



UNA VOCE

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OCSM (the Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians) is the voice of Canadian professional orchestral musicians. OCSM's mission is to uphold and improve the working conditions of professional Canadian orchestral musicians, to promote communication between its members, and to advocate on behalf of the Canadian cultural community.

Editorial

by Barbara Hankins

What can twenty-five to forty people accomplish sitting for five days in a room together, talking and being talked to?

The delegates and executive members work hard at the conference, and definitely earn their expense-paid trip (funded by your union work dues and OCSM dues). Often there is laughter and on rare occasions, tears. Sometimes eyes glaze over with the effect of western time zone origins or late night hospitality room chats. But often what is accomplished will only be known when delegates return home.

The delegates' duties continue through the year as they represent your orchestra through such activities as distributing this newsletter, assisting with a conductor evaluation survey for managers, and participating in on-line discussions.

By now you will have received your delegate's conference report, so some of the material in this *Una Voce* issue may sound familiar. This conference issue includes summaries of our guest speakers on "Advocacy" as well as tips on how to write your own advocacy letter. On behalf of all the OCSM members, David Brown wrote an excellent letter to the Detroit Symphony's Board Chair, included here with a response and update from DSO oboist Shelley Heron.

Len Leibowitz's article was written a few years ago, but it still raises viable concerns about peer review – a topic discussed in depth at this year's conference.

We encourage you to take a close look and find out more about what OCSM is doing to fulfill its mission, and how you can become involved.

OCSM 2010 conference

By Robert Fraser

The mid-town Holiday Inn in Montreal was the site of this year's OCSM conference, held from August 11 to 15. This location was auspicious in that the east side of the hotel overlooked the construction site of the Montreal Symphony's and L'Orchestre Métropolitain's new home,

"L'Adresse Symphonique." It is certainly exciting to see the hall take shape; it will open in September 2011. Local 406 of the CFM/FMC (La Guilde des Musiciens/ennes du Québec) and the musicians of the Montreal Symphony graciously hosted our hospitality events.

Advocacy was a key theme in this year's conference. We had a bi-national perspective on arts advocacy, with presentations from Randy Cohen of Americans for the Arts (a presenter at the previous ICSOM conference) and Alain Pineau of the Canadian Conference for the Arts (CCA). The history of the CCA goes back to the 1940s; their efforts led, in part, to the creation of the Canada Council, our federally-funded peer-reviewed arms-length funding agency. It was interesting to have these two presenters on the same day; we benefitted from hearing both the extensive research and strategies of the US arts lobby and the historical perspective and current priorities of the Canadian lobby. On the same day, we also had presentations from Katherine Carleton, Executive Director of Orchestras Canada, and Daniel Swift, a music officer of the Canada Council, adding their perspectives to the discussion.

As a result, OCSM is adding its voice to that of the AFM in a number of lobbying initiatives: improved policy for carry-on instruments on Canadian air carriers, increased funding to the Canada Council, amendments to copyright legislation that will allow for greater revenues into the neighbouring rights stream, and the usual work of advocacy in our own provinces and cities.



Conference attendees enjoying the hospitality of local 406.

AFM officers and staff were on hand for their annual contribution to the conference. We were pleased that newly elected AFM President Ray Hair was able to make his first Canadian visit, and we look forward to working with him in the days ahead. V-P from Canada Bill Skolnik was on hand for the entire conference. As a result of AFM Convention action we can now refer to ourselves as the Canadian Federation of Musicians (CFM) when doing business north of the border. Bill brought us up to speed on CFM initiatives, including new media agreements, continued lobbying to ease difficulties Canadian have in working in the USA, continued work on neighbouring rights, and our coalitions with other trade unions. We also had excellent presentations from our own SSD staff, Mark Tetreault and Bernard Leblanc, and a conference call presentation from David Herring on the new online wage chart tools. Our own legal counsel, Michael Wright, gave a presentation on peer-review, and worked with Mark at our negotiating orchestras workshop. Peer-review committees are relatively new in Canadian orchestras, and as a result have little legal precedent. The closest area where case law exists is in university peer-review committees, and Michael's presentation cited examples from their case law. Of particular importance is the setting of standards, policies, and procedures for review, as arbitrators tend to focus on the process of a review, rather than the result. Musicians were encouraged to defend a colleague if the procedure was not fair, even for the worst player. In every province, everyone has the right to go to an arbitrator if there is procedural irregularity. Even if the contract states it, results of a decision can't be "final and binding."

