

Senza Sordino

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The 2008 ICSOM Conference

by Laura Ross, ICSOM Secretary

Three orchestras, the San Francisco Symphony, the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, and the San Francisco Opera Orchestra, were host to the 2008 ICSOM Conference. at Hotel Kabuki, located in San Francisco's Japantown. Held August 20–23, the Conference was jam packed with presentations, workshops, reports, and opportunities for orchestra delegates and guests to interact with their colleagues from across the U.S.

Following the practice of the last few years, there was a meeting of negotiating orchestras the night before the Conference's opening session. The meeting was very informative and was well attended by delegates and alternates, orchestra members, local officers, Symphonic Services Division (SSD) staff, and Governing Board members.

Wednesday morning, the Governing Board met with new delegates at a breakfast meeting designed to help prepare them for their next four days. The opening session then began with the introduction of officers, guests and attendees. Chairman Bruce Ridge spoke about his travels this past season and the success of ICSOM's two *Calls to Action* to support the Jacksonville and Columbus symphonies during their lockouts. He called attention to the strength and unity within ICSOM and argued for a more positive message in our industry. Chairman Ridge's complete opening remarks can be found online at www.icsom.org.

The highlight of the Conference was keynote speaker Randy Cohen's presentation. Mr. Cohen, the vice president of policy and research for Americans for the Arts (AFTA), presented information about arts in the schools, various publicly funded arts programs, and studies that prove participation in the arts improves performance in school and on tests. Particularly entertaining were some of the AFTA commercials promoting arts advocacy that he shared. ICSOM is looking forward to working with AFTA to increase public support for the arts.

We were pleased that AFM President Tom Lee was able to attend the Conference and that he was joined by International Executive Board (IEB) members Ray Hair (Dallas/Fort Worth Local 72-147 president), Billy Linneman (Nashville Local 257 secretary-treasurer), and Bob McGrew (Houston Local 65-699 secretary-treasurer). All addressed the delegates. Since ICSOM orchestras are represented by 44 of the largest locals in the U.S., we welcome the many local officers who attend the Conference each year, and we especially look forward to improving our communication with all the members of the IEB. We receive a number of compliments from local officers each year commending us on the important information and workshops that are part of every ICSOM Conference. We hope the entire IEB as well as additional orchestra members and local officers will consider attending an ICSOM Conference in the future.

As usual, the first day was filled with a number of reports advising delegates about the numerous services ICSOM provides. We also heard from some of our orchestra representatives who faced great difficulties this past season. On Wednesday we heard from John Wieland, who spoke about the lockout last fall in Jacksonville. Honolulu representatives Steve Flanter and Emma Philips spoke about the payroll problems they dealt with last season. On Thursday, we heard Columbus Symphony delegate Mike Buccicone with Local 103 president and orchestra member Doug Fisher discuss their orchestra's lockout that began June 1. We were also pleased to welcome back Chicago Symphony *Emeritus* member Tom Hall, who spoke about his orchestra's wonderful Alumni Association of former CSO members (and subs and extras that worked and toured with the orchestra over the years). In addition to offering activities and perks to alumni, it also encourages interaction between current and former members. Wednesday evening, attendees were treated to a tour of Davies Symphony Hall and a fabulous mixer hosted by the musicians from San Francisco's symphony, opera, and ballet orchestras and Local 6.

Thursday morning began with Bill Foster's report as chair of the ICSOM Electronic Media Committee. This was followed by a terrific presentation by American Federation of Musicians-Employers' Pension Fund (AFM-EPF) Executive Director Maureen Kilkelly who shared further information regarding the pension fund after last year's presentation by Vinni LoPresti and Will Luebking. We were also quite pleased to have AFM Pension Trustees Tom Lee (chair of the AFM trustees committee), Hal Espinosa (Los Angeles Local 47 president), Lovie Smith-Wright (Houston Local 65-699 president), Melinda Wagner (San Francisco Local 6 former president),

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Chairperson's Report by Bruce Ridge



With the daily onslaught of dire economic news emanating from Wall Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, all Americans find themselves concerned for the future. Symphonic musicians confront these economic issues on an ongoing basis, and it is understandable that at this moment, musicians might feel even greater consternation about the future of their chosen profession. After all, we hear negative prognostications even in the best of times, and we often face a misinformed attitude that would hold that (as Norfolk's *Virginian-Pilot* wrote earlier this year) "In lean times, slashing money for the arts is the right call."

The stronger argument, however, is that the arts play a crucial role in America's national and local economies. The facts are well-established, and have been discussed in these pages frequently in the past few years. The non-profit arts and culture industry in America accounts for over \$166 billion in economic activity every year and provides over 5.7 million jobs. Every dollar that government invests in the arts returns seven dollars to the community.

ICSOM has long sought out partners that could help us spread the message that donating to the arts is not just a gift, it is a tangible investment in the communities where our citizens live, our children learn, and our companies do business. At this time of economic uncertainty, it is more important than ever to invest in the arts so that our cultural institutions can fulfill their potential to strengthen the economic health of our cities.

At the 2007 ICSOM Conference in Minneapolis, the delegates passed a resolution regarding the establishment of a national campaign to increase the public's awareness and interest in classical music. Over the past few years, we have discussed such a campaign with many entities, but we were never successful in generating interest. While the cost of such an endeavor has frequently been cited as insurmountable, it is also true that negativity is so ingrained in our culture that not everyone in our field shares ICSOM's desire to spread a positive message about our future.

I found the lack of interest in pursuing such a national arts advocacy campaign to be very frustrating and disheartening. After all, many industries have elevated their profile quite successfully by understanding the media in a richer way. The slogan "pork...the other white meat" is now part of the national consciousness. While those of us from the South might find it surprising that pork needs promoting, apparently it does. Nationally, the campaign to promote the business of pork producers was a huge success and a great investment. Other businesses have also recognized this need ("The Coffee Achievers", "Got Milk?", etc.)

The orchestral industry has long seemed behind the times when it comes to understanding the media. The field allows a negative spin to dominate, sometimes through reports commissioned from within. Managers constantly express a desire to produce media for less compensation, yet social networking websites that offer free access

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International Conference of Symphony & Opera Musicians

A Player Conference of the American Federation of Musicians
of the United States and Canada, AFL-CIO

www.icsom.org

Orchestras

Alabama Symphony Orchestra
Atlanta Symphony Orchestra
Baltimore Symphony Orchestra
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra
Charlotte Symphony Orchestra
Chicago Lyric Opera Orchestra
Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra
The Cleveland Orchestra
Colorado Symphony Orchestra
Columbus Symphony Orchestra
Dallas Symphony Orchestra
Detroit Symphony Orchestra
Florida Orchestra
Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra
Grant Park Symphony Orchestra
Honolulu Symphony Orchestra
Houston Symphony Orchestra
Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra
Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra
Kansas City Symphony
Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra
Los Angeles Philharmonic
Louisville Orchestra
Metropolitan Opera Orchestra
Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra
Minnesota Orchestra
Nashville Symphony Orchestra
National Symphony Orchestra
New Jersey Symphony Orchestra
New York City Ballet Orchestra
New York City Opera Orchestra
New York Philharmonic
North Carolina Symphony
Oregon Symphony Orchestra
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Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra
Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra
Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra
San Antonio Symphony
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San Francisco Ballet Orchestra
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San Francisco Symphony
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President's Report by Brian Rood



The 2008 ICSOM Conference, held in San Francisco this past August, provided an ideal opportunity to meet with delegates and to learn from our many presenters about important issues that affect ICSOM musicians and their orchestras. Special thanks go to President David Schoenbrun and AFM Local 6 (San Francisco), ICSOM Delegates Thalia Moore, Leslie Ludena, Cathy Payne, alternate delegate Steven D'Amico, and Conference Coordinator Brian Lee for their terrific work and warm hospitality.

