

NEWS MEMO

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY

MUSICIANS, UNIONS TO PROTEST *CANNED CLEOPATRA* TONIGHT *BALLET DUMPED ITS ORCHESTRA, WILL DANCE TO CHINESE SOUNDTRACK* LOCAL LABOR FED, INFLATABLE RAT JOINING WEEKEND RALLY

- WHO:** Members of The Dallas-Fort Worth Professional Musicians Association, Local 72-147 of the American Federation of Musicians, union locals from Tarrant County Central Labor Council AFL-CIO and other AFM members.
- WHAT:** Musicians and their union brothers and sisters will form picket lines and distribute leaflets in protest of Texas Ballet Theater's canned music policy.
- WHERE:** Bass Performance Hall, 4th and Commerce Streets, Fort Worth, Texas.
- WHEN** Friday March 27, 7pm; Saturday March 28, 1 and 7pm; Sunday March 29, 1 and 6pm. The protests begin one hour prior to the start of each *Cleopatra* performance.
- WHY:** The ballet company has outsourced its orchestra pit during this weekend's performances of "*Canned Cleopatra*," replacing an entire symphony orchestra with a recording it made in China. Company artistic staff traveled to Shanghai in June 2008 and paid the Chinese government \$30,000.00 for a recording of the Rimsky Korsakov score of *Cleopatra*. Musicians say the recording has turned Bass Hall into a Big-box store where the goods are made in China. "The best Chinese musicians have emigrated to America and now perform in US orchestras," said **Ivo Ivanov, violinist and a member of the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra**. "By recording in China, the ballet got its money's worth - a third-rate product. We should be playing in the orchestra pit for Cleopatra, but I'll be outside on the sidewalk instead," he said. **United Auto Workers member Marc House** says he'll be at Bass Hall for the protest. "I've always enjoyed listening to local musicians. I'll be there with them because they're my friends and neighbors, and they bring such joy and happiness to the world. To farm them out to China ought to be a crime," he said. What's next - karaoke at Bass Hall?" **Screen Actors Guild member Betty Zoller** is urging SAG-AFTRA members to attend. "What the ballet is doing is a travesty. They're telling everybody its an 'opulent million dollar spectacular' but they don't mention the pre-recorded music. They should let *Cleopatra* out of her can," she said. **Musician Cass Acosta is coming over from Shreveport**, where symphony musicians are currently engaged in a bitter season-long strike. "I know that Shreveport orchestra musicians will be carrying picket signs at Bass Hall. Solidarity works. We hear the giant inflatable rat will make an appearance, so we'll have a new name for the show - 'CleoRatra'" he said.

http://www.musiciansdfw.org/pages/ballet_crisis.htm Release #7, Friday, March 27, 2009 9:00 am

For further information, contact Local 72-147 President Ray Hair
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