

Senza Sordino

Official Publication of the International Conference of Symphony & Opera Musicians

VOLUME XVIII



JUNE, 1980 NO. 5

WHAT ARE FRIENDS FOR?

On April 18, 1980, the Kansas City Philharmonic Association canceled the Master Agreement made and entered into by and between the Kansas City Philharmonic Association and the Kansas City Federation of Musicians Local 34-627 American Federation of Musicians by alleged reason of "insolvency and other matters beyond their control" effective at the end of May 3, 1980 which truncated the season by 2 weeks. The management claimed a projected saving of \$75,000 by this action. However, the reality of this allegation only transfers the insolvency from the books of the Association to the lives of the musicians. In losing 2 weeks pay, or 6% of our annual income, we have had a sizeable chunk of pay cut from beneath us. Obviously, the question of insolvency has not been addressed but merely shifted to the musicians.

On April 25, 1980, the orchestra received the following telegram from the members of the St. Louis Symphony:

"The members of St. Louis Symphony are deeply shocked at recent developments in the Kansas City Philharmonic. To cancel two weeks of the season is intimidating, depressing and demeaning to the musicians as well as a probable violation of their legal contract. The Board of Directors is failing its responsibility both to the orchestra members and the community. We send our support and hope to be forthcoming with a meaningful gesture soon."

During the next few days, this gesture took the form of a benefit concert. This unprecedented offer of support met with

It became apparent as we worked that the project was serving as a cohesive force to tie a fragmented orchestra back together. For the first time in years, members from all sides of the political arena were serving together on committees in a collective effort. This truly created a spirit of unity, the backbone of collective bargaining. It afforded the opportunity to sublimate our anxiety in a positive direction, Our boosted morale inspired us to carry the project to a successful conclusion.

37 members of the St. Louis Symphony spent their day off to travel across state (about 4½ hours travel time), and were served a pot luck dinner upon their arrival in Kansas City. They performed a baroque chamber concert before an estimated audience of 1000. Artistically, the concert was a great success as noted by the Music Editor of the Kansas City Star — "The performances were almost uniformly polished and sensitive, as one would expect from the members of one of the nation's best orchestras." Further quoting "It was a generous and appropriate gesture, and one hopes it will not be lost on the people of Kansas City." Following the concert, they embarked on their return trip to St. Louis and arrived about 2:30 A.M.

The benefit concert generated a net profit of approximately \$2500 for the musicians of the Kansas City Philharmonic and will go towards emergency expenses that have arisen from the early termination of the season.

Our most sincere and genuine thanks go to the musicians of the St. Louis Symphony with the hope that the sacrifices they made will make an impact on the conscience of the Kansas City community.

Gertrude Phalp, Chairman Orchestra Committee
and ICSOM Representative
Kansas City Philharmonic Orchestra

OSO HAS NEW MUSIC DIRECTOR

The Oregon Symphony Orchestra will begin an exciting 1980-81 season under the baton of James DePriest, new Music Director of the OSO.

Mr. DePriest's appointment came after an intensive ten-month search during which the qualifications of over 125 applicants, nominees, and other possible candidates were reviewed. Each candidate was evaluated according to his musicianship, repertoire, experience, national and international reputation, commitment to orchestra building, and respect in the community. The search committee, composed of eight board members, solicited both orchestra and ICSOM evaluations on the finalists. Mr. DePriest's appointment was supported by both the orchestra and the search committee.

The musicians are extremely grateful to the members of the search committee for their sincere interest in meeting with members of the orchestra and soliciting our comments. Our thanks, also, to Fred Zenone for his help with the ICSOM evaluations and to our orchestra committee for representing our interests in meetings with the search committee.

Carla Wilson
ICSOM Representative, OSO



Photo by Carl Schiebler

St. Louis members enjoy pot luck dinner before benefit concert.

the approval of the membership of both orchestras and their respective union locals. The St. Louis local in conjunction with the Kansas City local donated the cost of bus transportation. Lou Newman, bass player with the Kansas City Philharmonic, accepted the appointment to plan and coordinate this concert and subsequently organized several committees to work on various facets of the project. With only 11 days between the decision to proceed and the concert date of May 12, it seems like a miracle that it could be put together.