Of particular interest was the keynote address/presentation given by Randy Cohen, vice president of Americans for the Arts (AFTA). Mr. Cohen spoke passionately about his organization's efforts to reach out across the nation trumpeting the tremendous positive economic impact and cultural value of the arts. Mr. Cohen showed several creative examples of materials designed to promote arts advocacy that were produced by AFTA for use by the Ad Council and other media outlets. ICSOM has long sought to partner with a national organization that would advocate for symphony orchestras and the arts in general. Now, ICSOM has found a willing partner in AFTA. Not only delegates, but all ICSOM musicians are encouraged to learn more about AFTA's advocacy campaigns and how we can strengthen the ties between our orchestras and communities. A laudable goal would be for each and every community to believe that *its* orchestra is essential to their own local quality of life and ultimately indispensable.

Over the past several years, a key priority for ICSOM has been to counter the negative "gloom and doom" generated by the press, a few orchestra boards, and even other arts organizations. Nowhere have the effects of this negative rhetoric been more visible and damaging than in Columbus and Shreveport.

Earlier this year Stanford Professor Robert Flanagan published his "findings" about professional orchestra budgets and musicians' compensation. Observations regarding this report have been written by ICSOM's chair, president, and secretary, and may be found in the March and July issues of *Senza Sordino*. As is the case with all issues of *Senza Sordino*, these are also available online at www.icsom.org/senzarchive.html.

In the June issue of *Senza* I posed the following question: "Who will be the first management and/or board to use the Flanagan Report against their own musicians during negotiations?" Some industry management leaders immediately expressed skepticism for and annoyance with my question.

Yet the Flanagan Report found its way onto the website home pages of orchestras in both Columbus and Shreveport just weeks after its release. In both cases, there was a clear effort to justify board/management positions that musicians' compensation, complements, and contract length needed to be radically and impetuously reduced.

How many more orchestra tragedies will it take before orchestra industry leadership truly recognizes and takes responsibility for the harmful consequences of issuing such reports? Musicians often hear business analogies when we participate in discussions concerning our orchestras. How many businesses succeed by commissioning and then circulating reports designed to display negative aspects of the very business they aim to promote, let alone using incomplete and flawed data? Would not our collective energies be better spent working to build stronger relationships nationally and within our own communities? ICSOM welcomes the opportunity to work together with AFTA and others who wish to genuinely support and promote the exceptional economic and cultural value our orchestras provide.

On a related note, ICSOM Secretary Ross and I enjoyed participating in a unique strategic planning retreat hosted by AFM Local 7 (Orange County, California) and members of the Pacific Symphony Players Association. Following the conclusion of the ICSOM Conference, Laura and I flew to Orange County where we were joined by SSD Negotiator Chris Durham and ROPA President Carla Lehmeier-Tatum. The Pacific Symphony Players Association and AFM Local 7 are now jointly studying the Pacific Symphony's current service and schedule structure to better understand what the musicians might envision for their future. They are to be commended for being so proactive with negotiations that are several years away as to allow thoughtful strategic planning before the normal crisis mode generally associated with contract negotiations hits. As a side note, this meeting might well have been the first of its kind involving an AFM local, a players' committee, and representatives from SSD, ROPA, and ICSOM.

In early September, ICSOM Chair Ridge and I traveled to the Eastman School of Music for a discussion about Polyphonic.org. Along with committee chairs from several ICSOM orchestras and others, we provided feedback to Polyphonic staff members regarding the impact of the Polyphonic.org website. We agreed that Polyphonic continues to provide a valuable and interesting resource to symphonic musicians, to aspiring musicians still in school, and to others interested in the various aspects of a musician's life.

Finally, I would like to express my utmost admiration of and appreciation to our colleagues in the Columbus Symphony Orchestra for their steadfast resolve and solidarity. Together with Local 103 and its president, Doug Fisher, and with the support of their lead negotiator Len Leibowitz (our own Distinguished ICSOM Legal Counsel), they stood together under the direst of circumstances at great emotional stress and financial personal sacrifice. I am equally proud of the tremendous outpouring of support that came not only from ICSOM musicians but also many other AFM musicians and friends, including Jaap Van Zweeden, the music director of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. We all hope that the Columbus community will nurture the CSO board and management in order to make the changes needed to ensure the survival and continued growth of one of their greatest assets, the Columbus Symphony Orchestra.

Chairperson

(continued from page 2)

to a desired demographic are under-utilized by all but a handful of our orchestras.

One day about 18 months ago, I was reading a national news magazine when I saw a full-page ad with the caption: "Art. Ask for More." It was a clever and eye-catching ad promoting the need for arts education in schools. This was a very exciting discovery for me. Here, in a prominent publication, was an example of a media savvy national advocacy campaign. I saw that it was produced by Americans for the Arts, and I immediately sought them out for more information.

Americans for the Arts (AFTA) is the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America. With 45 years of service, AFTA is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts.

We believe that we have found the partner we need to spread the message that the arts are crucial to the growth of our communities. In fact, our new friends are the ones responsible for undertaking much of the research that has revealed the facts that the arts are an economically sound investment. The AFTA study, *Arts and Economic Prosperity III*, was released in May of 2007. Here at last is an organization dedicated to the cause of arts education, dedicated to promoting the value of the arts in our society, and astute enough to understand the need to work within the political framework to accomplish their goals.

At this year's ICSOM Conference in San Francisco, we were pleased to welcome Mr. Randy Cohen, Vice President of Policy and Research for AFTA. Mr. Cohen is responsible for much of the great research that went in to producing *Arts and Economic Prosperity III*. Mr. Cohen entertained and inspired the delegates by citing indisputable facts that demonstrated the value of the arts in every city across America.

In this edition of *Senza Sordino*, Mr. Cohen has written a fascinating article that speaks to all of the issues of concern that symphonic musicians face in this economy, and how the arts strengthen education and our nation's economy. It is a message that AFTA is working hard to spread, and they continue to develop their national advocacy campaign through new radio and television ads, some of which can be found at

www.AmericansForTheArts.org/public_awareness

The musicians of ICSOM need the Americans for the Arts, but AFTA also needs us. We encourage all of our members to visit the website for the Americans for the Arts at www.artsusa.org or at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

As part of our exciting new relationship with AFTA, we will soon be able to provide free membership in AFTA's "Arts Action Fund". As described on the AFTA website, "*Members of the Arts Action Fund want the arts to be within the grasp of all Americans. Your*



Photo by Laura Ross

Keynote speaker Randy Cohen (right) and ICSOM Chairperson Bruce Ridge at the ICSOM Conference in San Francisco.

membership helps to advance the arts both locally and nationally by supporting pro-arts candidates and giving the arts a voice."

