

# NEWS MEMO

## INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY

### MUSICIANS TO PROTEST CANNED MUSIC TONIGHT PATRONS PAID FOR LIVE MUSIC, BUT WON'T GET IT

#### *ORCHESTRAS VANISHED AFTER TWO BALLET BOARD MEMBERS GOT \$700K*

- WHO:** The Dallas-Fort Worth Professional Musicians Association, affiliated Local 72-147 of the American Federation of Musicians, which represents more than 1700 professional musicians across North Texas and Southern Oklahoma, including musicians of the Dallas and Fort Worth Symphony Orchestras and The Dallas Opera Orchestra.
- WHAT:** Professional musicians will protest Texas Ballet Theater's canned music policy by forming picket lines and distributing informational leaflets at the company's season opening performances, October 2, 3 and 4 in Fort Worth.
- WHERE:** Bass Performance Hall, 4<sup>th</sup> and Commerce Streets, Fort Worth, Texas.
- WHEN:** Friday, October 2, 2009, 6:30pm – 8:00pm; Saturday, October 3, 2009, 6:30pm – 8:00pm; Sunday, October 4, 2009, 12:30pm – 2:00pm.
- WHY:** Texas Ballet Theater shafted its live pit orchestras for the 2009/10 season, saying it will use pre-recorded "canned" music tracks instead. The company boasted that it saved between \$600,000 and \$700,000 by emptying its orchestra pit last season and outsourcing local musicians with recordings, some it made in China at a cost of \$30,000. *Prior to the company's fiscal collapse in August 2008, two of Texas Ballet Theater's Board of Directors received six figure annual sums totaling more than \$700,000, which went unreported in the company's IRS filings.* "WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT – THE POCKETBOOKS OF BALLET BOARD MEMBERS OR LEGITIMATE BALLET WITH LIVE ORCHESTRA?", SAID MUSICIANS' UNION PRESIDENT RAY HAIR. "THE COMPANY HEADS ARE STEPPING ON OUR MUSICIANS," HE SAID. Board members of non-profit organizations are generally expected to serve without compensation. The Ballet company has traditionally employed the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra to accompany its seasonal performances at Bass Hall in Fort Worth, and used the Dallas Opera Orchestra for holiday Nutcracker performances in Dallas. The company's decision to replace live orchestra with recordings deprives audiences of a legitimate ballet performance and has eliminated the jobs of hundreds of professional musicians. "Texas Ballet Theater is fleecing the public by charging full price for half a show. Patrons paid for live music. They should get it," said Hair. "With canned music, Texas Ballet Theater presents artificial, fake ballet," he said. ***The Union will protest the ballet's canned music policy at all 2009/10 season performances.***

For further information, visit [www.musiciansdfw.org](http://www.musiciansdfw.org) or contact Local 72-147 President Ray Hair at (Metro) 817-469-6040 or 817-988-5238 (cell).

Release #10, October 2, 2009 9:00 am