



March 8, 2006

### New York City Ballet Orchestra Ratifies 3-Year Agreement

On March 3, 2006, the musicians of the New York City Ballet Orchestra ratified a three-year agreement that is retroactive from Labor Day 2005 and runs through August 31, 2008. While the atmosphere of these negotiations was generally positive throughout the nine months of their duration, the members of the negotiating committee were ultimately disappointed that they were unable to resolve the long-standing and troublesome issues surrounding their “Rotation Player” members (contracted, part-time players), who, unfortunately will continue to be treated as second-class citizens in the orchestra. They were also unsuccessful in obtaining meaningful relief for string players, settling instead for an increase in the weekly string premium. Substantial effort was made to settle multiple issues regarding the use of archival tapes (for dancers’ rehearsals, etc.) but these remain unresolved. Elsewhere, the committee successfully deflected a re-opener clause regarding health insurance cost increases and achieved some meaningful improvements in working conditions and attendance rules.

**LENGTH OF SEASON:** 26 weeks (23 weeks comprise the winter season from Thanksgiving through the end of February and the spring season which runs from late April through the end of June + 3 additional weeks at Saratoga Performing Arts Center)

<b>WAGES:</b>	<b>[2004-05]</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>
<b>Minimum Annual Salary -</b>	[\$57,055]	\$59,231	\$60,956	\$62,806
<b>Weekly Salary* -</b>	[\$1,700]	\$1,725/\$1,750 <i>13 wks/13 wks</i>	\$1,775/\$1,800 <i>13 wks/13 wks</i>	\$1,825/\$1,850 <i>13 wks/13 wks</i>

\* for 6 performances per week, payment for additional services during the work week based on service rendered.

**Rehearsal Scale (hourly) -** [\$58]      \$60      \$62      \$63

**Additional string player payment:** [was \$25 per week] Increased to \$40 per week

**AFM-EPF:** Increases from 13.5% to 14% at the start of the Spring Season in 2008.

**INSURANCE:**

- Domestic partners will now be treated as spouses for coverage under the Blue Cross Plan.
- Long Term Disability: The Company is investigating the expense to raise the cap on disability benefits.

**SICK LEAVE:** Sick leave will now be payable for “elective” engagements (i.e. tours, Saratoga) for any musician(s) who become sick or disabled after acceptance of the engagement.

**TRAVEL:**

- Management may offer tour work to less than the full orchestra in certain situations.
- In certain situations and with specific limitations, management may “adjust” the designated day off on tour by 24 hours.

**AUDITIONS:**

- Internal auditions will be held for string section associate principal vacancies but the Music Director may fill the chair by selecting a player from the orchestra who did not participate in the audition.
- Limitations were set for audition finalists (“trialists”) who are invited to play with the orchestra.

**WORKING CONDITIONS:**

- An Attendance Policy Administration side letter includes “The Ballet intends to continue administering the attendance requirements of the Agreement as they have in the past,” i.e. with leniency.
- Attendance notice was increased from 2 to 4 weeks.
- [NEW] Each section of the orchestra will have at least one designated substitute, selected by the Personnel Manager in consultation with the Principal of each section and with the approval of the Music Director, whose presence will count toward the “section minimum” attendance quota, as defined in the contract, for that section.
- New ballet or company “designated” ballet performance requirements were relaxed.
- At any service, if certain unscheduled attendance conditions exist in the titled chairs of any section, the Music Director may override the established seating order and designate who will sit in the titled chair for that service.
- New rehearsal provisions were established that include the prohibition to begin a rehearsal with a break, that (with restrictions) no segment of any rehearsal may exceed 75-minutes without a break, and a requirement that rehearsal overtime must be announced by the personnel manager when the overtime segment begins.

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

- The dismissal procedure has been changed to allow a musician to appeal dismissal through the existing Grievance and Arbitration procedure or through the newly established Peer Review Committee.
- Rotation Players (contracted, part-time players) restrictions were removed on the amount of work that can be offered and they will be offered work resulting from leaves of absences of regular members of up to one-half season.
- If certain conditions exist, management may replace a guaranteed performance week with a rehearsal week (substitution week) that will pay at performance rates.
- Any musician who voluntarily participates in an educational program will be compensated at the same rate that the participating dancers are.
- Transit checks or a Qualified Parking Plan will be added to the benefits package under a new flexible spending account.
- Subject to agreement on the amounts involved, certain pending arbitrations will be settled.

Thanks to the negotiating committee: Robert Biddlecome, Chair; Sara Cutler, Conway Kuo, Eugene Moye, and Ethan Silverman. Thanks also to Local 802 President David Lennon and especially to Vice President Jay Blumenthal as well as Attorney Leonard Leibowitz.

*This bulletin was prepared by ICSOM Secretary, Laura Ross with the assistance of the New York City Ballet Orchestra ICSOM Delegate, Ethan Silverman.*

**NEW YORK CITY BALLET ORCHESTRA**