HGEA, UPW); and served on the Board of Directors of the IATSE Pension Fund, the Hotel and Travel Industry Federal Credit Union (Local 5 H.E.R.E.), the Aloha United Way, and the Hawaii State AFL-CIO; and

Whereas, Milton understood that members are served when the interests of the organizations that employ them are served, and therefore actively advocated the cause of the Honolulu Symphony in the community, intensely lobbying for arts legislation at the Hawaii State Legislature and the various city and county councils, advocating and fundraising for the Honolulu Symphony among labor and other community organizations, and generously contributing his own personal funds; and

Whereas, Milton established at Local 677 a style of social unionism that sought to serve all the needs—economic, emotional and spiritual—of his members, and which recognized the worth of musicians not just as workers, but in their totality as precious creative human beings; and

Whereas, Milton's administration demonstrated that the principle of union solidarity, simply and equitably applied, has the power to harmoniously serve the needs of all musicians, symphony and non-symphony alike, and foster true respect and appreciation among all members of the local; and

Whereas, Milton gave unparalleled personal devotion to his members, including his orchestra musicians, as manifested by unlimited commitment of his time, energy, spirit, and money to their health and well-being; and

Whereas, Milton lived a life of humility, dignity, humor, and grace that led by example, commanding unreserved loyalty and devotion from musicians, bringing to musicians the honor and respect of employers, government officials, labor leaders, and all others he touched, and making him not only a brilliant leader, but also a servant, of his members; and

Whereas, Milton H. Carter, Jr. suddenly passed away on April 25, 2000; be it

Resolved, That ICSOM, its member orchestras, and their delegates extend to all the officers, directors and members of the Musicians' Association of Hawaii and to the family of Milton H. Carter, Jr. our deepest sympathy and condolences, recognizing that Milton's death is a profound loss to all our orchestras and to all of labor; and be it further

Resolved, That ICSOM shall make a charitable contribution to the Milton H. Carter Endowment Fund of Live Music Awareness, or as otherwise directed by the Musicians' Association of Hawaii, that will help perpetu-

ate the programs that Milton initiated and supported to better the lives of musicians.



Whereas, The current legal structure of ICSOM has caused ongoing confusion at the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), causing, in turn, the waste of much time in annual explanations by ICSOM officers and ICSOM legal counsel; and

Whereas, The current legal structure does not contain sufficient protection against individual liability of officers and agents of ICSOM; and

Whereas, The Governing Board of ICSOM has recommended that the assets of ICSOM, including, without limitation, its treasury, the Emergency Relief Fund, *Senza Sordino*, and all goodwill, be transferred to a new corporate entity formed pursuant to Section 501(c)(5) of the IRS Code, and that such new corporation assume all rights and obligations of ICSOM, including its status as a conference of the AFM; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the delegates to the 2000 ICSOM Conference, meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, adopt and ratify the recommendation of the ICSOM Governing Board to form a new corporate entity for ICSOM; to seek and obtain an IRS determination letter approving such corporate entity as a labor organization under Section 501(c)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code; to transfer all assets, including, without limitation, ICSOM's general treasury, Emergency Relief Fund and Memorial Fund assets, *Senza Sordino*, and goodwill connected therewith, to the new corporate entity; and to seek approval from the AFM for the transfer to the new corporation of the player conference status of ICSOM.



Whereas, I. Philip Sipser was ICSOM legal counsel for over 15 years; and
Whereas, Phil Sipser has also represented virtually every major orchestra; and
Whereas, Phil Sipser's impact on ICSOM and on the entire orchestral field cannot be overstated; and

Whereas, September 2, 2000, is Phil Sipser's 82nd birthday; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the delegates to the 2000 ICSOM conference express to Phil Sipser their love and admiration and wish him good health and the happiest of birthdays.



