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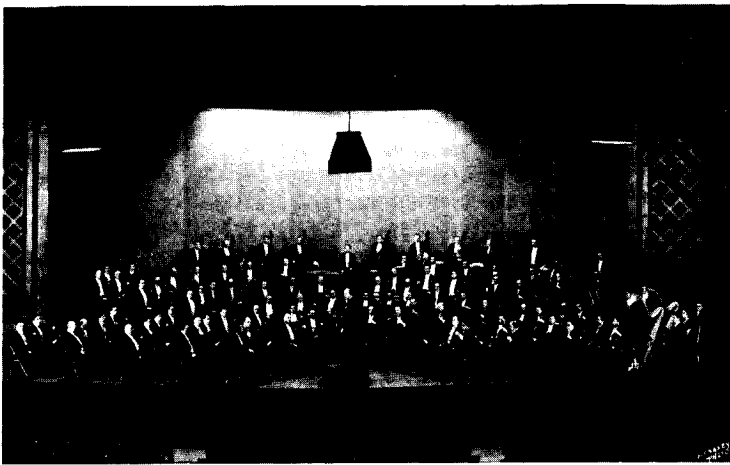
JANUARY 1982, NO. 2

## A CASE FOR FAIRNESS

HENRY SHAW

The photograph of the 1939 Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra below suggests a condition that one would expect to be present in any major orchestra photograph of that era. It is virtually a single gender musical group. A 1979-1980 listing of 44 ICSOM orchestras identified by gender and reported in the August 1981 issue of *Senza Sordino*, showed a total of 1150 female and 2731 male orchestra members. Something has obviously happened along the way to alter the picture.

It would be safe to say that the one gender orchestra was perpetuated by individuals with the power to hire who held the stereotyped view that a woman's capability as a worker was limited both physically and psychologically. This prejudice, as well as prevailing custom, governed the job giver, therefore



Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra year 1939. Only female member is second harpist.

conductors avoided hiring women musicians for reasons having little to do with musical ability. Women harpists were hired for cosmetic reasons. A few others were exceptions to the rule.

The prevailing attitude was that women were weak and that the woman musician did not have the inclination to make an orchestra career a high priority in her life plan. There was concern over the effects of marriage and child rearing as a time consuming diversion that would conflict with professional duties.

To take this reasoning one step further, the conductor's decision did not clash with the attitude of society in general. After all, untold generations had quantified the role women could play outside the family setting. Women dutifully resigned themselves to the status quo for the most part. Reality discouraged talented female musicians from testing the stacked audition system in our orchestras.

What happened to create a hole in the dike? World War

II and Rosie the Riveter. World War II took male orchestra musicians out of orchestras faster than other men of competence could fill the vacancies. Women were hired not out of recognition of their ability but out of necessity to put a full orchestra on stage. It was quickly discovered that they did not collapse during the second half of a concert; that they performed as capably as Rosie did in the defense plant nine to five, and longer. The opportunities appeared faster in the orchestras where the turnover rate was swifter. To this day the proportion of women to men is smallest in the most prestigious orchestras where better pay, retirement benefits and working conditions result in fewer personnel changes from year to year. The women's liberation movement, slowly changing social attitudes, the advent of orchestra personnel participation in the audition process, among other reasons, have been responsible for the acceleration of women into our symphony orchestras.

Dr. Gilda Greenberg, Professor of Humanities and Social Science at Western Michigan University, recently completed a survey of 219 women musicians in the fifteen top orchestras (as listed with the American Symphony Orchestra League). They include five eastern orchestras, three western orchestras and seven central U.S. orchestras. The women musicians responded through a variety of techniques; written survey, personal interviews and telephone contact. Additional data was gathered from sources outside the orchestra; Conservatory administrators, chairpersons of music departments, composers, career placement directors of schools of music, and recent graduates of schools for the performing arts.

