

Senza Sordino

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15

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1991 ICSOM Conference: The View from Vail

From Denver's Stapleton Airport, the van climbs through gorgeous mountain scenery; the two-hour ride to Vail provides the perfect chance to leave worldly concerns behind and prepare for the intense atmosphere of a week-long ICSOM conference.

The Antlers, a condominium where we stayed, overlooked Vail Mountain; right out the back door, there were wooded trails which delegates enjoyed exploring, and a rushing stream where two ICSOM officers could be spotted fishing in the early hours before conference sessions started.

The clear and penetrating mountain air at Vail imbued the 1991 ICSOM conference with a fresh sense of purpose. Even relations with the AFM took on a different tone; there was a spirit of cooperation, shared concerns, and commitment to improvement.

In one of the more moving events of the week, plaques honoring outstanding service to ICSOM were presented to Michael Nutt, Florence Nelson, Tom Hall, Abe Torchinsky, Bill Roehl, and Henry Shaw. Brad Buckley's heartfelt words of appreciation to each of these people drew a warm ovation from the audience of delegates, union officials, and guests.

Officers Elected

This was the year to elect four people to member-at-large positions on the ICSOM governing board. Three incumbents were reelected: Jim Clute (Minnesota), Michael Moore (Atlanta), and Stephanie Tretick (Pittsburgh). New to the board is Charles Schleuter of the Boston Symphony. Members of this year's nominating committee were Tom Hall (Chicago), Lee Crocker (San Francisco), and Melanie Burrell (Colorado).

For the Record

In summarizing the past year's phono negotiations, the media committee stressed that we were able to preserve the two-hour minimum call. There is no national media contract to negotiate this year.

An Ace in the Hole

The AFM strike fund is approaching \$1 million! It is now appropriate to consider increasing the weekly benefit payable from the fund. Musicians Brad Buckley and Melanie Burrell currently serve as trustees of the fund. It was recommended that the alternate trustee be chosen from a participating Canadian orchestra.

Rating Conductors

Conductor evaluations can now be shared among ICSOM, OCSM, and ROPA. However, as program administrator Tom

Hall reminded delegates, under no circumstances should evaluations be shared with conductors! The Phoenix Symphony, which was suspended from the program last year following distribution of an in-house evaluation to the local press, was reinstated to the program.

Resolutions

The conference passed the following resolutions:

- recognizing the bold steps taken by the new leadership of the AFM in implementing changes to strengthen the union;
- supporting Kennedy's technical amendment to the Immigration Bill, requiring consultation of the union in matters affecting the employment of musicians;
- urging the National Repertory Orchestra to reach an agreement with the AFM, and recommending that all steps be taken a) to protect the NRO musicians from exploitation and b) to protect the professional environment of the Colorado Symphony;
- requesting the trustees of the AFM-EP fund to reconsider the decision to reduce the death benefit;
- urging the trustees of the AFM-EP fund to make the fund available to all constituent members;
- recognizing and congratulating the newly elected AFM officers.

The mountain of agenda accomplished at our conference offered everyone a broader professional perspective, the camaraderie of a national network, and a chance to improve the profession.

1991 Conference Issue

Conference Overview
What Orchestras Want from the Union
AFM Reform
Music Copyists
National Health Insurance
Medical Study of Six ICSOM Orchestras
Mock Negotiation Session
AFM Officers

(All articles written by the editor unless otherwise noted.)

Orchestras Need Services From AFM

The sweeping reforms enacted at the 1991 AFM convention will radically change the dues structure within the AFM. Increased per capita dues paid by the entire membership will fund the "turn-key" expenses of the Federation, while nationally mandated work dues will be collected only from collective bargaining units, and used to pay for services to the musicians in those units. Thus, orchestra musicians' work dues will fund the Symphonic Services Division, bringing the Division more money, which should be spent directly on services to orchestras. Orchestra musicians must now indicate exactly what we want from the union for the work dues dollars we pay. To that end, labor consultant Bill Roehl, who has been involved for the past two years in the restructuring of the AFM, led several hours of discussion in which the ICSOM delegates articulated what their orchestras want from the AFM.