In the coming weeks, you will be receiving information from ICSOM on how you might join the AFTA's Arts Action Fund. We urge you all to consider joining.

We have long recognized that for the arts to survive and flourish, musicians must be activists as well as performers. The current climate of economic distress and negativity requires a renewed activism on the part of every artist.

Throughout the years, ICSOM has been one of the most active and successful advocacy groups around. Now is the time for ICSOM to take the next step and collaborate with a national, non-partisan organization that astutely understands how to use the media and the political system to advocate for the future of the arts in America. We are all excited at the prospect of this relationship. Please speak with your ICSOM delegate and ask for a report on the presentation that Mr. Cohen made at the most recent conference on AFTA.

There is no doubt that this is a critical time for the economy of the United States and the world. There is also no doubt that the arts can play a crucial role in the economic recovery that lies ahead. This is a message that our boards, our managements, and our communities need to hear. Let's get the word out by working with our new friends and partners at the Americans for the Arts.

Senza Sordino is the official voice of ICSOM and reflects ICSOM policy. However, there are many topics discussed in *Senza Sordino* on which ICSOM has no official policy; the opinions thus expressed in *Senza Sordino* are those of the author(s) and not necessarily of ICSOM, its officers or members. Articles and letters expressing differing viewpoints are welcomed.

Conference

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Gary Matts (Chicago Local 10-208 president), and Bill Foster (rank-and-file trustee from the National Symphony) in attendance.

The afternoon sessions included a discussion about the pros and cons of incorporating player associations with San Francisco tax attorney Jim Wesser and observations by Len Leibowitz about the various orchestra bylaws submitted prior to the Conference. A CD of the collected bylaws was distributed to each delegate. The afternoon ended with player conference reports from ROPA President Carla Lehmeier-Tatum, OCSM President Francine Schutzman and RMA President Phil Ayling. Breakout sessions on education, electronic media, health insurance and organizing between negotiations followed in the evening.

Once again the closed town hall meeting for delegates and ICSOM officers on Friday morning was too brief to discuss all of the multiple topics of interest. There have been calls to expand this part of the agenda. In the afternoon, SSD negotiators Chris Durham and Nathan Kahn and SSD Electronic Media Director Debbie Newmark spoke about their activities this past season. San Francisco Symphony General Manager John Kieser then spoke about the orchestra's successful education program, *Keeping Score*, and he included a few clips of programs that focused on Beethoven and Stravinsky. Ron Gallman of the San Francisco Symphony and Leni Boorstin of the Los Angeles Philharmonic spoke about their educational programs—San Francisco's *Adventures in Music* and LA's new Youth Orchestra LA. The rest of the afternoon was devoted to a mock-arbitration session in which six groups served as either arbitrators, union or management representatives, or witnesses, and each group held an arbitration by presenting evidence, questioning witnesses, making opening and closing arguments, and putting the decision into the hands of each set of arbitrators to make their decisions independently.

The final day of the Conference included member-at-large candidate speeches, elections, an updated AFM Diversity Committee report by Lovie Smith-Wright (interim chair of the committee), and voting on

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Photo by Laura Ross

Three past *Senza Sordino* editors join the current one for a photo. From left: Tom Hall (Chicago, retired), Sam Denov (Chicago, retired), Robert Levine (Milwaukee), Richard Levine (San Diego).

Orchestra Newslets

The **North Carolina Symphony** began its season with an outdoor Labor Day concert broadcast on local television. The September schedule included a celebration of Raleigh's new convention center, with the premier of a composition by Robert Ward titled "City of Oaks". Delegate Beth Lunsford reports that the orchestra will record Medtner's Piano Concerto No. 2 with Yevgeny Sudbin as soloist in November. The CD is being produced by BIS Records and will also include Rachmaninov's Concerto No. 3, recorded last season.

Christoph Eschenbach will become music director designate of the **National Symphony** for the 2009–2010 season, concluding a search process that delegate Truman Harris says began about three years ago. Beginning in the fall of 2010, Eschenbach will start a four-year contract as music director.

According to former delegate Brian Ventura, the **Detroit Symphony** has completed an intensive long range strategic planning process. Their season began with Leonard Slatkin officially on board as the new music director. Mr. Slatkin (he insists that the musicians *not* call him Maestro) was in Detroit on the second day of the season to meet with the orchestra and will conduct five subscription weeks this season, beginning in December. He is involved in planning future seasons and is taking an active role in fundraising—especially important in the difficult Michigan economy. The orchestra is also beginning the Honda "Power of Dreams" teaching program, which will supplement the DSO's extensive education program that already includes seven youth orchestra, string, and jazz ensembles.



Photo by Alan Valentine

When Schermerhorn Symphony Center opened in 2006, the **Nashville Symphony** began a tradition of hosting receptions for visiting orchestras, allowing musicians from both orchestras to meet each other and, in some cases, renew friendships. The **San Francisco Symphony** was their latest visitor, on September 28, 2008. From left to right: Bradley Mansell (NSO), Cathy Payne (SFS), Laura Ross (NSO), and Linda Lukas (SFS).

The Arts: Strengthening Education and the Nation's Economy

by Randy Cohen, Vice President of Policy and Research at Americans for the Arts



Pick up any newspaper this week and you will read about the sagging U.S. economy—recession, inflation, the sinking value of the dollar. You will also see hand-wringing articles about America's global competitiveness and creativity—how businesses as diverse as Apple and Proctor & Gamble thrive because of it, and how we'll

lose our international market share without it. In today's 21st century global economy, the competitive business edge belongs to innovators—those providing creative solutions that prosper in the marketplace. Leaders in business, government, and education are getting savvy to what those in the arts have long known: To fuel creativity and innovation, you need to invest in the arts.

Creativity: Integral to Innovation

New research by business scholars demonstrates a greater understanding that creativity is at the leading edge of innovation. In the 2006 report, *Are They Really Ready to Work?*—prepared by The Conference Board for its Fortune 1000 business constituency—U.S. employers point to “creativity and innovation” as one of the top skills needed by new hires to succeed in the workplace. The applied skills that support innovation, such as critical thinking, communications, and problem-solving—all skills commonly acquired in a quality arts education—were, in fact, considered more important than the traditional skills of basic reading, writing, and math. These business leaders further stated that the importance of creativity and innovation would only increase in the future. Putting voice to these findings, Conference Board CEO Jonathan Spector offered the following testimony to Congress: “Innovation, creativity, and related skills such as entrepreneurship are clearly a top concern of senior executives....As innovation is crucial to competition, so is creativity integral to innovation.”

