



UNA VOCE

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The Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians (OCSM) 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 among its members, and to advocate on behalf of the Canadian cultural community.

Guest Editorial

In light of the recent hardships faced by our colleagues in Orchestra London Canada, I have offered this space to their voice.

— Editor

We hope that the New Year finds you safe, happy, and ready to make music in 2015. Unfortunately, as many of you know, we in London are facing a perilous situation. For all intents and purposes, the orchestra has been shut down since mid-December. All concert dates as of January 1, 2015, have been cancelled. Three weeks of pay from the month of December are currently owed to the employees, with the organization out of cash and facing a crippling amount of debt. The Executive Director has resigned, and the office has been closed.

The Board of Directors has not officially declared bankruptcy, allowing some time for a restructuring effort. It is unclear at the moment whether or not this will be possible, and what implications this would have for compensation and working conditions.

We have been performing a great number of free concerts throughout the community, building goodwill and attracting positive press coverage. We are currently organizing to take the lead in efforts to revive the orchestra. In support of these efforts, we humbly request any financial support that your organization might be able to provide. Cheques can be made out to the OLPA (Orchestra London Players' Association) and mailed to:

Orchestra London Musicians
16 Bloomfield Drive
London, ON
Canada, N6G 1P3

All financial resources will be used with the greatest of care, and we will be happy to send updates on our progress to anyone who is interested.

– The musicians of Orchestra London

Mark Tetreault Steps Down as Director of Symphonic Services Division for Canada

by Bob Fraser

OCSM President

A Thank-you from OCSM

It's difficult for me to objectively sing the praises of a tuba player without bias; we bass trombonists have a soft spot for tubas (located just under the left side of the rib cage, which is where you get bumped by one if you're not careful). By the time you read this, Mark Tetreault will have stepped down from his SSD post. Thankfully, he will continue his musical contributions to the Toronto Symphony, and I'm sure you will see him and his wife Leslie Dawn Knowles at jazz and bluegrass haunts throughout the world.



Mark's contributions to SSD and to OCSM will be sorely missed. He has been an effective negotiator for so many of our orchestras (including my own) and a valuable resource person for musicians, Local officers, and managers alike. His ability to find common ground in the most difficult of situations is a gift that few possess, and his strong activism is an inspiration to us all. I don't think I'm wrong when I guess that Mark's activism will continue, even though he has officially left the SSD. I fully expect to see him charging forward against the injustices of the world, armed only with a tuba and a sharp-witted mind.

On behalf of OCSM, I wish Mark all the best in this next phase of his career, and express our thanks for his ten years of exemplary service.

Interest-based Bargaining Works for OSM

by Eric Chappell

Negotiating Committee President
Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal

Hello, fellow OCSM members! I am happy to report that the Musicians' Association of the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal (AMOSM), along with the Guild des Musiciens et Musiciennes du Québec (GMMQ) and the American Federation of Musicians (AFM), have reached an agreement with the OSM on a four-year contract through August 2018.

These negotiations were notable for a couple of reasons. For the first time for the OSM, an "interest-based" approach was used, in which both sides were open to discuss their principal interests for each issue, their problems, and to brainstorm solutions together. A provincial mediator was present at all meetings, which proved invaluable. The second notable thing is that an agreement was reached only one month after the expiry of the contract, rather than the usual delay, which for us is a year or more after expiry.

The openness that was possible in this style of negotiation permitted trust to be established between the two sides, and created a tone of respect at the table. We hope to build on this relationship in the day-to-day implementation of the agreement. The process was not always easy, and our mediator was particularly helpful in the monetary discussions. The raises of 2 per cent per year that were agreed upon (plus raises to seniority pay and per diem in North America) seemed to be an acceptable concession to both sides, and were possible due to a condition of renewal of our provincial grant.

I'd like to thank our fearless team: our union representatives Simon Roux (GMMQ) and Bernard Leblanc (AFM-SSD), and my colleagues Alain Desgagnés, Sylvain Murray and Michael Sundell. It was a privilege to act as president of this committee!