The following information about orchestras is needed:

- a contract database with access to individual topics;
- health plans, pension plans, seniority, touring;
- recordings done in the field;
- ethical auditions and how to address violations; coordination of auditions;
- medical problems of musicians; workers' compensation, disability, unemployment;
- issues involving extras and substitutes;
- relief time;
- access to long-range plan of the orchestra;
- work stoppages;
- managers' collective bargaining histories with their various orchestras.

The following services are needed:

- organizing the orchestra into a real bargaining unit, including information to help new players understand the labor and collective bargaining histories of their orchestra;
- pre-negotiation support, including costing out the contract, financial analysis of the employer's ability to pay, what per cent of the budget spent on musicians;
- conflict resolution: labor/management, orchestra/union;
- training of local union officers;
- training of orchestra committees;
- internal and external organizing.

Immediately following the ICSOM conference, these needs were officially presented to the AFM Symphonic Services Division steering committee, which will take the list to the IEB for consideration.

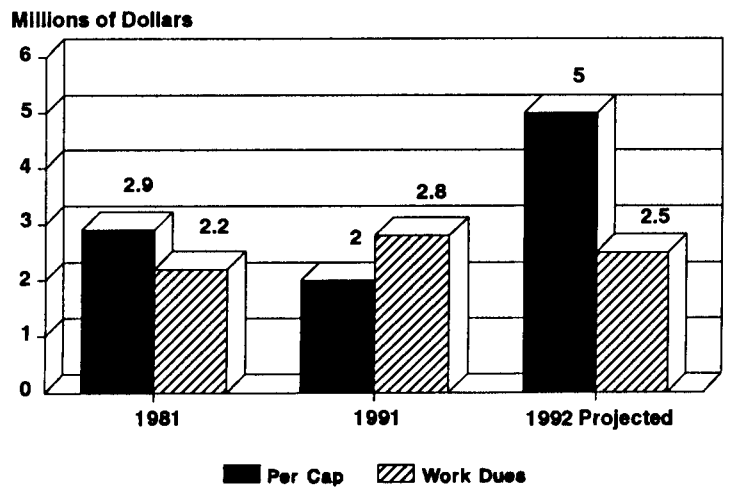
Reforms Will Help AFM, ICSOM

The 1991 AFM convention was remarkable for our union and for symphony musicians. For the first time in the history of the AFM, the player conferences were able to propose AFM bylaws! Our proposals concerning the definition of a symphony orchestra, AFM organizing efforts, and the ROPA emergency relief fund were passed. Significantly, ICSOM was directly involved in the formulation of crucial bylaws concerning local union reform, AFM convention reform, and AFM dues restructuring. The chart below shows the effect of the new dues structure, which should broaden the Federation's financial base equally among the entire membership.

Prior to the convention, the lack of leadership consensus and funds had paralyzed the Federation. Clearly, the delegates to the convention realized the Federation was in serious trouble. Their actions at the convention supplied both the resources and a mandate to address this trouble. I am sure the new administration and IEB realize the necessity of providing the dynamic leadership, efficient operations, appropriate services, and innovative programs needed by members and their locals. Certainly, ICSOM is prepared to cooperate to the fullest extent possible to help revitalize the union.

Brad Buckley
ICSOM Chairperson

Federation Dues



The increase in per capita dues, which every member of the AFM must pay, will now provide more revenue than nationally mandated work dues, which only members of collective bargaining units must pay. This should create the funding to provide orchestra musicians better services for work dues dollars paid.

The new dues structure goes into effect January 1, 1992.

Professionals Bring Music Copying to a High Art

The American Society of Music Copyists is a group of about 100 AFM members who are professional copyists. Joe Muccioli and Tina Hafemeister are members of the ASMC, and talked to the ICSOM conference about problems with printed music.

Projecting slides of musical excerpts on a screen, Muccioli and Hafemeister enumerated the types of problems confronting orchestra musicians in poorly copied parts: bad page turns; confusing cues; missing bars; misplaced or incorrect rehearsal numbers; illegible or incorrect notes, size or proportional spacing; poor printing; poor layout; and inconsistent ledger line spacing, to name a few. They remarked that orchestra music looks the worst of any in the industry.

They pointed out how much more difficult such problems make our jobs as performers; sometimes, hard-to-read sections must be memorized or handwritten. Obviously, rehearsal time and librarian overtime must be spent to compensate for inaccurate and illegible parts.

Muccioli decried the economic attitude in the music industry, which doesn't care about proper music presentation. "What we are talking about is not only improper music copying but a disregard for printing quality and maintenance... You can postpone maintenance of the catalogs of publishers only so long before the music is unplayable and essential information is lost, requiring expensive musicological research, editing, and recopying. Most publishers will not make that kind of investment in any but the most performed works."

Muccioli and Hafemeister recommended forming a task force of ICSOM, ASMC, and orchestra librarians to draw up standards for music preparation and guidelines to follow when those standards are not met; there must be an organized method of putting pressure on music publishers to meet those guidelines. A motion was passed directing the ICSOM governing board to investigate problems with printed music.

This part, copied by a professional, shows the same excerpt that was published in the December 1990 Senza Sordino. Does any ICSOM orchestra ever see a Firebird part that is this readable?

16

div.

sempre cresc.

come sopra

div.

p

17

unis. II

f

National Health Care Proposed to Cure Insurance Woes

Judith Merideth runs a lobbying firm in Boston, and has helped to design the AFL-CIO grass-roots lobbying strategy for national health care. She began her presentation to the ICSOM conference with some background about the insurance industry.

In Europe, there are two models which led to modern public health care. The earliest public health program started after the Thirty Years' War, treating soldiers who had contracted syphilis. Hospitals built at that time continued to be supported by governments for years to come. This established the model of taxpayers contributing to government-provided health care. The second model developed from the lords and nobles paying for health care for their serfs.

In North America, the U.S. paid for health care for its armies, which led to the development of nursing and public health. The public health movement here got shut off right before World War II, when doctors and hospitals put together Blue Cross and Blue Shield, which offered health care to people who had pre-paid for it. At the same time, Canada was following the English model of government-provided taxpayer-funded national health care.

During World War II, organized labor in the U.S. gained employer-paid health insurance at the bargaining table. By 1976, almost 85% of the American population was covered by employer-paid health insurance; organized labor then lobbied successfully for Medicaid and Medicare to fill in the gaps. However, the number of people without insurance has increased steadily since 1976. Businesses and taxpayers are now paying most of the health care bill.

According to Merideth, "As long as the issue of health insurance is on the bargaining table, we won't get pay raises. We must get organized to lobby politically for national health care. This is a political issue that has to be solved in Congress."

Merideth outlined some of the questions and issues pertaining to national health care. Who would pay for it? (Business is eager to be absolved of this responsibility.) Who would limit and control charges for services, supplies, drugs, and equipment? How would we ration care? How much are we willing to compromise care for ourselves and our loved ones? Health care has not been a political discussion in the U.S. in terms of how much we are willing to spend on infants, the elderly, the poor, or workers.

Even though unions stand to lose the most because they have the best coverage, the AFL-CIO is leading the movement for health care reform. The AFL-CIO strategy is to force Congress to come up with a significant health care reform package by 1994. An internal and community educational campaign will be centered around our own bargaining experience. Grass-roots networking is crucial to this movement.

Meredith described successful lobbying techniques and concluded her presentation by engaging the delegates in a role-playing exercise in which she played a very conservative member of Congress whom the delegates tried to lobby in favor of national health care.



Six ICSOM Orchestras Flex and Stretch

One of the founders of the field of arts medicine, Dr. Alice Brandfonbrener has practiced medicine at the Interlochen National Music Camp, the Aspen Music Festival, and the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago. She is editor of the *Journal of Medical Problems of Performing Artists*.

