

NEWS MEMO

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY

TARRANT UNIONS JOIN “CANNED CLEOPATRA” PROTEST *CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL’S 50 UNIONS TO STAND WITH MUSICIANS AT BASS HALL* **BALLET COMPANY OUTSOURCED ORCHESTRA WITH RECORDINGS IT MADE IN CHINA**

- WHO:** Tarrant County Central Labor Council, comprised of 50 AFL-CIO affiliated local unions that together represent more than 25,000 members, including The Dallas-Fort Worth Professional Musicians Association, Local 72-147 of the American Federation of Musicians, which represents 1700 professional musicians across North Texas and Southern Oklahoma.
- WHAT:** Union members will protest Texas Ballet Theater’s canned music policy by forming picket lines and distributing informational leaflets prior to ballet performances of *Cleopatra*.
- WHERE:** Bass Performance Hall, 4th and Commerce Streets, Fort Worth, Texas.
- WHEN** Friday, Saturday and Sunday, March 27, 28 and 29, one hour prior to performances.
- WHY:** Texas Ballet Theater’s artistic staff traveled to Shanghai in June 2008 and paid the Chinese government \$30,000.00 for a recording of Rimsky Korsakov’s musical score of *Cleopatra*. The ballet company will use the Chinese recording this weekend to replace an entire orchestra of professional musicians at Bass Hall. The company’s canned music policy has killed weeks of work that have hurt professional musicians and cheapened the art form, outsourcing not only musicians’ jobs, *but culture as well*. The ballet company is selling tickets to its 2009/10 shows at the new \$400 million Dallas Center for the Performing Arts without acknowledging that with an empty orchestra pit, consumers won’t be getting what they’ve paid for. “It’s another example of the selfish corporate greed mentality that has destroyed good middle class jobs by offshoring them overseas to the lowest bidder,” said T.C. Gillespie, President of Tarrant County Central Labor Council. “We are in a severe recession where millions of jobs have been lost, where families are suffering, but company CEO’s are comfortable, getting millions in taxpayer bailouts. Texas Ballet Theater’s production of *Canned Cleopatra* is a rip-off without live music. The company should be ashamed. By hollowing out the orchestra pit at Bass Hall, the ballet company has strip-mined society, right here in Fort Worth. We’ll stand with professional musicians outside Bass Hall where together we will say, ‘No way, canned ballet.’”

www.musiciansdfw.org Release #5, Tuesday, March 24, 2009 1:30 pm
For further information, contact Local 72-147 President Ray Hair
at (Metro) 817-469-6040 or 817-988-5238 (cell).