The OSM in Asia: Warm Acoustics, Bad Air

by Vivian Lee

Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal

The Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal went on tour to Asia this fall from October 7 to 23. We spent most of the tour in Japan, with the last few days in Beijing and Shanghai. The older I get, the less enthusiastic I am about going on the road, but I do enjoy some aspects of each tour. Tokyo is a crazy, big place, very busy, very

modern, with some very old-fashioned ideas (to our Western minds, at least), but I liked it. People are as helpful as they can possibly be without actually speaking the same language; everything is clean and orderly; the trains run on time; the food is good (there's even good Italian food when you're sick of sushi and yakitori); and we got to stay in some pretty nice hotels, especially the ANA in Tokyo (affectionately known as the OSM "home-away-from-home," probably chosen for its proximity to Suntory Hall).



(L to R) James Box, Vivian Lee, Pierre Beaudry, and Austin Howle.

We had quite a few days in Tokyo, with run-outs to some nearby cities, including a concert at the Koriyama Women's College, which is just outside the danger zone of the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant meltdown that followed the tsunami of 2011. The area has suffered terribly economically because nobody wants to go near it, even though it's not considered dangerous. The concert we played there was a benefit for the region. We also played in Fukui and Kyoto.

For me, the musical highlights of the Japanese leg of the tour (comprising 10 of the 14 days) were playing in Suntory Hall in Tokyo and in the Sapporo Concert Hall ("Kitara") in Sapporo. I've played many times at Suntory, but it never gets old. What a great hall; such a pleasure to play in that warm, welcoming acoustic. We played Stravinsky's Violin Concerto with Ryo Goto, *La Mer*, *Daphnis and Chloe*, *Bolero*, and a couple of encores; a demanding concert!

I'd never played at the hall in Sapporo before and it was a delightful surprise. It's located in the wonderful Nakajima Park (happily, right next to the hotel), which was in full autumn colour while we were there. It was bliss to walk around in the park after so many days in the crowded streets of Tokyo. Kitara and Suntory are similar in that they are both warm, wood-panelled halls that seem to be helping you play well, with no distractions or interference. Japanese audiences are generally

very reserved; they clap for a long time, but they never stand up or yell. The exception was in Sapporo where quite a few people gave a standing ovation and there were a few *Bravos* too. Maybe we played *Pictures at an Exhibition* particularly well that night? It was a nice way to end the Japanese portion of the tour.

We were prepared for the pollution to be bad in Beijing, but it was still pretty astonishing and depressing. When our plane was descending into the city, for a second I thought “fog,” but it wasn’t long before I realized it was smog. A few people had brought along face masks and put them on as soon as we got out of the plane. To think that on the day we arrived there was a marathon in the city! When we got to the hotel I looked out my window and I could hardly see beyond the immediate block we were on. There was a huge intersection right across from the hotel so we got a good idea what traffic is like in Beijing: bad!



Sapporo Concert Hall.

A day trip to the Great Wall was the highlight of my time in Beijing. Visiting the Wall was well worth it, even though it was still smoggy two hours distant from the city. On our way there our tour guide gave us some interesting details about the Wall. According to her, it is sometimes called “the longest cemetery in the world” because of all the people who died in its construction. We went up the mountain by chair-lift and for a couple of hours climbed up and down along the Wall, taking pictures and admiring the way it snakes along the mountain as far as the eye can see (which wasn’t very far that day!), and then took a luge ride back down to where we got the bus. Yes, that’s right, they’ve built a toboggan run on rails just for us tourists to descend more quickly, although considering the wait in line, I’m not convinced it was faster than the chair lift. Pretty wacky!

We played one concert in Beijing, at the Forbidden City Concert Hall: not a memorable hall acoustically. Those who spent the afternoon between rehearsal and concert walking around the Forbidden City were really impressed by it, but I chose to relax at the hotel.