Whereas, The proposed abolition of the federal estate tax may have a calamitous impact on the ability of non-profit organizations to raise money, especially for capital and endowment funds; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the ICSOM Governing Board be directed to work with the AFM, the American Symphony Orchestra League, and any other potential allies to ensure that any changes in federal tax law regarding estate taxes be crafted so as not to undermine the uniquely American non-profit sector, which has done so much to ensure the physical, cultural, intellectual, and spiritual health of all American citizens.



Whereas, The 1998 Unity Conference produced numerous opportunities for sharing of information and experience amongst the delegates from the various Player Conferences; and

Whereas, The convening of the three symphonic Player Conferences in one venue at the same time in a second Unity Conference will enable the Player Conferences and the AFM's Symphonic Services Division to maximize the impact of their resources in presenting information and instruction to the delegates; and

Whereas, The convening of such a symphonic Unity Conference would provide a logical opportunity to invite the representatives of orchestras from other countries to discuss issues of mutual concern in an increasingly globalized cultural and media environment; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the ICSOM Governing Board be directed to work with ROPA, OCSM, and the Symphonic Services Division of the AFM to plan such an event for the summer of 2002; and be it further

Resolved, that such a plan include not only the logistical details of such a conference, but also a proposed agenda and set of goals; and be it further

Resolved, That such a plan be brought to the 2001 ICSOM Conference for the approval of the delegates.



Whereas, Andrew Brandt served as an officer of the Regional Orchestra Players' Association for many years, culminating in six years of distinguished service as ROPA's president; and

Whereas, Andrew Brandt worked tirelessly with the leadership of the other Player Conferences of the AFM to improve the situation of symphonic, recording, and theater musicians within the AFM; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the delegates to the 2000 ICSOM Conference thank Andrew Brandt for his service to musicians, congratulate him on the completion of his term as ROPA President, and offer him their warmest wishes upon his retirement from ROPA office.



Whereas, During the ongoing Atlanta Ballet Orchestra strike, the musicians of the Atlanta Ballet Orchestra are currently being replaced by musicians who are students and others; and

Whereas, These replacement musicians may have agreed to accept this scab employment due to their lack of knowledge or misunderstanding of the American Federation of Musicians; and

Whereas, Nationally, lack of knowledge or misunderstanding of the American Federation of Musicians by conservatory students and entry-level professionals is at an alarming level; and

Whereas, Action is needed to reverse this condition, lest there be serious ramifications for other orchestras as has happened with the Atlanta Ballet Orchestra; and

Whereas, The American Federation of Musicians must take the lead in developing an effective program to reach out to conservatory students and through its locals, therefore, be it

Resolved, That a joint task force consisting of members of the Player Conferences and the American Federation of Musicians be appointed and convened for the purpose of studying the aforementioned problems and for making recommendations for needed action to the player Conferences and to the International Executive Board of the American Federation of Musicians.



Whereas, Musicians belonging to the American Federation of Musicians work in a wide variety of circumstances, including freelance musicians, symphonic musicians in large and small orchestras, and recording musicians in every genre; and

Whereas, Musicians belonging to the American Federation of Musicians vary widely in the amount of professional work available to them, ranging from musicians who are able to perform professionally on an intermittent basis to musicians who are able to perform professionally on a full-time basis; and

Whereas, Musicians who work in these varying circumstances have varying needs for union services and varying ideas about the policies and directions that are most appropriate for the American Federation of Musicians, and

Whereas, The governance structure of the AFM is based on the fact that the Federation is composed of over 250 affiliated local unions, and is tied directly to the representation of those local unions at the biennial Convention; and

Whereas, The traditional governance structure of the American Federation of Musicians did not specifically provide for the input of the member musicians based on the needs and views they developed in their particular working circumstances; and

Whereas, The Player Conferences were created in order to give working musicians a voice in the union that was specifically tied to their needs and experiences in their particular workplaces; and

Whereas, It is important for the future growth and relevance of the American Federation of Musicians that the varied needs of working musicians be addressed, and the time has come for their participation in the union governance system to be enhanced, now therefore, be it

Resolved, That the American Federation of Musicians International Executive Board, in cooperation with the Player Conference Council, research methods to enhance the participation of working musicians in the governance of the union, with the goal of making appropriate recommendations to the 2001 Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That in no case shall the ICSOM Governing Board agree to IEB representation on the International Executive Board specifically limited to, or intending to represent the specific interests of symphonic, recording, and theater musicians unless all AFM Player Conferences are represented on the IEB and unless their representatives are elected directly by the Player Conferences and not by the AFM Convention.



