



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF
SYMPHONY AND OPERA MUSICIANS

SETTLEMENT BULLETIN

March 14, 2010

Columbus Ratifies Year Agreement

On February 27, 2010, the musicians of the Columbus Symphony ratified amendments to their existing agreement that were implemented on March 1, 2010; the agreement expires on August 31, 2011.

The CSO has no debts or assets of any kind (other than large instruments and office equipment) and was unable to obtain a line of credit from any bank. The musicians were informed mid February that the orchestra would be unable to meet musicians' payroll or pay health insurance premiums after March 1, 2010 and as a result, the orchestra would cease operations on that date and the health insurance policy would not be renewed since it was due to expire on February 28, 2010. Since there would have been no employees on the policy, there would have been no COBRA coverage for the musicians.

Following the 6-month lock-out in 2008, which ended with a 25% wage and pension cut and a shortened 31-week season in 2009, musicians' resources remained depleted. In addition, the enormous stress of the past three years has contributed to a much higher than usual usage of health insurance that included several new life-threatening illnesses for musicians and their families. Health insurance premiums would have increased 40% on March 1, 2010 without a reduction in policy coverage. When the lock-out ended in 2008, the negotiating team constructed a three-year "lifeboat" contract to buy time for those who needed to find other employment, financial and health reasons, etc.

The negotiating team agreed to "patch" the current contract through the originally intended three-year period, and to work with the board and management (without a public fight that would have finished the orchestra immediately), to create a recovery plan that would take them through the remainder of the contract. In 2010-11, the musicians' wages and pension will be 40% less than received in 2007. After the end of next season, the future is unknown, but there is a moderate risk that operations could either cease permanently at that time, or be converted to an all per-service model with no full-time musicians employed.

Due to the generosity of ICSOM orchestras in 2008, which resulted in donations of nearly \$150,000, the musicians felt they could not, in good conscience, ask for additional help. The musicians thank the leadership of ICSOM, who were supportive throughout this latest emergency, and hope that this will be the very rare situation most ICSOM orchestras will never have to face.

	[2009-10]	2009-10	2010-11
LENGTH OF SEASON:	[38 wks.]	36 wks.	25 non-contiguous wks.
WAGES:			
Annual Salary –	[\$43,320]	\$41,040	\$30,000
Weekly Salary –	[\$1,140]	\$1,140	\$1,200*

*In 2010-11, a corporate donation of \$200,000, divided equally by the number of full-time musicians under contract at that time, will be paid in addition to the above scale. The anticipated amount is between \$4,500 and \$5,000 per full-time musician, bringing annual base salary to about \$35,000.

COLUMBUS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

AFM-EPF: Remains at 4%

ORCHESTRA SIZE: Remains at 54; however, with only 46 full-time members currently, no minimum will be required during the 2010-11 season

VACATION: Reduced from 3 weeks paid vacation to no paid vacation weeks

SICK LEAVE: Reduced from 16 services to 12 services

MISCELLANEOUS:

- Paid Parking is suspended during the 2009-10 season and will be restored during the 2010-11 season.
- Paid Personal Leave will be suspended 2010-11 season.

Thanks to the negotiating team: Betsy Sturdevant, Chair; Michael Buccicone, Ken Matsuda, Mary Farrington, and Joyce Fishman. Thanks also to Local #103 President Doug Fisher, and Attorney Mike Hunter.

This bulletin was prepared by ICSOM Secretary, Laura Ross with the assistance of the Columbus Symphony ICSOM Delegate, Michael Buccicone.