The AFM-EPW Fund (Canada) gave an actuarial presentation, similar to one given at the 2007 conference in Quebec City. This was given by one of their local actuaries, Geneviève Lussier. This presentation was a good primer for delegates, explaining the differences between the various types of pension plans and how actuaries make assessments on the long-term health of the fund. The new name for the fund was announced: Musicians' Pension Fund of Canada / Caisse de Retraite des Musiciens du Canada.

As always, the delegates gave their annual round-table reports, and one entire day of the conference was devoted to "Conference Topics" – these topics emerge from the delegate reports, or are ongoing topics that need to be revisited annually. Examples include archival recording and other new media agreements, health and safety issues, social media networking, immigration problems faced by non-Canadians joining our orchestras, the working conditions and status of extra musicians, orientation programmes for new musicians, and, of course, the aforementioned areas of advocacy that OCSM is working on. We also hear from our friends at ICSOM and ROPA, and add our voice in support of orchestras in our sister conferences, especially the Detroit Symphony at this difficult time.

Quotes of the Conference

Bill Skolnik: "I wish I had an OCSM for rock, jazz, chamber, and folk musicians. Those musicians are dominated by producers."

It's 7:00 p.m. on Saturday and we're all hungry and tired. Francine is valiantly working through the Conference Topic List. Next point: "Apathy." Francine says, "Let's do 'Apathy' tomorrow."

Advocacy in focus: Lobbying takes centre stage

by Matt Heller

Our orchestras continually acknowledge their government and community funders – and rightly so – yet the people fighting for that funding get very little recognition. At the Montreal conference, delegates heard from several of these people: Katherine Carleton, Executive Director of Orchestras Canada (OC); Alain Pineau, National Director of the Canadian Conference of the Arts (CCA); and Randy Cohen, VP for Local Arts Advancement, Americans for the Arts (AFA), who delivered an engaging and mobilizing keynote speech. Together, they gave a nuanced perspective on our priorities and challenges under the current government, as well as the many ways that individual musicians can join the advocacy battle.

Advocacy priorities

Alain Pineau describes the CCA as a "network of networks," uniting arts organizations across all disciplines, from dance troupes to art museums. He spoke of arts advocates "trying to sing from the same hymnbook" – to choose the issues that matter most to Canadian artists, and those with the best chances of success. High on that list, of course, is the funding of the Canada Council for the Arts, CBC, and provincial arts grants. As Canada Council Music Officer Daniel Swift told us, funding has remained stable but there is "no indication of additional funding on the horizon." For these levels to increase, it would seem, we need to make a better case before the public about the value of arts funding. For this reason, Pineau gave this month's National Policy Conference the theme "Artists: Powering the creative economy?"

New copyright legislation now before Parliament (Bill C-32) could have a dramatic impact on this creative economy. At stake is whether, in an era of internet media consumption, we will still have a model that rewards content producers. Alain Pineau argued against exemptions that have entered the bill, including the so-called "YouTube exemption" which allows re-purposing content.

VP Bill Skolnik and the AFM are also advocating on this issue, and particularly on levies of blank media and

internet service providers (ISPs). Canadian law still only levies the purchase of blank CDs and DVDs, even though computer hard drives and MP3 players have become the most common places to store music, and store vast amounts of it levy-free. Similarly, ISPs transfer enormous amounts of copyrighted content, without any organized means of policing those copyrights or compensating the producers. In Europe, ISPs are responsible for policing copyright, which results in better protection for their creative industries.