The purpose of the study was to identify obstacles that still remain and are confronted by women musicians. Dr. Greenberg states in her survey;

*"The response to this research by all participants was beyond expectations. The returns reflected many issues, such as: (a) the need for blind auditions through the final stage of competition for orchestral vacancies, (b) a change in the attitude of some musicians, (c) the need for the encouragement of women and minorities in pursuing careers as instrumentalists, (d) a reassessment of the conductor's dominance in final selection of personnel.*

*The cultural attitudes which have prescribed women's career aspirations in the past have also prescribed women's musical activities and presently pervade our major symphony orchestras. Although significant changes can be observed by a comparison of the personnel policies in the past ten years, the career opportunities for women as concertmasters, principal chair musicians, and brass and percussion players has been extremely limited. Over the years women have been covertly excluded from principal chair positions through the prevailing myths and attitudes of those in the power structure."*

Dr. Greenberg further states that "gradual but very slow inroads are being made in all the string and woodwind sections of the top symphony orchestras. The significant finding is that the higher the prestige and money associated with the musical organization, the higher the ratio of men to women in all positions, including the principals."

Under the sub-title, *Significance of Findings* she writes:

1. *The increasing use of blind auditions has created opportunities for women and minorities that did not exist in the past.*
2. *Instrument selection is still perceived as "feminine or masculine."*
3. *Successful musicians indicated that teachers were more influential than parents in motivating them to become a professional.*
4. *Since most principal chairs are now held by men, a question for this study was: "Has there been opposition to you as a leader in your section"? and do you think that women have equal opportunity to obtain placement in major symphony orchestras?"*



Zubin Mehta and members of the New York Philharmonic.

Over 70% believed there was equal opportunity to obtain a job with a symphony, and the same percentage felt there would be no opposition to them holding a leadership role in the section. Thirty percent specifically questioned the attitudes of conductors from Europe whose perception of women as professionals appeared to be negative in terms of their own cultural differences and values. One third of the group also suggested that any gain towards a leadership role by a woman was interpreted as a threat to some male colleagues. The involvement of members of the symphonies and groups like ICSOM has created new opportunities for positive change.

Dr. Greenberg advised women who want to have careers in a major symphony to "work hard until you are the best; take as many auditions as possible; practice — there is no shortcut; know the literature thoroughly and gain as many experiences as possible in playing with small ensembles; study with the best teachers whose reputation and professional connections can be used in promoting one's career."

Significant improvements for women musicians have been evident over the past generation. In this country one would expect that a case need not be made for fairness. Equality of opportunity is the law. Inequality is a battle for all of us.

## MEA COLPA

The work stoppage in Baltimore was inadvertently referred to as a strike rather than a lockout in the October issue of *Senza Sordino*. Our apology and fervent hope that beautiful music will soon sound again in Baltimore.

## MAJOR CONTRACTUAL BREAKTHROUGHS MADE BY LOUISVILLE ORCHESTRA

On November 3rd, the members of the Louisville Orchestra ratified a three year contract. We have finally climbed out of the cellar. We are now a full time, salaried orchestra of 68 players. Although many of us feel that we are still underpaid, the fact remains that we have taken a giant step forward in establishing a solid foundation for our future. We won our battle against a no-growth core orchestra concept, and we now have a commitment from our board and management to promote and support an orchestra. This ratification ends the most difficult period in our 44 year history. We were on strike from September 15 until October 6, when we agreed to return to work to play and talk. We then resumed our negotiations that, we felt, were progressing smoothly. We were puzzled, to say the least, when on Wednesday, October 28, our players were given an ultimatum by the director of our board to either ratify our contract by November 4 or suffer a weekly pay cut of \$96.75. Our committee was then given a document to recommend to our members, parts of which were totally different from the contract we had heretofore basically agreed upon. At an eleven hour session on Friday, October 28, our committee met with our new manager, Karen Dobbs, when for the first time we negotiated together in a true spirit of mutual cooperation and concern for the welfare of the Louisville Orchestra. Our original contract was then restored with non-economic gains we believe are of vital importance. It is our most earnest hope that this mutual regard will prevail.