Arts: Integral to Creativity

So crucial were these findings, The Conference Board partnered with Americans for the Arts and the Americans Association of School Administrators (representing the nation's 14,000 school superintendents) to study this issue in greater detail. Those closest to high-school graduates (public school superintendents) and those close to the workforce entrants these graduates become (employers) were surveyed to identify and compare their views surrounding creativity. The first product of this important new strategic alliance is the 2008 report, *Ready to Innovate: Are Educators and Executives Aligned on the Creative Readiness of the U.S. Workforce?* The study makes clear that both business and school leaders are virtually unanimous in rating creativity as increasingly important in U.S. workplaces (97 percent and 99 percent, respectively). The report, however, brings to light both provocative insights and remarkable disconnects between what business and education leaders value versus their actions.

Seventy-two percent of employers say creativity is of “primary concern” when hiring new employees. Yet, 85 percent of this group can't find the applicants they seek. How to find such workers? Both superintendents and employers agree that an “arts degree” is among the most important indicators of creativity when hiring. School superintendents rank the *arts degree* study as the highest indicator of creativity. Employers rank an *arts degree* and *self-employed work* as the top two indicators of creativity, in almost identical proportions. Very few employers test for creativity in the hiring process; a noteworthy 27 percent said they use the candidate's appearance to assess creative ability.

The Value-Action Disconnect

While it is heartening that most respondents feel a responsibility for instilling creativity in the workforce (83 percent of superintendents and 61 percent of employers), researchers found that this sense of duty is not matched by their current offerings: not in the schools, and not in the workplace. Fewer than 1 in 10 companies provide any kind of creativity training options to all their employees; in over half the companies, it is not offered at all. Students in the nation's high schools don't fare much better. Despite findings that the arts play a key role in developing creativity, most high schools offer arts classes on an elective basis only. Creative writing is the sole required course in more than half the districts. Less than 1 in 5 require a music class.

A Role for the Arts

In sharing these data with school superintendents, we hear genuine enthusiasm about the business community's growing understanding of “arts-creativity-innovation” connection. Yet, they express concern that it is these same business leaders who lean on them to cut the arts in order to balance their school budgets. This effect of killing the goose laying the golden eggs is not news to most in the arts community. There are, however, bright spots that provide arts advocates a foothold to make change.

New jobs are being created, such as “Creative Workforce Director” at Big Thought, a Dallas based organization advancing arts education, or the newly created position of “Creative Economy Director” for the State of Massachusetts, as part of a statewide economic development strategy.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has long included arts classes among its requirements for engineering students—understanding that anyone can train an engineer, but it takes a creative one to arrive at innovative solutions and to make quantum leaps in knowledge. Americans for the Arts National Arts Policy Roundtable—a convening of 35 national leaders in business, higher education, philanthropy, and the arts—came to a similar



conclusion at its Sundance Preserve convening in October 2007 when it coined the 21st century prescription to America's economic ills: *Knowledge + Creativity = A Competitive Edge*.

Wisconsin's Lieutenant Governor Barbara Lawton (a member of the 2007 Americans for the Arts National Arts Policy Roundtable) and State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster co-chair the newly formed *Wisconsin Task Force on Arts and Creativity in Education*, established to ensure that the state has the creative workforce and entrepreneurial talent necessary to compete in the new economy. "Creativity and innovation will be the cornerstone of Wisconsin competitiveness in the years ahead," Lawton said. "We must make strategic investments now to ensure Wisconsin has the bright innovators and entrepreneurs we need to drive our state forward."

There is overwhelming agreement among business and education leaders that creativity is an applied skill necessary to succeed in the workforce—the fuel that drives innovation. The task that remains for the arts community is to connect the dots for business, education, and community leaders to help them understand that an investment in arts education is an investment in our economic prosperity.

Improving upon the Status Quo

Musicians are essential to making change. They are our artists, teachers, and advocates. What are the first steps to doing this?

Become the "Messenger." Give your colleagues, school administrators, community leaders the information they need to make the case at school board meetings, in curriculum planning, or talking with parents.

Get the factoids placed into your programs:

- An overwhelming 93% of Americans agree the arts are vital to providing a well-rounded education, according to the 2005 Harris Poll commissioned by Americans for the Arts.
- The arts feed the brain. The Dana Foundation findings from a three-year, coordinated, multi-university study by cognitive neuroscientists show strong links between music, dance, and drama education and cognitive development. Their findings provide evidence that children motivated in the arts develop attention skills and memory retrieval that also apply to other subject areas.
- The fact is: arts education makes a tremendous impact on the developmental growth of every child and helps "level the learning field" across socio-economic boundaries. Art also has proven to make a measurable impact on at-risk youth by deterring delinquent behavior and truancy problems while also increasing overall academic performance. In addition, arts education strengthens student problem-solving and critical-thinking skills, adding to overall academic achievement and school success.
- The nonprofit arts industry generates \$166.2 billion in economic activity, and supports 5.7 million arts jobs in the U.S.

Take Action Yourself. Visit the Americans for the Arts e-advocacy center. Two minutes is all it takes to tell Congress you support the arts and art education. Add your voice to the chorus to ensure that every American has the opportunity to appreciate, value, and participate in all forms of the arts.



Randy Cohen, Vice President of Policy and Research at Americans for the Arts (AFTA), has developed the knowledge tools used to advance the arts in America since 1991. Randy produced the two benchmark economic studies of the U.S. arts industry—Creative Industries: Business & Employment in the Arts, a research and mapping study of the nation's arts businesses using Dun & Bradstreet data; and Arts & Economic Prosperity, the most comprehensive economic impact study of nonprofit arts organizations and their audiences ever conducted. In 2006, he launched the National Arts Policy Roundtable in partnership with Robert Redford and the Sundance Preserve, a convening of national leaders who focus on issues critical to the advancement of American culture. Randy developed the Institute for Community Development and the Arts, which included working with the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities to create Coming Up Taller, the White House report documenting 225 arts programs for youth-at-risk, and with the U.S. Department of Justice to produce the YouthARTS Project, the first national study to statistically document the impact of arts programs on at-risk youth. As a spokesman for Americans for the Arts, Randy has given speeches in 48 states and regularly appears in the news media—including the Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, and on CNN and NPR. Randy's background includes working as a policy and planning specialist for the National Endowment for the Arts, founding the San Diego Theatre for Young Audiences and serving as its managing director, and working in medical research for Stanford University and Scripps Clinic. He is a board member of the Cultural & Heritage Tourism Alliance and Takoma Park Arts & Humanities Commission. Randy lives with his wife and two children in Takoma Park, Maryland.



Visit Americans for the Arts at www.americansforthearts.org or at www.artsusa.org. The nonprofit's website is a veritable treasure chest of research, information, news, and advocacy.

Settlement Stories

Utah Symphony—Negotiations and Settlement Update by Gary Ofenloch and George Brown

How does an orchestra's negotiating committee approach asking management for an extra raise (over and above the CBA guarantee) when the orchestra is facing not only a heavy debt burden but also a residual power vacuum at the top of its administration? The Utah Symphony musicians faced just such a dilemma this year when considering asking management to re-open our previously ratified 2007 contract for a base salary increase. This spring, the administration had just installed a new CEO, marketing, and operations directors, and was still in the middle of a music director search. In addition, an adventurous capital campaign had previously been put on hold owing to the startlingly sudden departure of our CEO just prior to the 2007 contract negotiations, leaving the orchestra essentially rudderless.

In spite of these extenuating circumstances, many aspects of the original 2007 contract talks went incredibly smoothly. In fact, *every* issue outside of base salary was negotiated with nary a hint of rancor. Many issues were resolved with neither attorney at the table (netting cost savings to both sides). In these talks, the musicians saw marked improvements in per diem, pension contributions and seniority pay, as well as in working conditions such as scheduling. We also held onto our health care coverage as it was—at 100%.

However, even with these many successful resolutions, base pay remained a huge hurdle, even to the point of putting the orchestra at risk of a work stoppage. Here, the musicians' attorney, Joseph Hatch, proved extremely invaluable. When the players' committee faced acquiescing to a smaller pay increase than they felt the musicians would accept, Joe successfully negotiated a clause giving the players the ability to re-open contract talks for base pay (only) the following summer for both years two and three of the contract. Mr. Hatch's insertion of that clause may, indeed, have prevented last year's negotiations from hitting a complete impasse. It also provided the recipe for a most interesting summer for our committee, for management, and for newly installed CEO Melia Tourangeau.

One of the stated goals of Keith Lockhart upon his arrival in 1998 was to make the Utah Symphony a destination orchestra—an orchestra that would be capable of both attracting and *retaining* great talent at all levels of the organization. A few years ago, the board even adopted the notion of "destination orchestra" as an integral part of its mission statement.

In the wake of 9/11, arts organizations nationwide took a long hit until the nation began to shake-off its collective malaise. The Utah Symphony was no different. As a result, by 1997 the players went into negotiations reeling from a four-year salary freeze, irrespective of walloping cost of living increases during that time. And in spite of the board's stated intention of attracting and retaining great talent, our newer players were more active than ever in auditioning *out* of Salt Lake. Furthermore, fewer auditionees were coming to town than in earlier years when our contract was more

Columbus Symphony Lockout Ends by Bruce Ridge, ICSOM Chair

On September 22, the musicians of the Columbus Symphony Orchestra (CSO) ratified a three-year contract, bringing an end to one of the most egregious lockouts in the history of American orchestras. While the contract contains many concessions, management's initial proposal to eliminate 22 full-time positions was ultimately withdrawn, and the number of musicians will remain at 53.

The length of the season is greatly reduced, from 46 weeks to 31 weeks in the first year, and 38 weeks in the following years. Base salary decreases from \$55,000 to \$34,400 in year one, and rises to \$45,000 in year three. Pension contributions are also cut, from 8.5% to 4.0%.

On July 23, the Board of the CSO cancelled the season through November, and despite this settlement, the musicians will remain out of work until that time. By then, the span of this lockout will have reached six months. During this period, the citizens of this country's 15th largest city were deprived of their orchestra, but the musicians continued with their mission of community service by staging numerous benefit concerts.

It is exciting news that the CSO will be performing again for their audiences, but there are still difficult times ahead until the resumption of their season. Musicians everywhere hope that the CSO will gain the management and board leadership that such a great orchestra deserves. With innovative and committed management, there is no reason that the CSO should not grow, and hopefully the damage done by the current board leadership will be corrected in the years to come.

The ICSOM Governing Board wishes to thank every musician who made a donation in response to our *Call to Action* which we issued in June. An unprecedented amount of money was raised to assist the Columbus musicians in their cause, and the generosity of ICSOM members and the greater musical community of North America has been inspiring to us all. With each *Call to Action* issued by ICSOM, the response grows stronger. We also wish to thank the AFM Strike Fund Trustees who worked to ensure that the locked out musicians would receive the maximum benefits allowable under the bylaws.

We all hope that the future will be much brighter for the great musicians of the Columbus Symphony.

competitive. Fortunately, our board saw the potential danger in this, saw that we weren't keeping up with our peer orchestras, and so didn't balk when our committee requested a re-opening of the contract. Nevertheless, negotiations with management, concurrent

with new CEO, Melia Tourangeau's first weeks here, were intense. Ultimately, both sides agreed to a proposed 5% salary increase next year (2009–2010, a bump from the previously negotiated 2%), which Ms. Tourangeau felt she could take to her executive committee.

Of course, it helped that some individual members of the board came forward with donations earmarked specifically for player salary raises. Obviously, this supported Tourangeau and COO David Green, who advocated strongly and effectively for our raises. But this also may not have been possible without several years of orchestra committee members being active, voting members of the board. This arrangement forged new relationships between the two sides and snowballed as more players and board members got to know one another over time. The increased individual contact seemed to humanize the process this year, bringing both sides to a better understanding of each others' positions, and supporting a growing sense of trust all around. As a result, the mindset of the board this summer—and of our board president, Pat Richards—was supportive of the idea of a raise. Not only did they believe in the musicians, they knew what they finally had to do to truly adhere to their own mission statement.

So, how did a negotiating committee approach asking for a kicker in their raises when their orchestra was in such a strange and precarious position? In this case, it started with presenting management with a viable proposal; but more importantly, both sides were able to approach the talks from the perspective of partners, not adversaries. Finally, the leadership of Board President Pat Richards was also powerful and instrumental in advocating for the players to the board. As a result, we emerged from talks with support from the highest level of management as well as with a board that cares about the players and about its mission. And we emerged with that kicker to our raises.

National Symphony Ratifies New Four-Year Agreement *By Truman Harris, ICSOM Delegate*

The National Symphony Orchestra Committee (William Foster, chair; Mark Evans; Glenn Garlick; Peter Haase; Jennifer Mondie) negotiated a four-year contract that was ratified by musicians on Labor Day. Annual salary will move from \$107,198 (2007–2008) to \$128,568 (2011–2012), a nearly 20% gain. Weekly scale will rise from \$2,077 to \$2,504 in the fourth year; seniority will increase by the same percentage, bringing the weekly minimum for a player with 20 years of service to \$2,913. Effective June 5, 2012, contributions to the AFM-EPP will increase from the current 8% rate to 8.75% of scale plus seniority wages.

Other improvements include a new 20-minute intermission for a 2½ hour rehearsal, increased from the previous 15-minute interval, and an increase in meal per diem, rising incrementally from \$90 to \$98 in September 2011.

Baltimore Musicians Have New Three-Year Agreement *by Mary Plaine, BSO Union Steward and ICSOM Delegate*

Baltimore Symphony Orchestra musicians started their August hiatus secure in the knowledge that when their contract expired following the gala performance on September 13, 2008, there was already a new three-year agreement in place through September 11, 2011. The contract was ratified by the musicians on August 1 and agreed to by the BSO's board of trustees on August 4. The new agreement contains increases in minimum weekly scale in each of the three years, with scale becoming \$1,560 in the first year (was \$1,500 including a \$40 per week EMG), \$1,640 in the second year, and \$1,731 in the third year. The EMG included in these weekly scale figures is \$50 in the first year and \$40 in the second and third years. The annual salary in the final year of the contract will be \$90,012, up from \$78,000 at the end of the previous contract.

The negotiating committee successfully fought off attempts by the employer to reduce payments to substitute and extra musicians. Their per-service pay will remain at 1/8 of the minimum weekly scale minus the EMG amount.

An important gain for musicians was the agreement to restore the full-time complement of musicians to the traditional 96 players plus two librarians by the expiration of this new contract. In recent contracts, musicians had agreed to keep open a number of vacancies to save the institution on expenses.

The new agreement, which went into effect on September 14, 2008, contains improvements to other areas as well, including vacation and other time off, working conditions, and severance pay. Contributions to the AFM-Employer Pension Fund in the first year will remain at 5%, increasing to 5.5% in the second year and 6% in the third year. These increases will also cover the subs and extra musicians.

Oregon Symphony Settles Amicably with Mediation *By Dolores D'Aigle, ICSOM Delegate*

The Oregon Symphony has ratified a two-year contract. This is the first time in several years that a new contract was settled "on time." The musicians appreciated management's straightforward, efficient discussions.

With the musical leadership of Carlos Kalmar and the management leadership of Elaine Calder, the orchestra has made dramatic progress in recent years in artistic standards, donor support, and ticket sales. However the standard of living for musicians has steadily eroded since 2003, and the orchestra size has diminished from 88 to 76 players.

For this contract, musicians were unsuccessful in restoring the orchestra size, but with the help of federal mediation, a wage settlement was reached of a 5% increase for the 2008–2009 season and

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Settlements

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cost of living increase (CPI-U.S. City Average) for the 2009–2010 season. During this negotiation, our musicians acknowledged the financial difficulties of the orchestra, and our management/board were committed to finding a way to preserve the progress and quality of the institution.

Local 99 officers Ken Shirk and Bruce Fife were invaluable throughout the process.

Honolulu Symphony Settles Before Season Starts *by Steve Flanter, ICSOM Delegate*

On September 3, just 15 minutes before the beginning of the first rehearsal of the 2008–2009 season, the musicians of the Honolulu Symphony completed negotiations of a three-year contract. The new master agreement includes a wage freeze for the first year, followed by increases of 5% and 7% for the 2009–2010 and 2010–2011 seasons, respectively. The agreement provides for increases in per diem, and a change in the way seniority pay is calculated (formerly a specified dollar amount, it will now be a percentage of weekly scale). It also includes a contract re-opener for the 2009–2010 season for working conditions and other non-wage issues.

Washington National Opera Orchestra *by Peter de Boor, ICSOM Delegate*

On August 26, the Washington National Opera Orchestra (Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra) ratified a three-year agreement with Opera management. Negotiations had been generally cordial since starting in late May but seemed in July to have ground to a halt. With contract expiration and the beginning of the new season both approaching in early September, both sides agreed to meet one last time.

The Opera has been operating in deficit for many years, and the accumulated deficit is approaching \$12 million. In the face of this, management proposed an agreement in which each year became successively worse for the orchestra, with shrinking annual and weekly work guarantees, a reduction in the third year in the number of productions (for the foreseeable future) and even a reduction (by attrition) in the orchestra's complement. Yet, they were proceeding apace with their plans to produce the company's first-ever *Ring* cycle, in the fall of the second year.

The Opera is both blessed and cursed with a long-term lease of the Kennedy Center Opera House for 26 weeks of each year in the heart of the performing season. Certainly this is prime local arts real estate, but it comes at a high fixed cost (as they reported to us across the

table). On the other hand, the Opera's lease has repeatedly been put forward by the Kennedy Center as the main reason that they were not able to put on more weeks of ballet (which forms the bulk of our income from the Kennedy Center).

While the negotiating committee (aided by DILC Lenny Leibowitz) recognized our inability to force the Opera to produce more than it was able, we felt it was imperative for management to shrink the season in calendar time as well as work time. Not only would it allow our members to try to find other freelance work in the area, it would allow the Opera to give up time in the hall, so that the Kennedy Center had a chance to present other work for us.

When we arrived for the final day of negotiations, the Opera presented us with a detailed proposed schedule for the third year, showing a reduction of three weeks in the season. It was clear that management had heard our concerns and was seeking accommodation with us. In the end we accepted a reduction in the weekly guarantee, but only temporarily. We also accepted a large cut in the annual guarantee in terms of hours (though not as large as originally proposed, and we managed a slight increase in the annual guarantee in terms of dollars), and a wage freeze for 18 months (albeit with a sizeable raise in the third year). And the proposed reduction in the complement was dropped completely. Considering the financial realities of the company, we feel it is an excellent contract.

Pittsburgh Symphony *by Joe Rounds, Orchestra Committee Chair*

The Pittsburgh Symphony is pleased to announce a three-year trade agreement with its musicians. The rather modest salary and pension increases of 3% per year coupled with many improvements in working conditions received overwhelming support from the membership. Our orchestra has recently faced two concessionary contracts with cuts in pay, third-year snap backs that were re-opened, and a diminished size of the ensemble. In spite of the current financial hardships faced by this country, we restored the number of players, and we did not make any concessions in health care, or in pension.

This contract shows an organization that has regained its footing and core values and is ready to start looking forward. We are relieved to be in position to take responsible, steady steps toward maintaining the stature of this great institution.

Our orchestra committee served with professionalism and enthusiasm, and certainly should have acknowledgement for weathering the storm. We were represented by Micah Howard, Stephanie Tretick, Rhian Kenny, Dennis O'Boyle, David Sogg, Joann Vosburgh, and Joe Rounds as chair. We would also like to acknowledge the contributions of attorney Louis Kushner and local union president George Clewer.

Adopted Resolutions of the 2008 ICSOM Conference

Resolution #1—Jan Gippo

Whereas, ICSOM Chairman Emeritus Jan Gippo served ICSOM as its chairperson from 2002 to 2006 and has served his orchestra, the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, in a number of capacities including Chair of the Musician's Council, member and Chair of the Negotiating Committee and ICSOM delegate; and

Whereas, While serving ICSOM and the St. Louis Symphony in these various leadership positions, he did so with great ability and enthusiasm; and

Whereas, He also did much to champion the stature and profile of his chosen instrument, the piccolo, by commissioning numerous solo works and leading countless master classes; and

Whereas, After 36 years with the St. Louis Symphony, Jan begins a new phase in his career, his retirement; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Delegates to the 2008 ICSOM Conference once again express their respect, admiration and gratitude to Jan Gippo for his remarkable body of work on behalf of the members of the St. Louis Symphony, the members of ICSOM, and the flute/piccolo field at large, and wish him every good wish in his future endeavors.