Other issues drawing advocacy attention are tax code incentives for donations; a new touring initiative to replace the recently expired ProMarts; tightened work permit regulations which hamper the hiring of foreign musicians; and foreign ownership of broadcast satellite and telecoms. Pineau emphasized the importance of keeping media under Canadian ownership, and maintaining regulations favouring Canadian content – without such regulations, we build infrastructure only to drown in a sea of foreign content. And of course, all of these issues are impacted by the abandonment of the long-form census, which threaten arts organizations' ability to account for their full economic impact.

Joining the battle

This is a difficult time for advocacy, Pineau made clear, with a government skeptical of what they see as special interest lobbying. In such a climate, it is essential to define the arts as a mainstream cause, with broad support from all walks of life. Randy Cohen of Americans for the Arts (<http://www.americansforthearts.org>) shared some persuasive arguments why arts funding should be part of the solution in good economic times as well as bad.

An AFA study measured the annual economic impact of arts organizations and their audiences at \$166 billion. The impact of cultural tourism is particularly significant – 30 per cent of audience members came from outside the county, and these tended to spend twice as much at restaurants, hotels, and other local businesses. Cohen encouraged us to talk to local businesspeople, like the owners of restaurants, bars, and shops, and encourage them to spread the message that the arts are essential to their small businesses.

Larger businesses (and cities hoping to lure such businesses) also have a deep interest in promoting a vibrant culture. Another AFA study found that employers prioritized creativity above every other quality in prospective employees – even reading, writing, and arithmetic. As Cohen pointed out, creative people are creative in all spheres, and are drawn to cities where the arts are prominent and diverse.

The arts play a huge role in educating a creative workforce as well. Research has consistently demonstrated improved test scores by students who actively participate in the arts, improvements which hold up when controlling for the families' levels of affluence and education. Even

hospitals have seen improved outcomes from a musician visit the night before a procedure in Tallahassee, pediatric CT scans after such “musical interventions” had a 90 per cent success rate, saving an average of \$567 per patient.

Statistics are powerful tools when arguing for the arts, particularly on economic grounds. However, Cohen, Carleton, and Pineau each emphasized that nothing takes the place of a message from someone whose life is directly impacted. Especially in a government skeptical of organizations, individual letters are taken seriously; even a brief statement of views can be effective if written in an assertive, personal voice. Encourage your friends and family to make the case for the arts as well – among politicians of all parties. As we near an election, it becomes increasingly important to put arts advocacy before the public and the politicians fighting for their votes.

For more tips, please see the accompanying piece on “Being an Effective Advocate” by David Brown. You can find contact information for your MP at the Canadian Arts Coalition website (<http://www.canadianartscoalition.com>), and advocacy resources are also available at the websites of the Canadian Conference for the Arts (<http://www.ccarts.ca>) and Orchestras Canada (<http://orchestrascanada.org>).

Being an effective advocate

by David G. Brown

OCSM has approximately 1100 members, so if each of us wrote a few letters each season we could have a significant impact in our arts advocacy initiatives. Although it is demoralizing at times to feel like we have to justify our existence, some of the recent news around the world and also here at home shows how the arts are still often viewed as a luxury that can be cut whenever a fiscal crisis looms. It is therefore very important for us to be proactive and to increase our efforts in this area.

We are asked to take part in many diverse advocacy efforts on almost a daily basis. There are so many worthwhile causes it can seem overwhelming. Usually we sign online petitions, and perhaps we are also encouraged to include a personalized line or two. With everyone being so busy, taking the extra time to write a personal letter counts so much more, as it is clearly indicative of the strength of your convictions. Chances are if you are moved to write a letter you are feeling quite impassioned, and if your letter is compelling it should resonate with the reader and have more impact.

Things to consider in writing your letter:

- Identify an individual (i.e., a civic, provincial, or federal politician) and address him or her personally.
- The letter need not be long but the tone should be respectful; you want to convey the fact that you are a thoughtful, rational person.

- Make clear, well-considered points.
- Wherever possible, try to compliment the governments and institutions you are contacting for things they are doing well. Show your understanding of their issues (fiscal prudence, balancing budgets, etc.) before taking them to task.
- Include or refer them to compelling research that supports your position
- Be factual and don't exaggerate.
- Give examples of the benefits that will result from adopting your suggestions, or the negative things that will happen if policies to which you object are implemented.
- Give your letter a personal touch by including an individual story, an observation, or an account that helps to illustrate your position.
- Ask at least one question that requires a response.