We are proud of the overall tone, dignity and language of our contract, our exemplary mutual cooperation clause, our consistent blocks of time off, our audition, tenure and dismissal clauses. We now have the right to equal participation with our board members on two important committees as well as the opportunity to address the board at quarterly meetings and meet with the executive committee whenever we feel it is necessary. We are eager to utilize this opportunity to the fullest and we hope to pioneer in this new dimension of mutual responsibility, cooperation and progress.

We are proud of our entire orchestra for staging a dignified and effective strike action. *Every* member spent at least 6 hours a week on the picket line, where we wore our work clothes; our men in tails, our women in long black. We are grateful to the Rev. Vernon Robertson, who gave us the use of his 128-year-old parish church, St. Martin. There we spent our Saturdays rehearsing our own incorporated Festival Orchestra, meeting and sharing a pot luck supper in the church hall and playing evening concerts followed by a Mass where Father Robertson led services praying for peace and goodwill between the musicians and our board. These concerts were a great success, and our management is now considering adding a "Church Series" to our season. We went to the zoo, where a scheduled concert was cancelled because of our strike and gave out handbills explaining our position. Instead of picketing a Saturday night "Super Pops" concert that was given without an orchestra, we gave our own Church Concert while our spouses and relatives gave handbills to the Pops audience.

We made special efforts to deal openly and fairly with the media and received a great deal of coverage and publicity. Our lawyer, Herb Segal, our spokespersons and orchestra members were featured on local radio and T.V. shoes. T.V. cameras were at our picket line, our orchestra meetings, at the zoo, at negotiations and at our Church Concerts.

Our committee worked unbelievably hard and made personal sacrifices of their time and teaching jobs in order to write and bargain for this contract. Our committee includes Jerry Amend, Brooke Hicks, Sally Brink, Clara Markham, Louise Harris and Joe Parrish. Our Union President, Herb Hale, and his staff were beautiful throughout.

As our ICSOM representative, I must express my gratitude to all of you who sent Mailgrams, letters and personal messages

of support and advice. Brad Buckley and Fred Zenone were always just a phone call away. Their encouragement, advice, help and professionalism were invaluable.

Those of us who were involved in negotiations will not forget the many valuable lessons we have learned. We are determined to continue forward and to work for much greater gains for our members in our next contract.

Summary of the Master Agreement follows:

	1980-81	1981-82	1982-83	1983-84
Base Weekly	\$127.43	\$248.00	\$266.00	\$292.00
EMG	\$ 00.00	\$ 24.00	\$ 28.00	\$ 34.00
Minimum Weekly Scale	\$127.43	\$272.00	\$294.00	\$326.00
Number of Weeks	37	38	39	40
Season Total	\$4,715.00	\$10,366.00	\$11,466.00	\$13,040.00

Audition compensation of \$25 for 2 to 4 hours and \$50 for over 4 hours will be paid to members of the audition committee.

There will be 8 services a week; 9 if preceded or followed by a 7 service week.

Four joint player-society committees will now be activated to meet quarterly with the full board.

Other gains were made in per diem payments and in the area of working conditions.

Pat Brannon  
ICSOM Representative  
Louisville Orchestra

## FULL SPECTRUM LIGHTING URGED BY RESEARCHERS

If you've just gotten home after two rehearsals, your eyes are tired and you have a headache, you are probably blaming the poor manuscript you had to decipher most of the day. You may be right, but then again, it could be something you didn't suspect. It may not be the strain on your eyes or the insufficient lighting on stage, but rather the KIND of light.

There has recently been a great deal of study done on the affect of the lack of exposure to *natural* outdoor light in our daily life. Dr. Alfred Lewy, a research psychiatrist, thinks that his studies raise serious questions concerning the adequacy of most indoor lighting and especially about energy-saving lights that greatly distort the natural spectrum of the sun.

