

ICSOM PRESIDENT'S REPORT - 2011

During this year of political and economic uncertainty, arguably the most important event was the six-month labor dispute in Detroit. The Musicians of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra fought valiantly to preserve the DSO, its place among the top ten orchestras, and the exemplary community service they offer the citizens of Michigan.

ICSOM provided assistance to Local 5 and the DSO Musicians through participation in the Detroit Labor Day Parade, ICSOM's *Call to Action* that raised over \$300,000, numerous phone calls and meetings, and letters of support from governing board members and musicians throughout ICSOM. The draconian proposals and ultimatums issued by the DSO board and management might well have altered the workplace not only for musicians in Detroit but in other orchestras of all budget sizes. Our Detroit colleagues deserve our admiration and gratitude for defending their livelihoods, and ours, as well.

Unfortunately, Detroit was not the only trouble spot. Our colleagues in Louisville, Philadelphia, Syracuse and our ROPA friends of the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra faced either Chapter 7 or 11 bankruptcies as a result of institutional mismanagement and ineffective leadership, as well the continued economic malaise. Add in a political system that appears to be going after the middle class, education and the arts, in order to "balance" budgets, and we find ourselves in one of the most difficult periods for orchestras in memory. Even military bands may now be cut for the first time ever with an alarming loss of 35-70% in appropriations for next fiscal year's budget.

Yet, this was a time when ICSOM musicians banded together to help one another. Unprecedented levels of donations poured in from ICSOM orchestras to help musicians in Detroit, Syracuse, and Louisville. Through Chairperson Bruce Ridge's tireless efforts, ICSOM and the governing board reached out to musicians in troubled orchestras along with their boards, managements, and newspaper critics. There is more work to be done, however. We must find new ways to reach those in government, on boards, and within arts support organizations to truly advocate for our orchestras.

Unfortunately, efforts to marginalize labor and break the backs of unions, both public and private, reached new heights in 2011. It is now more important than ever to foster healthy relationships within the AFL-CIO, other unions, and, especially the AFM.

A full year has now elapsed since the historic 2010 AFM Convention. One significant and welcome development since last summer's Convention was the appointment of all three true "rank and file" trustees to the AFM-EPF. ICSOM and the other player conferences sought to raise the number of "rank and file" trustees at the 2003 AFM Convention. At the 2005 AFM Convention the AFM Bylaws were amended to raise the number of "rank and file" trustees to three. Further clarification and AFM Bylaw revisions were adopted by the 2007 AFM Convention regarding the meaning of "rank and file" as well as the process involved with trustee appointments.

Last summer, at the 2010 AFM Convention, the former IEB ultimately relented and asked that their Recommendation #2 be withdrawn, following compelling testimony before the Law and Finance Committees as well as the successful *Call to Action* ICSOM issued prior to the Convention. Their proposals sought to reduce the number of "rank and file" trustees as well as to nullify recently adopted AFM Bylaws restricting Federation officers and major elected or appointed local officers from serving as "rank and file" trustees.

Under the "be careful for what one wishes for" department it has been my distinct privilege to serve as one of the three "rank and file" trustees. The other two "rank and file" trustees are Phil Yao and our own Laura Ross. Phil serves as the co-chair of the investment committee and the new strategic planning committee and Laura serves on the administrative and communication committees. I serve with Phil and former 802 President and IEB member Bill Moriarity on the investment and strategic planning committees.

As is the case with many pension funds, these are challenging times for the AFM-EPF. Annual funding notices are scheduled to be mailed to participants by the end of July. This information will also be available on the Fund's (afm-epf.org) website. Trustees Ross, Moriarity, and I will report on the Fund at the ICSOM Conference. We are happy to answer questions in Detroit and throughout the year. AFM President and AFM-EPF Trustee Ray Hair will also be in Detroit.

The bylaws describe the President's duties as, "the supervision of the operation of the organization, subject to the directions of the chairperson, and for such other duties as directed by the Governing Board. As chief operations

officer, he/she shall be responsible for the ICSOM-related activities of all member orchestras.” This report will additionally focus on some of my activities this year.

1. In early September I flew to Detroit to march with Musicians of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Local 5, AFM international and other local officers, ICSOM Chairperson Bruce Ridge, ICSOM Secretary Laura Ross, and other musicians during the Detroit Labor Day Parade. We marched down Woodward Avenue, past Orchestra Hall while DSO Musicians performed, and gathered in Hart Plaza for a rally. AFM President Ray Hair, U.S. Senator Carl Levin, U.S. Representatives John Conyers Jr. and Sander Levin, and the Reverend Jesse Jackson were all on hand.
2. With three governing board members on the west coast, and in an effort to avoid some of the delays associated with flying in the winter, our annual mid-winter governing board meeting was held in LA. Los Angeles Philharmonic violist and ICSOM member-at-large extraordinaire Meredith Snow pulled out all the stops. She negotiated terrific hotel and restaurant arrangements, and did everything possible to make us comfortable, including shuttling governing board members. Detroit delegate Dave Everson was in town and drove me downtown from the airport. We arrived in time to catch the LA Phil’s second simulcast of *LA Live*, an all Tchaikovsky program with performances by actors reading from related Shakespeare texts. The performance was incredible. The acoustics are wonderful and Disney Hall is as beautiful as one can imagine. I found out later that Disney has 2,800 seats, and I was quite surprised. Disney’s seating configuration lends itself to creating a unique intimacy, not generally associated with such a large hall.

