

December 5, 2006

Honolulu Ratifies 2-Year Re-opener

On January 29, 2002, the musicians of the Honolulu Symphony signed a 5-year agreement (for 2002-07). The agreement specified wages for the 2002-03 and 2003-04 seasons, with wages for the last three seasons to be negotiated in a re-opener. The agreement assured that the board would not “seek a reduction in wages, weeks, or pension during such a re-opener.”

In June 2003, symphony management notified the HSO musicians that the season just completed (year 1 of the 5-year agreement), contained a “structural deficit”. This reported deficit varied from month to month as the new season approached, sometimes as low as \$150,000 and at other times as high as \$700,000. The board and management representatives began to suggest that cuts would have to be imposed in the third year of the 5-year agreement. In a series of meetings between orchestra committee members and a team consisting of board members and the executive director, the board team proposed various cuts. The musicians indicated that any cuts in the short term should be followed by a “snap-back” in wages and benefits to restore the contract. The board team disagreed. The musicians proposed that revenue enhancement ideas be discussed. The board team continued to insist on cuts.

Finally in October 2003, the musicians were presented with an ultimatum. A small group of board members (including the chairman and treasurer) banded together and told the musicians that they would withhold \$2.1 million they had planned to donate to the organization unless the musicians agreed to a 20% cut for the next 2 years of the agreement. They explained that without their \$2.1 million, the organization would have to permanently cease operations beginning one week later, with bankruptcy to follow in December 2003. Given this choice, HSO musicians accepted the cuts.

	[2003-04]	2004-05	2005-06
LENGTH OF SEASON:	[34 weeks]	30 weeks	30 weeks
WAGES:			
Annual Salary –	[\$30,345]	\$24,120	\$24,120
Weekly Salary –	[\$880/\$905] <i>17 wks/17 wks</i>	\$804	\$804
PENSION (AFM-EPF):	[8%]	6%	6%

ADDITIONAL CHANGES & CONDITIONS:

- The agreement shall automatically be re-opened on June 30, 2006, to negotiate wages, weeks, vacation, opera dress rehearsal and performance lengths for the 2006-07 season. The Employer agrees not to seek a reduction in wages, weeks or pension during such a re-opener.
- No more than 8 services may be scheduled between days off.
- No segment of a Pops concert may exceed 75 minutes (reduced from 90 minutes.)
- Assistant Concertmaster will receive 10% move-up pay.
- There will be no limit on the number of musicians allowed 1-year leaves of absence.
- Opera service length reduced to 3 hours.

Thanks to the negotiating team: James Moffitt, Chair; Steve Dinion, Scott Janusch, Mel Whitney and Steve Flanter. Thanks also to Local 677 President Michael Largenticha, and to Leonard Leibowitz, Janice Galassi and the late Lew Waldeck for their constant help.

This bulletin was prepared by ICSOM Secretary, Laura Ross with the assistance of the Honolulu Symphony ICSOM Delegate, Steve Flanter.

HONOLULU SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA