

NEWS MEMO

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY

CANNED NUTCRACKER PROTESTS GREW LEGS MUSICIANS' SIGNS, POSTERS, GIANT RAT TAUNTED \$350M CENTER, TBT RALLY AGAINST BALLET KARAOKE CONTINUES THURS THRU SUNDAY

- 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 continue their protests, begun last weekend, of the canned music policies of AT&T Performing Arts Center's resident ballet company – Texas Ballet Theater – by forming picketing and leafleting the company's debut performances at the Center.
- WHERE:** AT&T Performing Arts Center, 2403 Flora Street, Dallas, Texas.
- WHEN:** 6:30 pm Thursday and Friday, December 3 and 4; 12:30pm and 6:30pm Saturday December 5, 12:30pm Sunday December 6, 2009, ninety minutes prior to the start of performances.
- WHY:** The new acoustically acclaimed AT&T Performing Arts Center and Texas Ballet Theater are presenting holiday performances of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* with recorded music in lieu of live orchestra. AT&T PAC's resident ballet company traditionally employs the Dallas Opera Orchestra for performances in Dallas but instead is using "canned" pre-recorded tracks in the new \$350 million facility. The decision to replace live orchestra with recordings has eliminated hundreds of jobs for professional musicians and deprives audiences of a legitimate ballet performance. Despite the canned tracks, AT&T PAC continues to advertise ballet shows with live orchestra on its website. Last weekend's rally in front of the Center was attended by nearly 100 protesting musicians who greeted patrons with picket signs, leaflets and a giant inflatable rat balloon. The demonstrations received [extensive media coverage](#) from TV affiliates WFAA, KTVT, KDAF, and KUNV, and from KRLD newsradio 1080. "Patrons are coming to the new AT&T Performing Arts Center to experience *Nutcracker* with a live orchestra but get ballet karaoke instead," said Musicians' Union president Ray Hair. Texas Ballet Theater and AT&T PAC are 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 Hair. The company boasted that it saved \$600,000 to \$700,000 by emptying its orchestra pit. A Dallas Morning News *article revealed that ONE AT&T PAC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER, JEAN MARIE CLOSSEY, was one two of Texas Ballet Theater Board of Directors who were paid six figure annual sums totaling more than \$700,000.00 that went unreported in the "financially strapped" ballet company's IRS filings. Musicians say the ballet company recouped those funds by kicking out the orchestra.* The Union's requests to meet with AT&T PAC reps to discuss its canned music shows were ignored. ***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). Release #15, November 30, 2009