The next day we flew off to Shanghai, that mecca of architecture and opulence. I was blown away by the

designs of the skyscrapers and other modern buildings that we saw from the bus on the way to the concert hall.



With only one day in Shanghai we didn’t have time to see much. Some people visited the old city or the markets near the water on the morning of our departure, but I only walked a bit around the hotel area called the French Quarter, most of which dates back to the early 20th century. Not all that exciting, but it was

good to get some exercise before the dreaded 14-hour flight back. We all arrived safe and sound in Montreal without major delays. Home, sweet home!

Our Day on the Hill

by Francine Schutzman

OCSM past President

and Barbara Hankins

Kitchener- Waterloo Symphony

“The Conservative Government is plagued by scandal, devoid of new policy, with staff leaving.” So began our orientation by Will Stewart, Parliament Hill lobbyist, when we joined more than 100 other arts supporters – artists, administrators, board members, interested community members – to participate in the Canadian Arts Coalition’s fifth annual Arts Day on the Hill on October 22. This is an occasion when we meet, usually in teams of three, with MPs, Senators, and senior government officials to present three “asks” that have been prepared by the Coalition. Our orientation included key themes that each party is focussing on with an election looming, as well as background to this year’s requests to government, which were as follows:

1. Increase the Canada Council for the Arts’ Parliamentary appropriating by \$35 million in 2015 with a long-term goal of reaching \$300 million.
2. Increase Canada’s presence on the world stage for 2017 by establishing a \$25 million pilot program over three years at the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development for Canada’s 150th birthday.
3. Investigate new revenue models to support a comprehensive Canadian Cultural Digital Strategy that would enable the creation, dissemination and engagement of Canadian cultural content online.

The Coalition had submitted a pre-budget brief to the Finance Committee with further details of the above

points. Now, it's a lot easier for the people who have been involved with creating the wording for these requests to talk about them than for those of us who saw them for the first time the night before Arts Day, so we all stayed up late that night to do some quick background reading in order to prepare for the meetings. We were helped enormously by the work of the Coalition, as we were presented with carefully researched bios of the government officials with whom we would be meeting, as well as a list of all Canada Council grants that had been made to artists in their riding over the past year. We also checked the websites of the MPs in order to get a sense of their likelihood of being receptive to our visits.



(L to R) Yukon MP Ryan Leef, Barbara Hankins, April Britski (Executive Director, CARFAC National), and Francine Schutzman.

There were 97 meetings planned for Arts Day, and we participated in seven of those between the two of us. Armed with our business cards and “leave behind” summaries, we met with members of all three major political parties and received warm receptions from everyone, with only a couple of MPs displaying questioning resistance to our “asks.” We needn’t have worried about filling the time (thirty to forty minutes per meeting) with facts that we barely had time to try to memorize. Conversations were free-flowing and two-way, and it certainly felt as if nearly everyone on the Hill is a supporter of the arts. We left our meetings with photos, smiles and warm handshakes

A member of Francine’s team got sick, so Barbara joined that team for a meeting that turned out to be a great deal of fun. The MP in question, Conservative Ryan Leef from the Yukon, was a most engaging conversationalist. He congratulated the arts community for its excellent preparation that resulted in so many people carrying forward the same message, and he gave us some “non-partisan” hints for preparing for next year’s federal elections. Interestingly enough, Mr. Leef had started off the meeting by saying that he himself was

not an artist, although his son is a musician. We took him at his word until we started looking around the room at the end of the meeting for a spot for a group photo. We noticed a series of perhaps sixteen utterly gorgeous photographs on the wall, most of them close-ups of wildlife in the North. It turned out that Mr. Leef had taken them. Then we noticed a published book of poetry that he had written and he was quick to add that someone else had taken the photos for it. We assured him that he was indeed an artist.