On Tuesday, after our mid-winter meeting, Bruce, Laura and I had the great pleasure to meet with LA Phil President and CEO Deborah Borda. We were joined by LA Phil bassist and committee chair Peter Rofé and Meredith. During our lunch LA Phil Music Director Gustavo Dudamel came over and introduced himself. It was a terrific opportunity for ICSOM officers to engage with leaders from one of the world’s best and most successful orchestras.

We also met with members of the LA Opera Orchestra, LA Philharmonic pension committee, and found a few moments to drop in on Local 47 President, IEB member and fellow AFM-EPF Trustee Vince Trombetta and other Local 47 officers.

3. The Conductor Evaluation Program (CEP) was again administered by ICSOM Treasurer Michael Moore. The CEP provides a valuable and yet underutilized opportunity to evaluate music directors and other conductors. The statistical analyses afforded through the data’s unique format have been used by musicians and managers for decades to give the musicians’ voice a significant role in the selection and retention of conductors.
4. This year marked my tenth as a member of the ICSOM Media Committee. Chairperson Bruce Ridge, Secretary Laura Ross, Members-at-Large Matthew Comerford and Cathy Payne also serve. The Media Committee is led by Chairman William Foster. The list of orchestras who have signed onto the Integrated Media Agreement (IMA) now numbers thirty.
5. ICSOM continues to be a proud supporter of the Sphinx Organization. Sphinx focuses on building diversity in classical music and arts education. ICSOM sponsorships help to underwrite the finalist scholarship awards to the Sphinx Competition senior level winners. Sphinx Founder and President Aaron Dworkin will be with us on Friday during our conference.
6. Member-at-Large Paul Gunther and I served as Directory Administrators. *Senza Sordino* Editor Richard Levine stayed on as Directory Supervisor. I continue to be amazed at their expertise and am grateful for their hard work. Improvements were made to the Directory database that allow it to be even more user friendly than before. Please keep in mind that delivery of the Directory is subject to each and every delegate’s *timely* completion of address data input into the online database.
7. It was my pleasure to serve again with ICSOM President Emeritus David Angus as the ICSOM Trustees of the AFM Symphony and Opera Strike Fund. The Fund was utilized to assist the musicians of several orchestras this year, including the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, New Mexico Symphony and Syracuse Symphony. The Trustees approved the extension of additional benefits to the Musicians of the DSO. As will be explained during the Conference, we agreed that it was crucial to continue Strike Fund support to the DSO Musicians during their long struggle to resist the insidious demands of the DSO board and management.

8. In the fall I negotiated ICSOM's hotel contract with the Hyatt Regency Dearborn for the 2011 Conference. Delegate Dave Everson met onsite with staff members from several hotels and greatly assisted our efforts. I am currently working with governing board members and Local 10-208 to secure next year's hotel in Chicago for ICSOM's 50th Anniversary Conference.

Former SSD Director Chris Durham deserves our appreciation for his leadership, particularly during such a difficult time for orchestras. His steadfast commitment to the musicians involved in labor disputes and/or bankruptcies warrants special recognition.

We are eager to work with Jay Blumenthal, the new director of the SSD. Jay brings a wealth of talent, experience, and wisdom from his more than forty years as a professional musician, ICSOM delegate and member-at-large, local officer and Local 802 financial vice-president. Please take time to visit with him and the SSD staff while in Detroit.

ICSOM and the Governing Board were served extraordinarily well this year by the expert guidance and advice of our new general counsel Susan Martin and special counsel Michael Okun. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with and learn from these terrific attorneys.

It continues to be an honor and privilege to serve as ICSOM president. One of my greatest joys is to work with your governing board. Their dedication, expertise and warm friendship make this a labor of love rather than a job. I cannot adequately express how grateful I am to Bruce, Laura, Michael, Richard, Paul, Meredith, Cathy and Matt for all that they do!

I would be remiss if I did not mention my dear friend, our ICSOM chairperson. Bruce continues to carry the weight of ICSOM and our livelihoods squarely on his shoulders. On a daily basis I learn from this charismatic leader, eloquent speaker and brilliant thinker. Thank you, Bruce, for everything you do for us, our orchestras and the field. I cannot think of anyone who advocates more effectively for our orchestras. Musicians across the country are forever in your debt and none more than I.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Rood
July, 2011