Submitted by the Governing Board



Resolution #2—Education Committee

Whereas, Now, more than ever before, the entire ICSOM membership stands at a cultural crossroads, ironically struggling for dollars and concertgoers in a nation that is both wealthy and culturally knowledgeable; and

Whereas, In the firm belief that a healthy symphonic profession can lead to successful orchestras in thriving communities, and to a richer nation; and

Whereas, In acknowledgment of the magnitude of importance, as well as the wealth of information that supports this importance, of arts education and specifically music education, for the ongoing health of our profession; and

Whereas, ICSOM is committed to doing what is in its power to further the cause of music education for artists and audiences alike; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Delegates to the 2008 ICSOM Conference hereby direct the ICSOM Governing Board to form an ICSOM Education Committee; and, be it further

Resolved, That it will be the responsibility of this Committee, in collaboration with the Governing Board and Delegates, to research education-related topics, and to formulate directives and recommendations for the advancement of education and the well-being of our profession.

Submitted by the Governing Board



Resolution #3—Harry Chanson

Whereas, Harry Chanson served as President of Santa Barbara Local 308 for 66 years, beginning in 1942; and

Whereas, In 1952 AFM President James Petrillo appointed Harry to serve as chairman of one of the most important convention committees in the Federation – the AFM Finance Committee; and

Whereas, Harry continued to serve as chairman of the Finance Committee for more than 50 years through the 2007 AFM Convention; and

Whereas, Harry was one of the most respected officers in the AFM, a man whose counsel was sought by countless AFM officers, delegates and members over the years; and

Whereas, The entire Federation mourned his passing in May and celebrated his many contributions to the AFM; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Officers and Delegates to the 2008 ICSOM Conference offer their admiration and condolences to his wife June Gaddis Chanson; and, be it further

Resolved, That ICSOM send a contribution of \$250 to the Harry Chanson Music School Fund in his honor.

Submitted by the Governing Board



Resolution #4—James Nickel

Whereas, James Nickel has served ICSOM as member-at-large for the past three years as well as serving as the Dallas Symphony's ICSOM Delegate; and

Whereas, He served in both these capacities with great enthusiasm and commitment; and

Whereas, While continuing to inspire his colleagues, he managed to raise a family and win a new position in the National Symphony Orchestra; and

Whereas, His new position and his growing family must take precedence as he steps down from his responsibilities on the ICSOM governing board; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Officers and Delegates to the 2008 ICSOM Conference offer their admiration, respect and gratitude to James Nickel for all his work on their behalf and it is hoped that he will one day return to ICSOM in whatever capacity he might be persuaded to accept.

Submitted by the Governing Board



Resolution #5—Theresa Naglieri

Whereas, Theresa Naglieri has served the American Federation of Musicians for more than 50 years; and

Whereas, She began her employment as a stenographer-typist on June 24, 1958, two days after she graduated from high school; and

Whereas, Theresa's talent was recognized early when she was promoted to Executive Secretary, having worked under seven AFM Presidents—Herman D. Kenin, Hal Davis, Victor Funtealba, Martin Emerson, Mark Massagli, Steve Young and Tom Lee; therefore, be it

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Resolutions

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Resolved, that the Delegates to the 2008 ICSOM Conference acknowledge Theresa Naglieri's outstanding work for the American Federation of Musicians and offer her their thanks and best wishes for continued success in the future.

Submitted by the Governing Board



Resolution #6—Columbus Symphony Orchestra

Whereas, The Columbus Symphony Orchestra, established 57 years ago, has developed into one of the nation's great orchestras; and

Whereas, The Orchestra has served the Central Ohio community with distinction and commitment; and

Whereas, The current Board leadership has embarked on a campaign during this year's collective bargaining negotiations with the Union, to destroy the very foundations of the orchestra's artistic success, including a reduction in season length and other compensation to the musicians, which will surely ensure that its best musicians will be forced to leave the orchestra, and which will substantially inhibit its ability to attract the best available candidates for employment; and

Whereas, The imposition of such reductions and intimidation of musicians of this orchestra will reverberate throughout the field; and

Whereas, The dedication and courage of these musicians to resist these destructive measures deserves the support and admiration of everyone in the industry; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Delegates to the 2008 ICSOM Conference denounce the actions of the Board of the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, and express their unconditional support and empathy for the musicians of this great orchestra in their struggle to maintain the level of artistic excellence it has achieved for their sake and the sake of symphony, opera and ballet musicians in the US and Canada.

Submitted by the Governing Board, adopted by unanimous consent



Resolution #7, as amended—Hearing Protection

Whereas, Recent studies suggest that as many as 40 percent of musicians have some form of tinnitus, a disease of the microscopic nerve endings in the inner ear that causes sufferers to hear ringing, buzzing, humming, roaring or chirping sounds in their head; and

Whereas, Prolonged exposure to sounds over 90 decibels is a recognized cause of tinnitus and permanent hearing loss; and

Whereas, The sound produced by some music played by symphony orchestras, and especially that produced by and with visiting Pops artists, can consistently measure over 110 decibels on-stage, which risks hearing damage in as little as fifteen minutes exposure; and

Whereas, The aural health and safety of musicians is of critical importance to their continuing ability to perform and earn their living; and

Whereas, The use of hearing protection such as earplugs and sound shields can reduce the damage done by prolonged exposure to sounds over 90 decibels; therefore, be it

Resolved, That ICSOM work with the League of American Orchestras to encourage research and identify hearing protection that is discreet and effective without negatively affecting musicians' ability to perform at their highest level, encourage orchestra managements to invest in hearing test screenings, as well as the best hearing protection for the musicians in their orchestras, and to encourage musicians to use that hearing protection.

Submitted by Emily Watkins Freudigman (San Antonio) and Matthew Comerford (Chicago Lyric)



Resolution #8—Shreveport Symphony Orchestra

Whereas, The city of Shreveport, LA is in the midst of an economic boom as a result of the discovery of natural gas reserves in the area; and

Whereas, The city should be proud of its great symphony orchestra; and

Whereas, Despite the fortuitous confluence of these treasures, the Board and Management of the Shreveport Symphony Orchestra (SSO) has nevertheless demanded that the musicians of the SSO accept a seventy-five percent (75%) reduction in their already meager annual income of approximately \$12,000, to approximately \$3,000; and

Whereas, Such a reduction would result in the virtual demise of this marvelous orchestra, as the musicians leave to find other employment which would provide them with a living wage; and

Whereas, Those musicians have steadfastly refused to accept such a result despite the intimidation and economic coercion of the Board and Management; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Delegates to the 2008 ICSOM Conference deplore the disgraceful treatment of the musicians by the SSO Board and Management and urge that they reconsider their destructive behavior; and, be it further

Resolved, That the Delegates express their support and admiration for the gallant stand of these courageous and talented musicians, and applaud their refusal to give in to these outrageous demands.