Whereas, It is a fundamental premise of union democracy that rank-and-file musicians should have the right to participate in union governance, including the right to serve on the boards of their local and international unions; and

Whereas, The right to participate in union governance is meaningless unless rank-and-file representatives can participate in discussions of, and vote on, issues that directly impact bargaining units of which they are members; and

Whereas, The American Federation of Musicians is widely recognized within the American trade union movement as having moved peacefully and progressively to institute the principles of union democracy; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the ICSOM Governing Board be directed to propose an amendment to the AFM Bylaws at the 2001 AFM Convention that would bar AFM locals from preventing members or officers from participating in discussions of or voting on issues that directly impact bargaining units of which they are members.



Whereas, Orchestra top-level managerial staff hold positions of significant importance in orchestras; and

Whereas, It is important for ICSOM orchestras to know the history of prospective top-level managers; and

Whereas, ROPA has a system of tracking top-level managerial staff; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the ICSOM governing board study the possibility of ICSOM tracking top-level managerial staff, including an examination of the system used by ROPA, and report back to the delegates attending the ICSOM conference in 2001.



ICSOM Musicians In The AFL-CIO Spotlight

ICSOM musicians figure prominently in the September 2000 issue of *America@Work*, a national publication of the AFL-CIO. In a feature story by Joshua Freeman, "New York Union-Building: Lessons for Today," the case was made that during the decade after World War II "no city had a stronger union movement than New York. Its unionized workers ranged from garment and clothing workers—the largest group—to construction workers, members of the **New York Philharmonic**, machinists, longshoremen, diamond workers, upholsterers, Wall Street clerks, teachers and even seltzer water workers."

Mr. Freeman went on to describe the success of New York unions in "establishing a rich collection of social programs" to benefit working people, including affordable housing, public housing, non-profit housing cooperatives, rent controls, health coverage and union-sponsored health clinics. The arts, too, were important ingredients in the union social fabric: "New York unions even helped found the non-profit City Center for Music and Drama—parent of the renowned **New York City Ballet** and **New York City Opera**—so families of modest means could enjoy first-rate culture and entertainment."

On page 17, **National Symphony cellist and vice president of AFM Local 161-710 Robert Blatt** was pictured next to a story about his efforts to bring on-the-job union awareness to Washington DC high school students. Backstage field trips to the Kennedy Center give students a chance to see firsthand how union stagehands, musicians, restaurant workers and others are served by their unions in the workplace.

ICSOM Revisited

By Henry Shaw

Senza Sordino Editor Emeritus 1972-1982

(adapted from Henry's remarks to the ICSOM Conference,
August 27, 2000)

The proximity of Louisville made it an easy decision to drive from Cincinnati to visit old friends, and make new ones at the recent ICSOM Conference. It did not surprise me to find the organization still vital and addressing new areas of concern as they present themselves. Old and basic problems were again in evidence, and revisited, as they should be.

I think back to May 1962 when representatives of a group of major orchestras gathered in Chicago to address the same basic concerns: how can we make our profession, playing in an orchestra, one that would give us full employment and a living wage?

We were greatly encouraged by the Chicago meeting, reported to our fellow musicians at home, and agreed to meet again in Cleveland in September of 1962. There we formalized an organization to be called the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians.

Existing inter-orchestra communication was primitive, and out of that state of affairs was born our official publication, *Senza Sordino*. The publication succeeded in providing the informational pipeline from the organization to each orchestra member. I believe there were sixteen orchestras represented at the original meeting. *Senza Sordino* was the glue that held ICSOM together.

