

NEWS MEMO

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY

CAMPOUT, CANNED FOOD PICNIC TAUNT BALLET CANS, PLACARDS ADORN VW MICROBUS AT BASS HALL “ORCHESTRA, WHEREFORE ART THOU” MUSICIANS SAY PROTEST OF TBT’S *ROMEO AND JULIET* RUNS THRU FEB 14

- WHO:** Members of 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:** Picket signs and a display of canned food decorate a vintage VW Microbus in downtown Fort Worth in protest of Texas Ballet Theater’s canned music policy.
- WHERE:** Bass Performance Hall, 4th and Commerce Streets, Fort Worth, Texas.
- WHEN:** Now, and continuously through Sunday, February 14, 2010.
- WHY:** Bass Performance Hall and Texas Ballet Theater are presenting performances of Shakespeare’s classic *Romeo and Juliet*, with Prokofiev’s score, stepped to recorded music in lieu of live orchestra. Despite the canned tracks, Bass Hall and TBT continue to advertise the performances online “with striking music by Prokofiev” without revealing to customers that live orchestra has been eliminated. The recent *Canned Nutcracker* rallies at the new \$350 million AT&T Center in Dallas were attended by nearly 200 protesting musicians who greeted patrons with picket signs, leaflets and a giant inflatable rat balloon. The musicians received [extensive media coverage](#) from TV affiliates WFAA, KTVT, KDAF, and KUNV, and from [KRLD](#) newsradio 1080. “Patrons come to Bass Hall concerts expecting the whole enchilada, but with Texas Ballet Theater, you get ballet in a can, instead. Concertgoers paid for live music, but they won’t get it,” said Musicians Union President Ray 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, JEANNE MARIE CLOSSEY, was one of two 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 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 817-469-6040 or 817-988-5238 (cell). Release #18, 2/8/10. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)