The day concluded with a reception co-hosted by Joe Comartin, Deputy Speaker, and Tyrone Benskin, co-chair of the All-Party Arts Caucus. This gave us the opportunity to reconnect with some of the people with whom we had met during the day, and rub shoulders with some more of our parliamentarians.

In a time when stress and depression is costing our country between \$14 and \$50 billion per year in treatment, medication, lost productivity, and premature death, people who attend arts activities have been shown to be significantly healthier, have lower anxiety and be less subject to depression.

— from “Arts Facts” Arts Day on the Hill
(<http://www.canadianartscoalition.com>)

Symphonic Recording Agreements, Demystified

by Matt Heller
OCSM 1st Vice President

Digital media makes it easier than ever to hear and discover symphonic music; unfortunately, it is still not quite so simple to record and produce it.

Orchestras Canada has just launched a series of webinars, “Digital Strategies 101”, aimed at guiding managers step-by-step into the world of digital media. The first installment focuses on the recording agreements relevant to Canadian orchestras. Outgoing Symphonic Services Canadian Director Mark Tetreault dispels confusion about those agreements – including the easy-to-mix-up SRLA, SLPA, and SOBLRA – while digital consultant Randy Barnard crunches the cost numbers for a typical recording project under each contract.

Mark Tetreault emphasizes that no matter what kind of recording project a manager may be considering, their first contact should be with their Local officer. The Local can point managers towards the most relevant agreements, help them to understand the conditions, and refer them to experts in the Canadian office in more complex cases. Mark tells managers that the union is there to facilitate managers’ recording projects, not to delay or obstruct them.

Back to those agreements: the Sound Recording Labor Agreement (SRLA) is designed for studio recording sessions, involving a start/stop process and post-production. Rates are relatively high and it hasn't been used frequently in Canada. However, the Vancouver Symphony's Grammy-winning 2006 CD with James Ehnes was recorded under the SRLA.

The "limited" in the Symphonic Limited Pressing Agreement (SLPA) refers to the units sold – up to 3,000, though individual tracks can be sold as partial units. Mark noted that 3,000 is a lot of sales in the classical world. The rates are quite a bit lower for studio recordings, and it's also possible to use a live recording under this agreement.

As the name implies, the Symphony Opera and Ballet Live Recording Agreement (SOBLRA) is exclusively for live recordings, though they can be current or archived, including re-licensed CBC remotes. Rates can be as low as \$80 per musician (plus 10 per cent pension), and there is a provision for patch sessions. The recent TSO Live recordings are being done under SOBLRA.

The Concert DVD Agreement is relatively new and carries few restrictions other than new uses (adapting the film into a commercial jingle, for example). Randy Barnard estimated that a typical project would cost more than the SOBLRA, but less than the SLPA or SRLA.

The last agreements discussed, both significantly less costly, are the Canadian Music Centre-CFM Agreement and the OCSM Live Streaming Guidelines. The CMC-CFM is designed for the production and compilation of archival recordings of Canadian content, for production and distribution by the CMC. The Live Streaming Guidelines allow for web broadcast, either audio-visual or audio-only, of live performances of any length, including opera. They also provide for free use of a short (less than 3 minute) promotional clip.

All these agreements include approval processes by secret ballot vote, and rates are often based on the orchestra's own rates per-week or per-service, above certain minimum values. Randy Barnard calculated rough estimates of costs for each agreement, for orchestras from 20 to 100 members. I would encourage interested musicians to check out the Orchestras Canada website (linked below) to see this and future presentations, including ones on commercial marketing and promotional use of recordings.

Find more online at: <http://orchestrascanada.org/cfm-recording-contracts>.

Global Response Averts Roman Tragedy

by Liz Johnston
OCSM 2nd vice President

Loris Grossi is a musician of the Rome Opera Theatre and is also the FIM delegate representing the Italian SLC-CGIL (Workers Union Of Communication, Italian General Confederation of Labour). On October 4, 2014 he wrote an SOS message to the Federation of International Musicians (FIM) Orchestra Working Group (an online forum much like the OCSM list, for FIM delegates), telling us about the shocking and tragic decision of the Board of the Rome Opera Theatre to fire its entire orchestra and chorus. This represented a total of 182 out of the 460 full time employees of the company. He asked us to spread the word and support their fight for their jobs in a mission of solidarity.