Submitted by the Governing Board



Resolution #9, as amended—Flanagan Report and Its Abuse

Whereas, The Mellon Foundation commissioned a study and report of the finances of symphony orchestras; and

Whereas, Professor Robert Flanagan of the Stanford Graduate School of Business was selected to do the study; and

Whereas, The report issued by Professor Flanagan was based on erroneous and incomplete assumptions which resulted in conclusions which were consequently flawed in a number of respects including that the compensation paid to the musicians of U.S. orchestras was a major, if not virtually the sole cause of the financial difficulties of these orchestras; and

Whereas, The conclusions of the report have been denounced by most professionals in the field, including orchestra managers of some of the largest and most prestigious orchestras in the nation; and

Whereas, Despite these denunciations, some managers and board members

have chosen to use these erroneous conclusions to support their demands for reductions in orchestras, as well as severe cuts in musician compensation and working conditions, as evidenced by the boards of the Columbus and Shreveport symphony orchestras; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Delegates to the 2008 ICSOM Conference decry this deliberate obfuscation of the actual causes of the financial difficulty of some orchestras and urge that the AFM, the League of American Orchestras, and other interested professionals in the field likewise speak out about this disingenuous behavior of those who would continue to use the false conclusions of this report to the detriment of symphony, opera and ballet musicians in North America.

Submitted by the ICSOM Governing Board



Resolution #10—Domestic Partner Benefits

Whereas, Many ICSOM orchestras offer domestic partner benefits with the intention of providing equal benefits for all musicians working under an orchestra’s collective bargaining agreement; and

Whereas, Unlike the case for opposite-sex married spouses, the Internal Revenue Code treats the value of domestic partner benefits as taxable “imputed income” to the employees who receive these benefits; and

Whereas, Contributions by employees toward domestic partner coverage cannot be paid from pre-tax dollars the way that contributions from opposite-sex married employees can; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the 2008 ICSOM Conference urges the ICSOM Governing Board to prepare and distribute to all member orchestras relevant information regarding this discrimination in the current federal tax laws affecting orchestras with negotiated domestic partner benefits; and, be it further

Resolved, That the Conference encourages all ICSOM member orchestras to become educated on the inequitable tax implications in their individual states, and to discuss these findings with their managements with the aim to address this situation such that for musicians who enroll their domestic partners under member orchestra’s health insurance plan, the employer will “gross-up” the employee’s salaries to the level where such employees will bear no more tax consequences than married employees who opt to cover their spouses.

Submitted by John Koen (Philadelphia), Leslie Ludena (San Francisco Opera), Mary Plaine (Baltimore), Warren Powell (Florida Orchestra), and Bob Wagner (New Jersey)



Resolution #11—Health Care Consultant/Advisor

Whereas, The topics of health care insurance and other benefits are some of the most important and most costly issues orchestra musicians face both during and between negotiations; and

Whereas, Many negotiation committees have recognized the need to hire independent consultants/advisors to educate and advise the musician representatives in the area of health care insurance and other benefits; and

Whereas, It would be beneficial to many negotiating committees and their musicians to have access to a knowledgeable consultant/advisor in the areas of health care insurance and other benefits, a consultant/advisor who knows

our industry and understands our specific issues; and

Whereas, Such an individual would also be valuable in evaluating an orchestra’s existing benefits coverage and brokers’ fees; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the delegates to the 2008 ICSOM Conference urge the Governing Board to work with SSD to retain a health care insurance and benefits consultant/advisor to assist orchestras in the education of health insurance options and the preparation of information for bargaining with the employer.

Submitted by Mary Plaine (Baltimore) and Robert Wagner (New Jersey)



Resolution #12—Laura Brownell

Whereas, Laura Brownell has served the American Federation of Musicians for 15 years, first as the head of SSD’s Canadian office and, for the past 4 years, as Assistant to the President and Director of the Symphonic Services Division: and

Whereas, During her career with the AFM, Laura Brownell worked for the interests of North American symphonic musicians with intelligence, passion, and style; and

Whereas, Laura Brownell has accepted a new position with the Society of Energy Professionals, IFPTE Local 160, a union representing electrical power engineers in Ontario; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the delegates to the 2008 ICSOM Conference express their admiration and thanks for her work on their behalf over the past 15 years, extend to her their congratulations on her new position, and express the hope that she will not lose touch with the symphonic field and will, in the future, find time to be able to continue her involvement with the orchestra industry.

Submitted by David Angus (Rochester) and Christian Woehr (Saint Louis)



Resolution #13—Change in RMA Conference Status

Whereas, The delegates to the 2007 ICSOM Conference passed a resolution urging “the Recording Musicians Association and the current administration of the AF of M to meet together in a spirit of unity, put aside their differences, and achieve the higher goal of reunification and solidarity for the greater good of all of the members of the AFM and their families”; and

Whereas, The relationship between the RMA and the AFM IEB has continued to deteriorate; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Delegates to the 2008 ICSOM Conference reiterate their call for dialog and comity between the RMA and the AFM IEB; and, be it further

Resolved, That the Delegates to the 2008 ICSOM Conference express their strong opposition to any change in the conference status of the RMA and their wholehearted and continuing support of the efforts of the ICSOM Governing Board to restore comity within the AFM family and maintain the conference status of all currently recognized player conferences.

Submitted by Larry Wolfe (Boston), Brad Mansell (Nashville), Ethan Silverman (New York City Ballet), and John Koen (Philadelphia), adopted by unanimous consent

Conference

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the various resolutions presented by the Governing Board and individual delegates. The Saturday member-at-large/delegate luncheon, where orchestras assigned to each member-at-large sit together and discuss issues of mutual interest, was again a Conference highlight. There is always a great deal of interaction among the delegates, and it has been a very positive addition to the Conference.

Since Chairman Bruce Ridge, Treasurer Michael Moore and *Senza Sordino* Editor Richard Levine ran unopposed, they were re-elected by acclamation. Meredith Snow (who was unable to attend the Conference due to a family emergency) and Paul Gunther were re-elected to two-year terms as members-at-large, and Matthew Comerford, who had been appointed to fill the member-at-large position vacated by James Nickel until the Conference, was elected to fill that one-year vacancy.

Resolutions adopted at the Conference included recognition of ICSOM Chairman *Emeritus* Jan Gippo's retirement from the Saint Louis Symphony; establishment of an ICSOM education committee; acknowledgment of the passing of Local 308 President Harry Chanson, along with a contribution of \$250 to

the Harry Chanson Music School Fund; recognition of the service of former member-at-large James Nickel, who recently won a new position in the National Symphony; congratulations to AFM Executive Secretary Theresa Naglieri for 50 years of service and to Laura Brownell who recently stepped down as SSD Director. Other resolutions gave special recognition to the musicians of the Columbus and Shreveport symphonies, and condemned their treatment by their respective boards; denounced the Flanagan Report; called on ICSOM to work with managers to identify and improve orchestra musician hearing protection problems; requested information regarding domestic partner benefits; and recommended that a health care insurance and benefits consultant be identified and retained to assist orchestras. Once again there was a call for unity between the AFM IEB and the RMA. The text of all adopted Conference resolutions can be found starting on page 11 in this issue of *Senza Sordino*.

Next year's ICSOM Conference will be hosted by the Virginia Symphony and Local 125. It is scheduled for August 19–22, 2009 in Norfolk, Virginia. The delegates also approved Houston, Texas as the location of the 2010 ICSOM Conference.