OCSM responds to Detroit Symphony crisis

To: Stanley Frankel, Chair, Detroit Symphony Orchestra

Dear Mr. Frankel and members of the Detroit Symphony Board of Directors,

This letter is written on behalf of the Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians, which represents 1100 professional classical musicians performing in twenty Canadian orchestras.

We are certainly aware of the impact that the financial recession has had in the United States and, in particular, the significant slump in the auto manufacturing sector which has impacted so strongly upon your fiscal resources. We also recognize the level of performance excellence which your orchestra has maintained for many years. The Detroit Symphony is routinely rated as being one of the top ten orchestras in the United States. This outstanding achievement has been reached through decades of dedication from board members, management and musicians alike. Some of our members have performed frequently with the Detroit Symphony and we are very concerned to hear about the current plight of your highly regarded cultural institution. It has been disturbing to learn recently that this exceptional organization, which other orchestras have admired and envied, is now in such severe financial circumstances that the future of the orchestra is in grave jeopardy.

We can only urge you to do everything in your power to involve your board and the greater community to address your issues in a creative and productive manner. Your fiscal problems are undeniable but the future of the orchestra is paramount. Detroit is desperately in need of new models for urban renewal and economic invigoration. Creativity and inspiration are essential ingredients for the new approach that is required.

The arts are integral to this process and your stewardship at this transitional time can ensure that the Detroit Symphony survives to remain a source of inspiration and delight for future generations.

Musicians are not assembly line workers that can be replaced by machines. They rely on each other to create the finest quality in their finished product and therefore they are only as good as their weakest link. This is why great orchestras are so vigilant about hiring the best possible candidates whenever there is an opening and also doing whatever they can to ensure that their performers will stay. An orchestra benefits greatly from internal stability and so your demand to remove tenure provisions from your collective agreement is an extreme, dismaying concept to which all professional orchestra musicians would be adamantly opposed. The consequences of implementing such an idea would be so artistically destructive that even proposing it as a point of collective bargaining illustrates how profound the separation between the artistic and business aspects of your organization must be. You may never again have a great orchestra if the morale of the musicians is destroyed by excessive pay cuts and severe reductions in working conditions. It appears that the members of your orchestra are cognizant of your financial affairs and have indicated that they are willing to enter into discussions of how to address your problems. It is much more difficult to rebuild than to maintain what you already have but, if this is to be your approach, then the dramatic loss in quality which must ensue if the orchestra survives at all will be a profound loss not only for your community but also your entire country.

In closing we urge you once again to do all that you can to avert having to preside over the tragic demise of your orchestra.

Sincerely, David Brown

* * *

Dear David,

Please let the musicians of OCSM know how much we appreciate their support. It helps us in our fight to know that we are supported by our colleagues, not only in the USA, but in Canada as well.

Please know that we remain strong in our resolve as we enter the third week of our strike. This will not be a short strike as management has already cancelled performances into November, but with everyone's help we will continue to impress upon the leadership of the orchestra that, for many reasons, Detroit cannot afford to lose the DSO.

Thank you, again, for writing a great letter to Stanley Frankel.

All the best,
Shelley Heron
DSO oboist and Musicians' webmaster

DSO strike update

by Shelley Heron on behalf of
the Musicians of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

As of this writing we are in entering the fifth week of our strike and the sixth week without pay. With so much at stake for other orchestras as well as the Detroit Symphony, our situation has hit the national stage with articles appearing in major newspapers around the country and a multitude of blog sites weighing in.

Our biweekly, self-produced concerts are playing to capacity audiences, and WADL-38, a local privately owned television station, is rebroadcasting our live-to-air broadcast of October 24 on November 2. We will continue to provide top-notch classical music to the community.

"A Call to Action" for financial support from other IC-SOM orchestras was sent out on October 27 and many have already contributed. This support will be essential as we feel we may be on strike for many weeks yet. There have been no negotiating meetings scheduled and no further discussions planned. For further updates, please visit our website (www.detroitssymphonymusicians.org).