Above all it should be remembered that ICSOM is rooted in a spirit of volunteerism; in its dues structure, in its many willing and hard-working officers as well as other orchestra musicians who share the load, and from an early year, the willingness of our members to come the aid of member orchestras in troubled times.

Continue to take what you can from Conference meetings, *Senza Sordino*, and each other. Utilize what fits your orchestra situation best. ICSOM, a conference within the American Federation of Musicians, is truly democratic unionism in action. Understand and be aware of its roots and support your togetherness with the AFM.

Please accept my deep appreciation for the warm welcome accorded me in Louisville.

When Tom Hall succeeded Henry Shaw as Senza editor in 1982, he offered this biographical tribute to Henry (from Senza Sordino, November 1982), "For thirty years he has served as Assistant Principal Second Violin in the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. He has long served on his orchestra's committee, eight years as chairman. Either as a delegate or ICSOM officer, he has attended every annual conference but two since 1962. In recent years he has been on the Orchestra Panel of the National Endowment for the Arts. In all his endeavors, in his typically quiet and unassuming way, he has proven a model of reliability, dedication, clear thinking, sound judgment, and seemingly eternal youthfulness."

Make Senza Run That Extra Mile

One of the many sidebar discussions that took place at the ICSOM Conference centered around how to bring the message of orchestra musicians more effectively and efficiently to a wider audience. We need to better educate our students and the public on matters of unionism, hopefully preventing a recurrence of the Atlanta Ballet scab problem. The obvious way to do this quickly is to get our major communicator, *Senza Sordino*, into as many hands as possible before it lands in the trash bin, and to do so while limiting environmental waste and conserving resources.

After studying the options, it was decided that making electronic access to *Senza Sordino* easier would be good, and here are some methods that the ICSOM Governing Board has adopted to address this matter:

√ **Senza distribution by email, to those who request it.** To sign up to receive *Senza* as an email attachment, send an email message to Robert Levine (rtl@icsom.org) asking to be added to the *Senza* email list.

√ When the availability of a new *Senza* is announced on Orchestra-L, a **hyperlink to Senza Sordino on the ICSOM website** will be provided.

It was felt that reducing access to paper copies, i.e., not printing as many, was not advisable at this time, since the jump to cybercommunication is not yet totally complete for many readers; however, suggestions were made for getting more mileage out of those paper copies, as described in the following *Senza Advisory*:

Senza Advisory

ICSOM musicians: Don't leave your copy of Senza Sordino on the stand after rehearsal! When you are done reading it, put it in your instrument case and take it to your teaching studio—leave it in your studio or waiting room, or on the table in the student lounge, or in the career placement office, or on the bulletin board. Or invite your college or university library to buy a *Senza* subscription—instructions for subscribing are on page 12.

ICSOM delegates: If you find a lot of *Senzas* left behind after rehearsal, consider putting a tray or box near the trash can for "recycled *Senzas*" and encourage musicians to leave their used copies there. Then encourage musicians to take these extra copies to share with students, music schools, libraries, board members, journalists, concertgoers, legislators, or to distribute anywhere *Senza Sordino* might find an interested and eager readership.

Senza Sordino

Wins National Awards

The International Labor Communications Association (ILCA), a branch of the AFL-CIO made up of member labor publications, has awarded *Senza Sordino* its first-ever national recognition in labor journalism.

Winning the **First Award in the Labor History, Best Human Interest or Biographical Profile category** was “**James Petrillo: Leader of the Ban**” by **James Clute**, a biography of past AFM President James Petrillo. Winning the **Second Award in the Labor History, Best Story, Profile or Editorial category** was “**Dissonance: A History of Dissent in the AFM**” by **Marsha Schweitzer**, which chronicled the history of AFM reform leading to the 1998 Unity Conference. Both stories were from the May 1998 issue (Vol. 36, No. 3) of *Senza Sordino*. These winning articles were selected from 1,297 entries by 156 member publications.



