

NEWS MEMO

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY

MUSICIANS TO PROTEST CANNED NUTCRACKERS

AT&T WINSPEAR'S RAVE ACOUSTICS HOST BALLET WITH EMPTY ORCHESTRA PIT BALLET SILENCED LIVE MUSIC AFTER TWO BOARD REPS COLLECTED \$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 the canned music policies of AT&T Performing Arts Center's resident ballet company – Texas Ballet Theater – by forming picket lines and distributing informational leaflets at the company's debut performances at the Center.
- WHERE:** AT&T Performing Arts Center, 2403 Flora Street, Dallas, Texas.
- WHEN:** Friday, and Saturday November 27 and 28, 2009 12:30 and 630 pm; and 12:30pm Sunday, November 29, 2009, ninety minutes prior to the start of performances.
- WHY:** The AT&T Performing Arts Center and Texas Ballet Theater will present holiday performances of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* in the acoustically renowned \$350 million facility with recorded music in lieu of live orchestra. AT&T PAC's resident ballet company has traditionally employed the Dallas Opera Orchestra for performances in Dallas but instead will utilize "canned" pre-recorded tracks for its 2009/10 season. The company's decision to replace live orchestra with recordings deprives audiences of a legitimate ballet performance and has eliminated hundreds of jobs for professional musicians. Despite the canned tracks, AT&T PAC continues to advertise ballet shows with live orchestra on its website. "Texas Ballet Theater and the Center are cheating patrons by charging regular ticket prices without disclosing that the orchestra pit will be empty. Patrons paid for live music, but they won't get it," said Musicians' Union president Ray Hair. In June 2008, the ballet company traveled to China and paid \$30,000.00 for recordings it used to displace musicians. The company boasted that it saved between \$600,000 and \$700,000 by emptying its orchestra pit. *Information disclosed in a Dallas Morning News article revealed that two of Texas Ballet Theater's Board of Directors – ONE IS NOW AN AT&T PAC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER - were paid six figure annual sums that went unreported in the company's IRS filings totaling more than \$700,000.00. Board members of non-profit organizations are generally expected to serve without compensation. The Union will protest the ballet's canned music policy with informational picket lines and leaflets at all performances during the 2009/10 season.*

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

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