OREGON SYMPHONY HOSTS THIS YEAR'S ICSOM CONFERENCE

Mt. St. Helens notwithstanding, ICSOM delegates will be heading for Portland, Oregon this summer. The Conference will be held at the Lloyd Center Sheraton Hotel. Registration will take place Monday morning, August 25th. The first working session will begin after lunch. The Conference will end on Friday, August 29th, shortly after noon.

Conference material from the Oregon Symphony conference committee will be mailed to all orchestra delegates about July 1st.

The newly completed negotiations between the A.F. of M. and various facets of the media industry will be thoroughly discussed. A wide assortment of workshops and caucuses are being planned. Choose your delegate carefully keeping in mind the importance of his ability to communicate your orchestra's views to the Conference and to return home with a detailed report of the week's activities.

The Conference agenda, in general, will follow the order below.

I Meeting

- I A—Meeting called to order
- B—Roll call of orchestras
- C—Introduction and presentation of guests

II Minutes of 1979 Conference

III Reports of Officers and Representatives

- A—Chairman
- B—Vice-Chairman
- C—Secretary
- D—Treasurer
- E—Editor of Senza Sordino
- F—Counsel's report
- G—Strike Fund report
- H—A.F. of M. Conference observer's report
- I—OCSM observer

IV Committee reports

- A—Electronic Media Committee
 - 1—Recording contract negotiation (Oct. '79)
 - 2—Video Disc/Cassette/Pay TV negotiation (May '79)
 - 3—Film agreement (Aug. '80)
 - 4—Public TV agreement (March '81)
- B—Music Assistance Fund — Orchestral Fellowship report

V Unfinished Business

- A—ICSOM policy for membership application
- B—Increase in dues
- C—Tax Shelter Annuity update
- D—Negotiations
 - 1—Contracts not reported in Senza Sordino
 - 2—Negotiations still in progress

VI New Business

- A—Conductor Evaluations
 - 1—Status of file
 - 2—Computerization of system
- B—Renewal of Counsel's contract

VII Nomination and election of officers

- A—Chairperson
- B—Vice Chairperson
- C—Secretary
- D—Treasurer
- E—Editor of Senza Sordino

VIII Selection of site for 1981 Conference

IX Good and Welfare

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The ICSOM By-Laws require election of row officers every two years. This Conference ends my third term as Chairman, and after serving for six years, I will not run again.

Under the peculiar circumstances of meeting only once a year, getting to know people and their potential is very difficult. Coming to Portland without the realization that officers are to be elected, would be doing a disservice to ICSOM. While a delegate may not come with a commitment to any individual, the realization that an election is to be held, will perhaps cause the delegate to look at the ICSOM leadership in a different light, in the course of the week in Portland.

In any event, it is the only system we have. I urge you to think about this in electing your orchestra's delegate. Make your feelings known to him, to the extent that you can, regarding the future leadership of ICSOM.

These last six years have been the most rewarding of my life, and the association with all of you will be with me always.

Irving Segall

SEATTLE SYMPHONY SIGNS THREE YEAR CONTRACT

Negotiations for a three year contract were successfully concluded and the contract was signed on March 27, 1980, eleven days before the orchestra left Seattle for its first European tour. Although terms and conditions had been agreed to in a Memorandum of Agreement prepared by both parties and ratified by the Orchestra members on September 28, 1979 as reported in the ICSOM bulletin, a delay was caused by Management's renegeing on some of these terms. The changes in the Memorandum sought by Management were in non-economic areas: personnel changes in the non-titled frozen stands of the string sections, creation of co-principal positions, and determination of reduced orchestra size for ballet and opera. A contingency clause in the European Tour Agreement prevented the negotiations from extending beyond the departure date.

