

August 29, 2008

Margo McCann, Executive Director  
Texas Ballet Theater  
6845 Green Oaks Road  
Fort Worth, Texas 76116

Dear Margo,

We view your decision to use recorded music for 2008/09 performances in lieu of live orchestra as unacceptable to the interests of professional musicians who, for many years, have provided unerring support for the talented artists of the Texas Ballet Theater. Furthermore, by instituting substandard canned music as a way to eliminate live orchestra, we believe you are deliberately depriving your patrons and audiences of a legitimate theatrical ballet experience, particularly in view of the fact that many of your patrons purchased season tickets in advance, tickets priced with orchestral accompaniment. Your patrons paid for an orchestra. Don't cheat them – they should get one.

Moreover, we are appalled to learn that your artistic staff traveled to China in June 2008 specifically to utilize the services of the orchestra of the National Ballet of China to obtain a recording of *Cleopatra*, which apparently is intended to displace the Fort Worth Orchestra in March 2009 at Bass Hall. We view these actions by your organization – the replacement of live musicians with recordings, some Chinese-made – as deplorable. A policy of canned music denigrates performances of a “premier professional classical ballet company” of “unprecedented talent, beauty and artistic expression,” as your organization claims to be. When you choose to subject your audiences to canned music, your organization is guilty of artistic fraud.

In response to these developments, please be advised that we will be picketing and leafleting your September 12, 2008 Dallas performance in an effort to persuade concertgoers from patronizing performances by the Texas Ballet Theater.

Sincerely,

Raymond M. Hair, Jr.  
President, AFM Local 72-147