At the ICSOM conference, she presented results from her recent year-long study of six ICSOM orchestras: Chicago, Chicago Lyric Opera, Milwaukee, Minnesota, St. Louis, and St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. (Control group orchestras were Syracuse, Indianapolis, and Cincinnati.) The study attempted to determine how exercise may prevent occupational injuries in orchestra players. Participation was voluntary, and subjects were free to drop out at any time.

Each orchestra was divided into two study groups, one of which did strengthening exercises, while the other did stretching exercises. Halfway through the season, the groups switched exercises. Of course, the control group was not given any exercises. The exercises focused on the arms, which are easy to measure and evaluate. Three times during the season, data was collected via questionnaires and physical measurements of the subjects' strength and flexibility.

Results indicated a higher incidence of musculo-skeletal problems in females. Correlations occurred between depression and musculo-skeletal symptoms, and between stage fright and stress. Weight-training appeared to be counterproductive, especially for string players, as it can lead to excessive muscle tightness.

Analysis of the data is not yet complete, but preliminary findings show there were some positive results of this study, including increased awareness and improved habits in some players, and the collection of new data. Disappointingly, there was a high drop-out rate, and the short-term results of the study are not really conclusive. Brandfonbrener stressed the need for more flexibility exercises, for more work addressing the special needs of female musicians, and for more education of players, managements, and physicians.

Playing Less Hurt ©

Tampa will be the site of the next "Playing Less Hurt"© conference February 28 – March 1, 1992. This conference addresses the identification, prevention, and treatment of medical problems of musicians, and is directed by Janet Horvath, associate principal cellist of the Minnesota Orchestra. Upper respiratory problems in wind players, stage fright, and problems of folk musicians are just a few of the offerings. For information, contact Division of Lifelong Learning, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL 33260.

Mock Negotiation Session

An actual negotiation which took place at the New York City Ballet in 1976 was the basis for an exercise devised by ICSOM counsel Len Leibowitz at this year's ICSOM conference. Delegates were given a written handout explaining the history, the setting, and the issues, and were assigned specific roles to play at the negotiating table. They had several days to prepare, and this led to many after-hours meetings. Some roommates found that being on opposite sides of the table severely constrained casual conversation! The negotiation began on Saturday morning. Proposals flew back and forth, caucuses took place outdoors, and there were even some off-the-record meetings. A settlement was achieved after about four hours, and Len then explained how the real 1976 negotiation had turned out.

What was the pressure point that brought delegates to "settle" by 1 p.m.? Probably the prospect of an afternoon off in Vail!

Union	Management
Maxine Arons, Local 802 president	Robert Irving, conductor
Stringfellow Jones, principal cello	Melvin Bellicose, counsel
Henrietta Reed, principal oboe	Fanny Finance, comptroller
Tubby Thomas, principal tuba	Pat Turk, personnel director
Jane Tune, principal trumpet	Holly Balloo, public relations
Laura Fader, chairperson	Betty Cage, executive director
Clarice Darrow, counsel	John Samuels, board chairman
Maria Heifetz, violinist	Robert Gottlieb, board member
Nancy Nero, violinist	Greta Money, development director
Chico Marx, harpist	

Some of these individuals were real people present at the 1976 negotiations, while others were invented for the conference exercise. Can you tell which was which?

Who Gets the Last Laugh?

The deadline from last year's *Senza Sordino* cartoon contest has been extended to December 31, 1991. Any aspect of our workplace is fair game. Entries should be black and white, not previously published, and hand-drawn by current or retired members of ICSOM orchestras. Entries become the property of *Senza Sordino* unless a self-addressed envelope is enclosed.

Fine Detail

Another Type of Union Organizer

For the first time in 29 years, the many organizational details of the ICSOM conference fell to a conference coordinator rather than to a host delegate and orchestra. Tom Hall, who has previously served as *Senza Sordino* editor and as Chicago Symphony delegate, was in rare form as our coordinator. He worked closely with ICSOM secretary Cindy Lewis, and by the time delegates arrived in Vail, every detail was impeccably arranged, down to the orderly stacks of paper in our alphabetized personal mail boxes. It was a luxury to be on the receiving end of such organizational prowess!