His, and other studies, show that to affect proper hormone production, human beings require brighter light than other animals — three to four times brighter than the lights used in homes, offices and factories. While not wanting to belabor the point, the hormone, Melatonin, is the issue here, for inadequate natural light seems to build up a high level of it in our bodies. This has a deleterious physical and mental effect upon us.

Both incandescent and commonly used fluorescent lights lack part of the spectrum found in natural lighting. It is this constant lack of exposure during daylight hours by indoor workers to full-spectrum light which could be the culprit in a wide variety of ailments including fatigue, eye strain, skin blemishes, headaches, irritability, decreased performance, reduced physical fitness, diminished immunological defenses and possibly impaired fertility. Those possibilities are suggested by Dr. Richard Wurtman, professor of endocrinology and metabolism at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Tests show that the "flicker" associated with fluorescent lights aggravates the problem to the extent that it is responsible for using up Vitamin A in our body at a rapid rate.

The best of all worlds in minimizing the harmful effects of indoor lighting is said to be the full-spectrum fluorescent light. While it may cost slightly more than ordinary fluorescents, it is no more expensive to operate. Full-spectrums contain the necessary blacklight missing in other indoor lights and more closely approach the spectrum of natural light.

Recently, one of our opera houses announced plans for the

remodelling of its facilities. Suggestion to install full-spectrum fluorescents was made by one of the orchestra musicians. The facts as revealed in the studies of Dr. Lewy and Dr. Wurtman as reviewed in the *Science Times* are echoed in a book by Dr. Richard Klavner, an optomologist, in his book, *TOTAL VISION*. He says, "Just how bad limited spectrum lighting is was markedly demonstrated with a group of first graders during the 1973-74 school year in Sarasota, Florida. The four classrooms in the trial were windowless, and thus all lighting was artificial. Two classrooms kept their conventional cool-white fluorescents, and two had full-spectrum lights installed, with shields to reduce radiation.

Under the normal lighting some first graders demonstrated nervous fatigue, irritability, lapses of attention and hyperactivity. Yet when full-spectrum lighting was installed, these same children settled down and paid more attention to their teachers, who reported improved overall classroom performance."

Improved fluorescents are manufactured by many companies. Look for *General Electric Chroma 50*, *Duro-Test Optima*, *Philips Verd-a-Ray*, and *Vita Lite*. Garcy Lighting of Chicago is manufacturing a system which uses regular tubes with a small black-light tube that can be changed as often as necessary during the normal life of the larger tube. Called *Spectralite*, it also eliminates the usual flicker of fluorescence.

## WHOOPS, SORRY ABOUT THAT!

In November the Utah Symphony was rehearsing for an upcoming concert with its associate conductor, Robert Henderson. While rehearsing Stravinsky's "*The Fairy's Kiss*," Mr. Henderson stopped the orchestra. He was furious and accused the orchestra of being half asleep. That was probably true because the rehearsal was at 9:00 A.M. after a late concert the night before. At that point, Mr. Henderson flipped the page of his score and it inadvertently ripped out and sailed through the viola section. Someone, who shall remain anonymous, then asked, "*is that cut good, maestro*"?

## ROCHESTER INKS ONE YEAR PACT

The members of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra have ratified a new one year Master Agreement. In so doing the musicians temporarily put aside their desire for continued growth in the orchestra. The number of players in the core orchestra will remain at 59. The length of the season continues to be 48 weeks including 5 weeks of paid vacation.

Terms of the contract are as follows:

Across-the-board increases of \$25 for the first 24 weeks and an additional \$25 for the remaining 24 weeks raising the minimum weekly salary from \$430 to \$455 and then \$480. This results in a minimum annual salary of \$22,440, a 10% increase over last year's corresponding figure.

A pension increase from \$5,500 to \$6,100. The pension is calculated at \$244 per year of service to a maximum of 25 years. Our pension increases are also paid to past retirees.

Medical and dental insurance continue to be paid by management while life insurance was increased from \$10,000 to \$20,000 and long term disability coverage was significantly improved.