ICSOM counsel, Leonard Leibowitz, negotiated the following:

	Sideman	First Chair
Wages: 1979-80:	\$365 (+\$5 EMG)	\$417.50 (+\$5 EMG)
1980-81:	\$395 (+\$5 EMG)	\$447.50 (+\$5 EMG)
1981-82:	\$435 (+\$5 EMG)	\$487.50 (+\$5 EMG)

PENSION Increase to \$6000 maximum benefit in the 1980-81 season

SENIORITY PAY: Across the board seniority pay in the 1981-82 season — \$1/year of service, payable in 5 year increments, maximum of 20 years

INSURANCES: Twelve month medical and dental insurance, disability insurance and life insurance for the musician in the 1979-80 season

Twelve month medical and dental insurance for the musician, spouse and dependents in the 1980-81 and 1981-82 seasons; disability and life insurance for the musician continued

LENGTH OF SEASON: Increase from 43 to 44 weeks in the 1980-81 season

SERVICES PER WEEK: Increase from 7½ to 8 in the 1980-81 season

A system of revolving strings was created and a major reorganization and rewriting of the contract was also achieved.

Committee members included Sandy Lambert, Chairman, Ron Johnson, Larey McDaniel, Dave Soter and Marilyn Uusitalo. Legal counsel was provided by Phil Sipser and Len Leibowitz, with special thanks to Len.

Sandy Lambert, Seattle
ICSOM Representative

ICSOM'S NEWEST ADDITION, THE UTAH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

As one of the newest members of ICSOM, a little information about the Utah Symphony may be appropriate.

Four major changes have either taken place within the past year or are currently taking place.

First, a major step for the Utah Symphony was finally taken in the spring of 1979 when the membership voted to join ICSOM, the last major orchestra to do so. After years of talk and reticence it is encouraging to be part of an organization designed to deal with the problems of symphony orchestra musicians. We look forward to a long and beneficial relationship with our colleagues.

Second, in September of 1979, the orchestra moved into Symphony Hall, its first permanent home in its history. For the past 32 years, subscription concerts have been presented in the Mormon Tabernacle, a 5000-seat auditorium donated for the purpose by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The \$12 million Symphony Hall is part of a multi-million dollar Bicentennial Arts Center Complex, which also includes a \$4.5 million art museum and the Capitol Theater — renovated at a cost of \$5 million — which houses Ballet West and the Utah Opera Company (both of which utilize the Utah Symphony as part of the symphony's 52-week season). Funding for the complex was in part a 1973 \$6.5 million bicentennial appropriation from the Utah State Legislature. The additional funds were raised through a Salt Lake County bond election in 1975. A previous \$49.5 million Salt Lake County bond election, which was to have included a Symphony Hall, failed in 1973.

Construction was to have been completed for occupancy in Sept. of 1978, but subsequent delays prevented the opening until last Sept. Designers of the hall were the Salt Lake firm of Fowler, Ferguson, Kingston, and Ruben, and the acoustical consultant was Dr. Cyril M. Harris, who also acted in the same capacity for New York's Avery Fisher Hall, the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., and Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis. Seating capacity is about 2,800 — 1828 on the main floor ("continental" fashion, with no interrupting center aisle) and the rest divided among three tiers. The building is rectangular in form with the inside walls all of natural oak wood accented by polished brass railings (over a mile of it), brass and crystal chandeliers and deep green upholstered seats and carpeting. The Hall and the lobby are adorned with more than 12,000 square feet of 24-karat gold leaf. Acoustics, for the most part, are good, although remarks made by Yehudi Menuhin at a recent appearance with the orchestra, were not so complimentary.

Another stage of the orchestra's development has been reached with the acquisition of its "own home."

Third, after 32 years as Music Director of the Utah Symphony, Maurice Abravanel stepped down last April. A search for a successor was begun and the orchestra was allowed a representative on the search committee and a chance to evaluate each candidate with the evaluations to be strongly considered by the search committee. A proposed one or two year search, however, was abruptly ended in December, 1979, with the Symphony Board's appointment of Varujan Kojian as Music Director. Kojian is a former assistant concertmaster of the L.A. Philharmonic and is presently conductor of the Royal Swedish Opera in Stockholm. While scheduled to commence full-time duties in July, he will conduct performances of the Beethoven 9th Symphony with the orchestra in April.

The last change—and an extremely important one—is the negotiation of a new three-year contract to begin in September, 1980. A 32-year conductor dominance has resulted in a weak contract, allowing a number of recent non-renewal notices by the new Music Director. Many vital issues constitute the new contract proposals and lengthy negotiations are foreseen. A preliminary discussion between union and management has been held and a management response is being awaited.

