

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
Concerning Musicians' Protest of Texas Ballet Theater's "Canned Cleopatra"

Dallas-Fort Worth Professional Musicians

Association, Local 72-147
American Federation of Musicians
1939 Stadium Oaks Court, Suite 110
Arlington, Texas 76011
817-469-6040
Ray Hair, President
www.musiciansdfw.org

Texas Ballet Theater

6845 Green Oaks Road
Fort Worth, Texas 76116
817-763-0207
Margo McCann, manager
www.texasballettheater.org

- The Musicians' Union has for many years provided professional musicians for the ballet company's main stage productions under agreements with The Dallas Opera Orchestra for Nutcracker shows in Dallas, and with the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra Association (FWSOA) for shows at Bass Performance Hall in Fort Worth.
- In August 2008, the company cancelled the use of live orchestras for its 2008/09 season, declaring itself unable to pay its bills, with debts of \$850,000 including \$100,000 to FWSOA and \$153,000 to Bass Hall.
- In June 2008, a few weeks before its debt disclosure and canned music announcement, artistic staff traveled to Shanghai and paid \$30,000.00 to the Chinese government to obtain a recording of Rimsky Korsakov's score of *Cleopatra*, used to replace musicians March 27-29 at Bass Hall in Fort Worth.
- On February 10, 2009, the company announced it would use recorded music exclusively for the 2009/10 season instead of live orchestra. The company claims it will save \$700,000 with canned music.
- Documents obtained by the Union show that two TBT board members received six figure annual sums totaling more than \$700,000 prior to its financial collapse in August 2008, which went unreported in the company's IRS filings.
- One of those board members, Jean Marie Clossey, now serves on the executive committee of the new \$350 million Dallas Center for the Performing Arts, where TBT will be presenting canned shows beginning in November, 2009.
- Board members of non-profit organizations are generally expected to serve without compensation.
- TBT financed a Fort Worth home for Artistic Director Ben Stevenson in 2006, with no repayment terms.
- Representatives of Dance USA, a national service organization for professional dance companies, say that cutting an orchestra is usually the last gasp of a dying ballet company.
- Advertisements for TBT promote performances as lavish spectacles featuring rich set designs and opulent costumes. The company fails to disclose that consumers are paying for a live orchestra, but won't get one.

For further information, contact Local 72-147 President Ray Hair
(m) 817-469-6040 or (c) 817-988-5238 www.musiciansdfw.org