We very much appreciate your continued support.

Instruments on planes: Still a turbulent experience

by Matt Heller

When complaining about his broken instrument did nothing, Canadian guitarist David Carroll turned to the nuclear option: he wrote and recorded a YouTube music video, "United Breaks Guitars." It quickly went viral, which led to instant celebrity for Carroll, as well as widespread public outrage about the airline's lack of responsibility, customer service, and coherent musical instrument policies.

Despite Carroll's success, Canadian musicians have not turned to YouTube en masse to solve their aviation problems – yet. We do have causes for complaint, however. Violin and viola cases have been turned away based on measurements, and flight staff have demanded cellists gate-check instruments, even though a ticket for a seat had been purchased. Air Canada limits checked baggage to 70 lbs, and both Air Canada and WestJet give check-in staff discretion to reject double basses as checked baggage, leaving bassists to reshuffle arrangements and miss the flight. When their instruments are accepted, bassists can pay extortionate oversize fees of \$300 and up.

For musicians, the biggest problem is the uncertainty of a policy subject to the interpretative whims of flight and check-in staff. A bill now before the US Congress (H.R. 915 – FAA Reauthorization Act) would change that.

As AFM Government Relations Director Hal Ponder writes: "The Senate FAA bill says that any small instrument that can fit in the overhead compartment or beneath the seat may come on board: it does away with the specific measurements which many of the airlines now employ. For larger, fragile instruments like cellos, the bill says that a seat may be bought for them. This continues the policy that airlines have been following. For large instruments that have to be checked, the instruments may weigh up to 165 pounds and measure not more than 150 cubic inches. This is considerably more generous than most airlines currently allow." Unfortunately, the bill has been held up over other issues, but is up for consideration again following the fall election.

OCSM 2nd VP David Brown and Symphonic Services Division Associate Director Bernard Leblanc, both bassists themselves, have written letters and made contacts within the Canadian airlines, offering to help develop similar guidelines governing instruments. And they encourage musicians to send in their stories of airline experiences so we can document how current policies are being implemented. (If you prefer to perform your story as a YouTube video, they'll accept those too.)

Meanwhile, cellists and bassists are adjusting to the new reality. String quartets have canceled tours, finding the expense of flying a cello prohibitive. Many bassists have turned down performances and auditions as well, while a growing number have looked to innovative bass makers such as Mario Lamarre of Montreal and James Ham of Victoria; both have developed ultra-light instruments with removable necks, allowing for a much smoother airport experience. For now anyway, the best solution to getting a bass there in one piece might just be bringing it to the airport in two.

Have a story to tell, or thoughts on this topic? Please e-mail: (mheller@gmail.com). Thank you!

* * *

[Cast your vote to support the FAA bill: (afm.org/carry-on). – Ed.]

OCSM Musical Instrument Insurance Program Update

by Bert Walker

The OCSM Musical Instrument Insurance Program renewal is December 1 of each year.

This year's renewal is complete with very few changes other than some increased benefit limits under the Accident Benefits section. Rates and Premiums remain unchanged from last year. OCSM members continue to receive a reduced premium compared to other classes.

Main Highlights of the program are:

Instruments:

All Risk cover: \$500 deductible Option for \$1,000

Special Basis of Loss Settlement: Subject to a valid appraisal less than 3 years old.

1. Loss in value due to affected playing qualities of your instrument following repairs of damage after an insured loss. The policy pays the difference between the appraised value of your repaired instrument and the appraised value prior to damage.

2. Difference in value if your damaged instrument is replaced and the replaced instrument is appraised less than the damaged instrument was appraised prior to loss.

Extensions for:

- Rental of Replacement Instrument: \$7,500
- Borrowed instruments: \$20,000 (notify insurer within 48 hours)
- Newly Acquired Instrument: \$50,000 for 30 days

Liability:

- Commercial General Liability: \$1,000,000 per occurrence \$5,000,000 aggregate
- Tenants Legal Liability: \$100,000
- Deductible: \$500

Accident Benefits

Principal Sum \$25,000 (Option for \$50,000)

In May 2010 HED Insurance and Risk Services became a part of Western Financial Group Insurance Solutions.