Editor's personal note: A top priority for most journalists is capturing the historic import of current events and preserving the historical record. That all *Senza* editors have shared an understanding of the power of history is revealed in the nearly 40 years of *Senza Sordino* archives. A trip through the back issues of *Senza Sordino* is a fascinating journey, filled with facts, figures, poetry, narrative, tragedy, and humor that paint a vivid picture of the evolution of life in orchestras over generations. ICSOM is now old enough to be able to look back upon itself, to feel the sweep of

history and its impact on our profession and on our union. It is thus highly symbolic that both of these ILCA awards are in the Labor History category, an area where ICSOM, it is now clear, has made an indelible mark.

It is also significant that the ILCA chose to present awards to two stories that not just describe people and events in labor history, but focus on the role of dissent and reform in that history. I interpret these awards not only as kudos for two excellent articles, but also as acknowledgment of reform in the AFL-CIO and recognition of the good that such reform has done in the labor movement as a whole. This prominent national recognition of *Senza Sordino*, ICSOM, and the role we have played in the growing union democracy movement will help other union members throughout organized labor set a course to empowerment in their own unions.

“Journalism is the first rough draft of history.”
Phillip Graham, publisher, Washington Post

This may be the first time *Senza Sordino* has won a national award, but certainly not the first time *Senza* has contained award-worthy material. I take no personal credit for these awards; my work as writer and editor is constantly inspired by the incredible job done by each of my predecessors in office. The standard that they established over the years for quality, integrity, and insight in *Senza Sordino* is one that I might aspire to equal, but know I can never exceed. I am merely the first editor in 38 years to send in the contest entry forms.

I therefore accept these ILCA awards on behalf of all the past editors and contributors to *Senza Sordino*, who have participated in today's success as surely as the current authors. In homage I list here the names of all past editors of *Senza Sordino*—for the record:

- Robert Coleman** (Chicago Symphony) 1962-63
- Reinhardt Elster** (Metropolitan Opera) 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) 1986-93
- Robert Levine** (Milwaukee Symphony) 1993-96



photo by Mark Schubert

Senza Sordino Editor Marsha Schweitzer
Did I really run for another term? What could I have been thinking?

Memorable Quotes from ICSOM Conference 2000



“If you have issues to debate, do it, and do it *now!* Nothing is the enemy of this organization more than apathy.”
– Henry Shaw, *Cincinnati Symphony Emeritus*, Senza Sordino Editor, 1972-1982

“For the past thirty years I have been most impressed by the high standard of devotion of the musicians who volunteer themselves to ICSOM. What is amazing is that the standard keeps being met!” – Leonard Leibowitz, upon receiving a plaque honoring his 30 consecutive years as ICSOM’s legal counsel.



On Voting . . .

“The loftiest of all rights of the citizen, by the democratic dogma, is that of the franchise. And whoever is not willing to fight for it, even at the cost of his last drop of gore, is surely not likely to exercise it with a proper sense of consecration after getting it . . . The potential voter values his peace and security more than he values the boon for which the Fathers bled.”
– H.L. Mencken in Notes on Democracy (1926)

Don’t devalue the boon — VOTE!
General Election Day is November 7, 2000.

On Giving . . .

The ICSOM Governing Board, in accordance with a resolution passed at the ICSOM Conference, authorized a \$500 charitable contribution in memory of Milton H. Carter, legendary president of AFM Local 677 in Hawaii and stalwart champion of the Honolulu Symphony Musicians. The gift was a permanently restricted contribution to the newly established Milton H. Carter Endowment Fund of Live Music Awareness, a concert-presenting and support organization founded by Milton and members of Local 677. This Endowment will help create and preserve employment opportunities for union musicians, which include symphony, chamber music, jazz and big band concerts, educational activities, and the Hawaii State AFL-CIO Labor Day Concert.

From the Internet . . .

Senza Sordino – a term used to remind the player that he forgot to put his mute on a few measures back.

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Affiliated with the American Federation of Musicians - AFL-CIO

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