The orchestra was so appreciative of (incensed by) the efforts of the negotiating committee of Elizabeth Weiss, Kathleen Murphy-Kemp, James Durham, David Angus and Chairperson Richard Jones that they re-elected (sentenced) the same committee to continue for another year of negotiating. Special thanks go to Local #66 President Joseph DeVitt for his invaluable insight and his expertise in negotiating.

David Angus, Rochester Philharmonic  
ICSOM Representative

## SAN ANTONIO HANDLES LOCKOUT SIGNS THREE YEAR CONTRACT

On April 27, 1980 a new era began for the San Antonio Symphony Orchestra. For the first time in our history our membership voted in favor of retaining the services of a lawyer for the coming contract negotiations. Even though some members of the Local 23 Executive Board had expressed reservations, this motion was also passed by a special general meeting of the union's membership and Executive Board on November 9th. Frank Herrera, one of the most respected labor lawyers in the Southwest, had agreed to be our legal council — his fee being four subscription series season tickets.

The negotiations began in December, 1980, however, when economic matters were addressed, all compromise ceased. The management appeared to be stalling until summer, when most of the musicians leave San Antonio. This requires the orchestra to vote by mail. When the Committee informed the management that it would not vote by mail, talks continued through the summer until a tentative agreement was reached.

On September 8th the membership voted 59-12 against ratification of an offer that would bring scale up to \$390. with 39 weeks in the third year of the contract (we were at \$300/36 weeks).

We were then advised that all scheduled services were cancelled until a contract was ratified. However, it was recommended by our legal counsel that we report to work as previously scheduled. We had never taken a strike vote, so the management's lockout action served to swing public support in our favor. The following day's lockout became a media event by our playing the National Anthem on the theater's backstage loading dock for local television cameras.

When management publicly announced the cancellation of the first set of subscription concerts, the orchestra countered with an offer to rehearse and play the opening concerts free, as a goodwill gesture to the citizens of San Antonio. The Symphony Board accepted our offer, and later offered to give the proceeds (after expenses) to the musicians, which we refused.

In the meantime, Mr. Herrera revealed that the management's lockout action was, in fact, illegal. On September 2nd the National Mediation and Conciliation Board had been noti-

fied of negotiation proceedings, and that the lockout violated the required 30-day cooling-off period. Given their position, management appeared to have no option but to allow us to return to work under the economic terms of the old agreement.

On September 30th, nine hours of negotiating produced a contract that had the unanimous support of our lawyer and the entire committee; on October 2nd the orchestra voted 51-20 to ratify.

The conditions and improvements of the agreement are retroactive from September 7th, and are as follows:

Wages for this year are \$350. a week. The second and third year figures are to be negotiated beginning in March, 1982. There are 38 weeks, an increase from 36 last year. Other gains are:

	'80-'81	'81-'82	'82-'83	'83-'84
Vacation	10 days	16 days	17 days	18 days
Hospitalization	none	\$240/yr.	\$300/yr.	\$360/yr.
Pension	\$6/wk./yr.	\$7/wk./yr.	\$8/wk./yr.	\$10/wk./yr.

Management will continue pension benefits under the old plan, which pays a given dollar per month, per year of service (in '81-'82, 30 years serv. at \$7/mo./yr., or \$210/mo.) A supplemental retirement plan will be started from proceeds of a benefit concert.

There was substantial improvement in contract language, especially concerning audition procedure, working conditions, tour and runout conditions, and scheduling, which included a weekly posted rehearsal order.

In essence, the orchestra forced our management to re-consider its options for our collective future. We are hopeful that the advances represented by this contract are an indication of further progress to be made.

Thanks go to our lawyer, Frank Herrera, who constantly gave sound, practical, and progressive advice; and to our negotiation committee: Shirley Fredric, Margaret Bella, Larry Mentzer, Marilyn Rife, and Warren Johnson; also Don Kraft, president of Local 23. Without the tireless work of this group, this agreement would never have happened. We are grateful for their dedication to the common good.

Julie Luker, San Antonio Symphony  
ICSOM Representative

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