For more information phone Tim Der, 1-800-665-8990 ext. 7650. E-mail: <tim.der@westernfgis.ca>. Apply online: <<http://www.westernfgis.ca>>

Beware of the “Music Police”

by Leonard Leibowitz

Perhaps the AFM, its locals, and especially the Symphonic Players Conferences have been too successful. Perhaps the bread and butter aspects of symphony orchestra contracts have reached a level of satisfaction that affords the musicians such comfort that their minds have the luxury of drifting off into the lofty reaches of the artistic stratosphere. If so, I would like to suggest that we all take a moment to reflect and consider a recent trend that I find insidious and virulent.

In the guise of euphemistic rhetoric such as “artistic leadership” and “raising the standard of performance,” musicians in many orchestras sound positively Orwellian when they talk about ensuring that their colleagues, or potential colleagues, are actually “good enough” to play in “their orchestra.” Some of this ideology has already found its way into collective bargaining agreements. Before we go further, I hasten to point out that I am not

talking about the Peer Review committees that exist in many orchestras. These committees have no authority or ability to initiate discipline or dismissal of any musician. This article reflects my concern over situations in which one or more musicians in the orchestra engage in activities, or serve on committees, which either lead to or actually initiate the dismissal of colleagues.

Some years ago, an orchestra negotiated a provision into their collective bargaining agreement establishing a “Tenure Review” committee. The general idea was that the same committee that auditioned the musician was to reconvene, together with the music director, toward the end of that musician’s probationary period to vote on whether or not to grant tenure. Sounds innocuous enough, right? Except that the clause allowed the musician members of the group to vote first, and if the probationer didn’t receive a minimum number of votes from them, the issue was decided – without a vote from the music director.

The first two probationers to come before the committee happened to be an African-American woman and a Japanese-American man. Neither received enough votes to call for the input of the music director, and so they were terminated. The media had a field day. But maybe it was just an unfortunate coincidence; and surely that coincidence alone would not be sufficient justification for denouncing the procedure. OK, I’ll buy that.

A few years later, another orchestra negotiated a similar provision that permits the music director to vote, but if the musicians committee and the music director disagree, the committee prevails.

In this case, the probationer was a principal player recruited by the music director from a European orchestra. The musician had a distinctive style of playing that was apparently somewhat controversial. In any event, he uprooted his family and bought a home in the US after winning the audition for the job. During his probationary period, he became aware of the contract procedure and of the fact that there were a number of colleagues who disliked his style. When he broached the issue with the music director, and offered to alter that style to become more conventional, he was told not to do so, and was assured by the music director that his achievement of tenure was not in jeopardy. Do I need to tell you the end of the story?

Finally, in a recent meeting sponsored by a charitable foundation that generously supports the arts, the role of principal players, and even nontitled players, in evaluating the performance of other members of the orchestra was raised. Suggestions were made of a system of “peer warnings” whereby colleagues would take it upon themselves to warn other colleagues that there were problems with their performance. And what, pray tell, would happen in such a system if the warned musician did not show sufficient “improvement” to satisfy their colleagues?

If musicians are charged with the responsibility of

evaluating their colleagues, what kind of atmosphere is created in an orchestra? How does it feel when everyone is peering over the shoulders of everyone else? What effect would such goings-on have on the solidarity of the orchestra that the AFM and the player conferences have struggled to instill, and that has proven to be a key element in success at the bargaining table? Does such a system, and its obvious consequences, really make the job more rewarding? I think not. None of this is to argue that we ought not to have mechanisms in place that provide musicians with meaningful input into artistic decisions, and even the ability to counteract clearly malicious decisions. There too the union and the players have already been enormously successful. We have significant input into the hiring process through our audition committees. And our systems of peer review of non-renewal initiatives are virtually unique in the industrial world. Why isn't that enough?

In the case of auditions, with very few exceptions, after the finalists are chosen, the music director makes the ultimate decision. That's a primary part of the job.