Ben Ivey, ICSOM Representative
Utah Symphony Orchestra

June 6, 1980

The International Executive Board
American Federation of Musicians

Dear Sirs and Brothers:

The May issue of the International Musician puts forth a recommendation by the International Executive Board for a national work dues as a solution to the Federation's fiscal difficulties.

Although ICSOM is highly concerned about the financial condition of the Federation we are alarmed at this proposed solution. The recommendation, if approved, could generate between \$700,000 and 1.4 million dollars a year from the four thousand ICSOM members of the Federation alone. We must respectfully disagree with this solution on two counts.

First, this proposal goes much farther than solving the demonstrable financial problems of the union. We can only assume, therefore, that there are plans for new programs to be established or current programs to be improved. However, since there is as yet no indication from the International Executive Board as to the nature of such improvements, we are in no position to evaluate the uses to which this new money will be put.

Second, as full time symphony and opera musicians we are being asked to assume a burden disproportionate to the membership of the Federation as a whole, most of which is comprised of part time, basically "inactive" musicians. These "inactive" members have chosen to make their livelihood in other endeavors and would so choose even with expanded employment opportunities in music. In many cases these "inactive" musicians retain their membership for reasons having nothing to do with trade unionism, but rather to provide them with low cost insurance coverages and the ability to do sporadic extra jobs to supplement their basic earnings elsewhere. One of ICSOM's unique features as a Conference is that all our members are career musicians.

We are concerned that we must disagree with you over a matter so vital as our fiscal viability. We must though, regretfully, work for the defeat of the current recommendation. To the end of unanimity and a stronger union we respectfully ask that you reconsider your position and come forward with a dues structure in which all members share more equally and a considered program that addresses the needs of full time symphony and opera musicians.

Fraternally,

Frederick Zenone
Vice-Chairman, ICSOM

BEECHAM, THE IRREPRESSABLE

While exercising his legendary sardonic wit upon a helpless soprano during a chorus rehearsal one evening, Beecham only succeeded in upsetting her further. She shouted at him, "Mr. Beecham, I'll have you know that I am a lady. Beecham bowed and answered, "*Madam, your secret is safe with me.*"

* * * *

SENZA SORDINO is the official publication of the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians and is published six times a year on a bi-monthly basis. ICSOM is affiliated as an official conference of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada, AFL-CIO.

Henry Shaw, Editor—Mailing Address: 1577 Elizabeth Pl.,
Cincinnati, Ohio 45237.

Subscriptions: A.F.M. Members \$4.00 per year.
Non-Member, A.F.M. \$7.00 per year.

Printed by S. Rosenthal and Co. Inc., Cincinnati Ohio

SAN FRANCISCO MANAGEMENT AND PLAYERS SAVE SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAM

Faced with a projected 20 million dollar deficit for the 1980-81 school year, the administration of the San Francisco United School District recently recommended extensive cutbacks in curriculum, including total elimination of the elementary school music and middle school vocal music programs. In protest to this proposal, management and musicians of the San Francisco Symphony organized a well-publicized appeal to save music in our public schools.

On March 4th, a local television station filmed Symphony musicians rehearsing at the Opera House and then attending the School Board Budget Committee meeting later that afternoon. Spokespersons for the large contingent of Symphony personnel at this meeting included Executive Director Peter Pastreich, Associate Conductor David Ramadanoff, and orchestra members David Schneider, Walter Green, and Margaret Tait. Our actions were reinforced by Yehudi Menuhin's address to the Board of Education a few days earlier, by numerous phone calls from Symphony Board members, by newspaper articles, and by testimony from Symphony Board members at the School Board meeting which followed the Budget Committee meeting.

As a result of our collective efforts, the Board of Education voted 7-0 to reinstate both the elementary and middle school music programs. In a letter to the San Francisco Symphony, school music supervisor Daniel Ryan wrote:

"Through your actions you have become part of a grass-roots movement to save not only music education in the schools but to make a significant statement concerning the quality of life in our society . . ."