Drew Owen is a cellist in the New Orleans Symphony, a former contest winner, and a frequent contributor to *Senza Sordino*.

Letter to the Editor

Editor,

I was impressed with the article in the August 1991 *Senza Sordino* comparing the various roles in an orchestra to a caste system. I would make one slight modification to that analysis. If the management is the Brahmin class, and the musicians are the Untouchables, perhaps the principal players play the role of the merchant class in this "Hindu" orchestra. Like any merchant class, the principals have a vested interest in seeing that the system continues the way it always has, often to the detriment of the Untouchables under them. In addition, when some musicians are treated as second-class citizens in the orchestra, resentment and ill will are the natural consequences.

A Tutti String Player
(name withheld by request)

Express Yourself. Readers are encouraged to communicate their views and reactions. Send a letter to the editor.

AFM President Speaks to Conference

With the president, vice-president, several IEB officers, the symphonic services division staff, and numerous local presidents in attendance, the AFM demonstrated its interest in and commitment to our 1991 conference.

Keynote speaker AFM president Mark Tully Massagli stressed, "We have eleven work weeks to put in place the plans that are going to help this union rebuild, go forward, and be progressive."

Outlining some of the changes his administration is implementing, he explained that for the first time, field representatives will be meeting with the IEB to offer input from their activities around the country. Massagli emphasized that even with the recent dues increase, AFM members still pay much less in per capita dues than do members of many other unions.

The Immigration Bill authored by Mazzoli (HR 3048) would take away Federation input regarding the importing of performers for available jobs in the U.S. The AFM will lobby for technical amendments which would protect the union's right to be consulted.

AFM locals have been given a mandate to provide better services, and a deadline for implementing improvements. Massagli declared, "We know you need help. I can't promise that everything will be in place by tomorrow, but I can promise our best efforts and diligence to see that your needs are met." He assured delegates that the AFM is not out to destroy or merge locals. In closing, Massagli promised "the best efforts of the AFM to improve the plight of the professional musician."

Other AFM Officials

Newly elected AFM vice-president Steve Young, president of the Boston local, urged involvement in our locals, and not only on the issues that concern orchestras.

Lew Waldeck reported on activities of the Symphonic Services Division. The National Repertory Orchestra (in Colorado), which the AFM is trying to regulate, is becoming another New World Symphony situation. The SSD has sent a letter to the management of each ICSOM orchestra requesting health plan information; this data will be made available to us. Nathan Kahn is working with the personnel managers to improve auditions. Chris Durham has left the SSD to become secretary of the St. Louis local. Rosemary Estes, hornist in the Florida Philharmonic and former president of ROPA, has joined the SSD staff.

ICSOM Governing Board

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ICSOM Orchestras

Alabama Symphony Orchestra Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Baltimore Symphony Orchestra Boston Symphony Orchestra Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra Chicago Lyric Opera Orchestra Chicago Symphony Orchestra Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra Cleveland Orchestra Columbus Symphony Colorado Symphony Dallas Symphony Orchestra	Detroit Symphony Florida Orchestra Florida Philharmonic Florida Symphony Orchestra Grant Park Symphony Orchestra Honolulu Symphony Orchestra Houston Symphony Orchestra Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra Los Angeles Philharmonic Louisville Orchestra Metropolitan Opera Orchestra	Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra Minnesota Orchestra National Symphony Orchestra New Jersey Symphony Orchestra New Orleans Symphony Orchestra New York City Ballet Orchestra New York City Opera Orchestra New York Philharmonic North Carolina Symphony Orchestra Oregon Symphony Orchestra Philadelphia Orchestra Phoenix Symphony Orchestra	Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra St. Louis Symphony Orchestra St. Paul Chamber Orchestra San Antonio Symphony Orchestra San Diego Symphony Orchestra San Francisco Ballet Orchestra San Francisco Opera Orchestra San Francisco Symphony Syracuse Symphony Orchestra Utah Symphony Orchestra
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