In the case of non-renewal for musical reasons, the initiative is with the music director. That too is an essential part of the job. If the peer review committee believes that the music director is wrong, the initiative can be overturned. But the fact that peer review committees sustain the music director's decision more than 80 per cent of the time demonstrates that most music directors do their job properly.

The role of the music director includes the ability to make personnel decisions. Virtually every great orchestra through the years bears the imprint of at least one superior music director. It has not always been entirely pleasurable playing under some of those batons, but at least musicians could feel safe commiserating with each other, which contributed in no small way to morale and unity. Does investing so much authority in one person produce perfect results? Of course not. But with the proper protections in place, it beats a system where musicians are pitted against each other.

To my knowledge, no one has yet suggested that musicians initiate dismissals of colleagues – and there, of course with some few exceptions, we allow one person, i.e., an arbitrator, to make that final decision without even retaining the ability to set aside the decision if we believe it to be wrong.

The ultimate concern here is that a system wherein musicians take the jobs of other musicians into their own hands, with no management initiative, will damage if not destroy collectivism, which after all is the essence of trade unions. My hope is that we don't let the "music police" replace our solidarity and all it has brought us.

New and improved wage charts

by Francine Schutzman

At the OCSM, ICSOM, and ROPA conferences last summer, the delegates heard about some exciting changes to the way the wage charts can be used for negotiations and public relations. The charts will be able to be filled out online, and the completed charts may be viewed there with a web browser. Wage chart instructions will be on YouTube. The delegate enters his or her password (available from Joel Lefevre of the SSD) in order to receive a copy of the wage-chart video with instructions. Delegates will be able to make changes as they occur, and they'll be able to make corrections to previously-entered data if necessary. Printed wage charts will still be made available to those orchestra members who wish to receive them.

Aside from containing more timely data, the charts will become even more valuable tools than they have been in the past. We can scroll down to see all of the orchestras with their data from 1998–99 to 2009–10 (there are tabs at the bottom of the chart). Data is available for download, but access is controlled (see your OCSM delegate for login info). Changes to data will be published quickly. It will be easy to view, analyze, and use the data. For example, it will be possible to compare the increase in orchestra salaries with the increase in the Canadian Consumer Price Index for a given period. A sample analysis has already shown that, while the CPI has increased 19.2 per cent over the past 10 years, OCSM salaries have increased by only 14.35 per cent. It has also shown that the orchestras with the largest deficits are not necessarily those with the highest salaries. It will be easy to pull out a line item and find an average for the listed orchestras (for example, of base pay or season length). Many thanks to all those who contributed to the overhaul of the wage charts, but particularly to David Herring of the Minnesota Orchestra.

From the archives

Compiled by Robert Fraser

Greetings to my colleagues: Steve Mosher (former *Una Voce* editor) and I are currently creating an indexed, electronic archive of all of OCSM's publications since the first OCSM Newsletter (Vol. 1, No. 1, December 1976). To that end, here are a few tidbits from OCSM's very first newsletter.

- A report on the first delegate meeting from 1974 (two years before OCSM's first official meeting). Topics included the standardization of working conditions and audition procedures, the need to have a voice in the selection of conductors, and the need for close commu-

nication between symphony musicians in Canada.

- A reprint of an article from the Winnipeg Free Press, dated November 22, 1976. The article was about the resignation of four members of the twelve-member Manitoba Arts Council in protest over a two-percent cut to the Arts Council's budget. Out of a total of \$9 million allocated for cultural affairs in Manitoba, the Arts Council operated on a budget of \$535,000.
- Summary of a discussion from the first OCSM Conference (August 1976) on audition procedures, including:
 - Right of a conductor to have a veto
 - The prohibitive cost of travel to auditions
 - The right of conductors to hold auditions outside the orchestra's home city
 - Silent vote or discussion after each candidate?
 - The use (and abuse) of screens at auditions
 - Should auditions cease if a suitable Canadian candidate is found?

UNA VOCE

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Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra	Elspeth Thomson
Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra	Rachel Thomas
National Arts Centre Orchestra	David Thies-Thompson
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