Ryan also told Symphony manager John Gidwitz that he felt the presence and speeches of orchestra members at the Budget Committee meeting were directly responsible for the Board's decision, and that words could not express the appreciation school music teachers felt for our support throughout this threatening situation.

Leone Buyse,
San Francisco Symphony

RECORDING TECHNOLOGY EXPANDING

There are two new record products on the market today which should have a significant impact on the buying public. They are "digital recording" and "video disc".

A "digital recording" looks like a regular stereo lp and can be played on conventional equipment. However some care must be taken as this type of recording can damage some speakers if played at a loud dynamic level.

The digital process uses computer technology to store sound on tape as numbers. In fact more than 50,000 numbers are generated to represent each second of sound. What this means to the listener is greater dynamic range, detail, stereo imaging, lower distortion, and increased signal to noise ratio. In short, this process produces a sound that is closer to the original than conventional technology. The cost of a digital record is \$18.00.

Video disc is a process that produces both sound and sight. For this you need a video disc turntable and a television set. The disc itself looks like a platinum 12 inch lp record. It is made of the same plastic as an lp record in exactly the same way by stamping.

There will be two types of video disc systems. One system will use a low wattage laser to read the disc. The other will use a stylus running over the surface. Needless to say neither system will be compatible with the other. This should make for some interesting marketing problems. The cost of the discs at this time range from \$5.95 to \$20.00.

This article was a general explanation of two new products which should have an effect on ICSOM members both artistically and economically.

Brad Buckley
ICSOM Media Committee

FROM HERE AND THERE

Affected by shaky economic conditions, the British Broadcasting System has been forced to make budgetary cuts that have shaken the cultural groups under its umbrella. The corporation is heavily in debt and the current money squeeze has resulted in the trimming of its house orchestras.

B.B.C. employed 551 musicians, the largest patron of live music in the world. Present plans call for a cut to 379 musicians at a savings to B.B.C. of four million a year. Among the orchestras axed is the B.B.C. Scottish Symphony Orchestra. The 101 member B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra based in London is spared.

The Hong Kong Philharmonic still has its problems. The American Federation of Musicians is still not approving contracts offered to A.F. of M. members by the H.K.P.O. in the wake of the dismissal of a number of U.S. musicians last year.

An article in the Hong Kong *Star* observes that imports brought in by conductor, Ling Tung, give the orchestra an expensive foreign label without adding any distinction. There is a strong inner-orchestra movement towards "localization." The prospect is that in the not too distant future, Westerners will be replaced by oriental players. Orchestra members would like it known that jobs offered to foreigners are at best temporary.

The Philadelphia Orchestra's fourth MARATHON resulted in a record fund raising take of \$350,000. The Denver Symphony raised \$211,000 with its MARATHON early in March.

The last issue of *Senza Sordino* went to press too late to announce the death of Walter Susskind, on March 25th of cancer. Most recently the music adviser of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and formerly conductor of the St. Louis Symphony, his career spanned 50 years. It was an impressive one, his reputation earned both in the U.S. and abroad. He made over 200 recordings with the London Symphony alone.

The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra has signed a three year recording agreement with Phonogram International and will record under Previn on the Philips label beginning next September.

P.B.S. has signed the Los Angeles Philharmonic to a new T.V. series entitled "From Los Angeles - the Guilini concerts." Two concerts from the current season and at least three concerts in future seasons is planned. The L.A. Philharmonic spent last month in Europe playing in London, Vienna, Linz, Innsbruck, Brussels, Paris, Madrid, Barcelona, Florence, Milan, Zurich and other cities.

Seattle returned on April 28th from a 13 day tour of Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

The National Symphony with Rostropovich spent three weeks of April in Japan and Korea.

CHECK THAT TSA YEAR END STATEMENT

By now all symphony orchestra musicians who deposit into TSA tax-deferred annuity accounts should have received Statements of Account for the year ending December 31st. While most orchestras have TSA committees, it would seem to be in the individual's best interest that he or she check for errors in the statement.

One should make sure that 1) all deposits and interest due is reflected in the year end statement and 2) that you have listed the correct beneficiary with your insurance company to avoid future problems.