

November 1, 2011

Important Announcement:

DO NOT ACCEPT WORK FROM THE LOUISVILLE ORCHESTRA, INC.

The musicians of the Louisville Orchestra have now come under a full frontal attack from the management of the Louisville Orchestra. In an effort to replace the current musicians of the Louisville Orchestra, management has put out a request for applications. This outrageous and regrettable action is the most recent in a series of steps taken to break the musicians' resolve for a fair and just collectively bargained agreement.

At the heart of collective bargaining is compromise, yet this never seemed present in management's strategy. Throughout the negotiations, the Louisville Orchestra musicians have shown great flexibility adjusting their position to meet or move very close to the draconian demands of management. However, no matter what the movement shown by the musicians, it never was enough.

This has resulted in the current situation that now threatens to destroy the beloved Louisville Orchestra with its uniquely rich tradition and history. The Board's cavalier disregard for the treasure entrusted to them is indeed shocking but no more shocking than the treatment of the Louisville Orchestra musicians who have for so many years dedicated their lives to bringing the joy of music to Louisville. These same musicians, who make up the Louisville Orchestra, uplift the spirit of the community during times of need and teach the children of Louisville to share with them their love of music. Now is the musicians' time of need. Let us all stand with them and speak out to show our resolve for a fair contract and a stop to this insanity.

Jay Blumenthal, Director
Symphonic Services Division
American Federation of Musicians

Both the Louisville Orchestra, Inc. and the Kentucky Opera have been placed on the American Federation of Musicians' (AFM) International Unfair List, and accepting work from these two groups could generate fines and penalties.

But it is not just the Unfair List that should deter anyone from accepting this work--the fact is that it would simply be wrong to do so.

Any musician accepting such work would not be serving the cause of art in America, or serving their career and family. Musicians accepting work as replacements would be taking food out of the mouths of fellow musicians, as well as depriving them and their children of health insurance.

The members of ICSOM, ROPA, and OCSM comprise a great number of orchestral musicians in North America, and we have thousands of students. Please educate your students, and the

leaders at your music schools, of the importance of this effort. If the egregious and despicable actions of Louisville Orchestra CEO Rob Birman, and Board Chair Chuck Maisch were to succeed, then no orchestra in North America would be safe from such attacks. Any musician accepting such work would be building a career on quick sand.

Please post this message in your studios, and please send it to your students everywhere, as well as the colleagues in your orchestra who might not be subscribed to the ICSOM, ROPA, or OCSM news lists. Post it backstage at work. Post it on your Facebook pages. Spread the message everywhere that the musicians of ICSOM, ROPA, and OCSM will always stand together.

The symphonic musicians of North America perform as a united network of friends. It is crucial that we stand together on this issue, not only for the musicians of Louisville, but for the future of musicians everywhere.

In solidarity,

Bruce Ridge
ICSOM Chairman