



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF  
SYMPHONY AND OPERA MUSICIANS

# SETTLEMENT BULLETIN

April 8, 2010

## Chicago Lyric Ratifies 3-Year Agreement

On December 3, 2009, two days before a scheduled strike date, the musicians of the Lyric Opera of Chicago Orchestra reached an agreement for a three-year contract that was retroactive to May 1, 2009, and continues through April 30, 2012. The agreement was ratified by the Orchestra the following day. The Orchestra Negotiating Committee had to deal with Lyric Opera Management’s attitude of “never let a good recession go to waste,” an attitude that permeated the negotiations from the outset and was as much about Lyric attempting to take advantage of the economy as it was about the economy itself.

Lyric’s Management has also avoided taking innovative risks necessary to inspire donors and subscribers, both current and future, to respond to its fundraising requirements. Lyric has posted balanced budgets for 22 of the past 23 years, with budget surpluses in almost all years. For the 2008-09 season it posted a surplus, not a deficit, and boasted it sold 93% of its seating capacity. In the most recent AFM Wage/Scale Chart for ICSOM Orchestras 2008-09, Lyric reported 67.68% of the budget was covered by earned income, the second highest earned income percentage, exceeded only by the earned income percentage of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Lyric even invested several millions of dollars in two luxurious hospitality/restaurant suites during the 2008-09 season. Nonetheless, throughout this negotiation Lyric management demanded cuts from the Lyric Orchestra musicians while at the same time continuing to award huge income gains to Senior Management through large payments disguised as “deferred compensation.”

	<b>[2008-09]</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
<b>LENGTH OF SEASON:</b>	[26 wks]	26 wks	24 wks	24 wks
<b>WAGES:</b>				
<b>Annual Salary –</b>	[\$59,150]	\$59,150	\$56,784	\$59,160
<b>Weekly Salary –</b>	[\$2,275]	\$2,275	\$2,366	\$2,465
<b>EMG:</b>	[\$1,625]	\$1,625	\$1,650	\$1,675
<b>ORCHESTRA SIZE:</b>	[WAS: 76 musicians] BECOMES: Reduced to 74 musicians through attrition only in the violin sections.			
<b>VACATION:</b>	Remains at 18% of total annual pay			
<b>INSURANCE:</b>				
<b>Dental/Vision –</b>	[WAS: Member coverage only] BECOMES: Beginning in the 2010-11 season, coverage option is added for dependents. Member must pay coverage difference.			
<b>Instrument –</b>	Coverage for second/backup instrument and bow insurance increases from \$20,000 per member to \$40,000.			

## CHICAGO LYRIC OPERA ORCHESTRA

**WORKING CONDITIONS:**

- The number of permissible Sunday performances paid at straight time will increase from 7 to 8 in the 2011-12 season.
- Beginning in the 2010-11 season, the number of weeks with two free days will decrease from 16 to 14, and the number of weeks with two consecutive free days will be reduced from 5 to 4.

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

- Base severance pay used for calculation increases from \$2,010 to \$2,100.
- Members winning a position in another orchestra may request a second year of sabbatical leave; such approval by the Opera will not be unreasonably withheld.
- By November 1 of each season Members must choose their Vacation Pay option to receive total payment at the end of the season, or to receive half payment at the end of the calendar year and the other half at the end of the season.
- No more than 2 Musical Standards letters of consultation may be issued in any one contract year for the entire Orchestra. The evaluation period is changed to occur during 9 months of the season instead of during the calendar year.
- “*Banda*” side letter now requires input from the Lyric Opera Orchestra Members Committee prior to making decisions regarding instrumentation for, and locations of, musicians performing *banda* and stage band parts.

Thanks to the negotiating team: William Cernota, Chair; Matthew Comerford, Teresa Fream, Eric Millstein, Greg Sarchet and John Rosenkrans. Thanks also to Local #10-208 President Gary Matts, Vice President Terryl Jares, Secretary-Treasurer Spencer Aloisio, President’s Assistant Louise Thorson and the entire Local staff. Finally, very special thanks to retiring Attorney/Negotiator for Chicago Federation of Musicians Local No. 10-208, Michael Greenfield.

*This bulletin was prepared by ICSOM Secretary Laura Ross with the assistance of the Chicago Lyric Opera Orchestra ICSOM Delegate and Governing Board Member-at-Large Matthew Comerford.*

**CHICAGO LYRIC OPERA ORCHESTRA**