Under Italian labour law, the opera house and its unions would have 75 days to reach an agreement and if they didn't, the firings would become effective at the start of 2015. What had previously been full-time positions would be hired on a casual basis ("outsourcing"). This move was intended to save the company €3.4 million annually. Management's main argument was that the same decision had been made in London, Paris, Madrid, and other European Cities. Loris made it clear in the ensuing weeks that the crisis was born from the political situation in Italy (where music and politics intersect more directly than here in North America), and that the situation required the appropriate response from outside of Italy, from the very institutions they were citing, and from the international community.

General Secretary of FIM, Benoit Machuel, wrote an excellent article titled "Global Threat Needs Global Reaction" for the December issue of *Senza Sordino*, which you can read on the ICSOM website. He describes the situation as one that "falls naturally in place within a more global strategy aimed at discharging employers, whether public or private, whatever the sector, from any obligation towards workers (minimum wages, social benefits, working conditions, compliance with health and safety standards, etc.)."

Regarding the "outsourcing" of jobs, he wrote that "The Rome Opera management presents the outsourcing of its orchestra and chorus as a modern and efficient management scheme. Following this scheme, musicians would be encouraged to form a new, independent, self-financed entity (the term "cooperative" has been used), which would (or might) be later contracted to provide the service that has been so far an internal resource. It goes without saying that the financial sustainability of

such an entity would be highly uncertain. What is much more certain is the fact that its musicians, whether employed or contracted as independent service providers, would immediately face harsh competition with multiple ensembles established in countries with much lower standards (salaries, social protection, working conditions, cost of living).”

FIM organized a massive campaign to harness the power of solidarity around the world by announcing a Call to Action. They also proclaimed November 17–23 to be International Orchestra Week, which was a platform for orchestras around the world to show their support for Rome Opera. It was also meant to awaken people to attacks on orchestras in their own communities and to rally to the cause against “Cultural Vandalism.” Countless letters denouncing the management’s decision and explaining the importance and value of an in-house, tenured, full time orchestra were sent from major Symphonic and Opera orchestras (with signatures attached from all of their musicians) to the Board of Rome Opera, the Minister of Culture, the City of Rome, and President Renzi. An open letter was co-written by FIM and its sister organizations FIA (the International Federation of Actors) and UNI (Media, Entertainment & Arts) similarly denouncing the planned course of action and also the false information that it was based on. A change.org petition was delivered to the Minister of Culture.

On November 7, Loris wrote that during the fifth negotiation meeting a deal was offered: if the musicians sign an agreement within two weeks, the board would withdraw the layoff. This was a turning point – the first ray of hope and, as Loris said, it was due to the pressure from Italians and from around the world. On November 18, an agreement was signed after two weeks of negotiations, and on November 26 there was a 97 per cent vote in favour of new contract. The Board had reversed its decision.

At the end of the negotiations, the Board changed their tune and asked for a reduction of €1.5 million instead of €3.4 million, with €1.9 recovered in other ways. Remarkably, all of the employees of the company decided to share the pain of the reductions, not just the musicians. In addition, a joint committee between the management and the union was formed to monitor the economic trend of the company every three months and agree on any necessary adjustments.

I give you Loris’s words to conclude this story: “I ascribe this remarkable result also to the huge solidarity we obtained from all over the world. I would like to thank all of you who in different ways were so close to us in declaring to the Italian Institutions how bad and inadequate was their decision, not just for the loss of jobs required but also for the survival of musical culture

in Italy and overseas. My deep gratitude goes to the multitude of fellow musicians from all over the world who, by raising their voices, contributed to make this success possible.”

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