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MUSICIANS' UNION OFFERS FEDERAL MEDIATION TO RSO ORCHESTRA STILL WAITING FOR JUNE 18 CONCERT PAY PLAYERS SAY RSO IS WITHOLDING PAYMENT FOR ANTI-UNION PLEDGE

- WHO:** Dallas-Fort Worth Professional Musicians Association, affiliated Local 72-147 of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada, which represents more than 1700 professional musicians across North Texas and Southern Oklahoma, including musicians of the Dallas and Fort Worth Symphony Orchestras, The Dallas Opera Orchestra and the Richardson Symphony Orchestra.
- WHAT:** The Union has requested Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) assistance in resolving a dispute with Richard Symphony, Inc.
- WHY:** RSO used a gun-brandishing off-duty sheriff's deputy, private security guards and Dallas police officers to remove Union reps from a management-called June 30 Orchestra meeting in Richardson, where RSO president Jim Pierce announced that RSO would refuse to further recognize or negotiate a new contract with the musicians' union. RSO has contracted with the musicians union since 1992, with the existing contract expiring August 31, 2010. On July 1, still owing orchestra paychecks for a June 18 concert, Pierce and RSO manager George Landis issued musicians regressive, self-serving personal service contracts having a drop dead date of July 15, for the 2010/2011 season that eliminated the Union as the bargaining rep. "It looks like management is holding on to our pay, hoping that we will sell out the Union and sign away 18 years of contract gains and protections," said RSO French horn player Chrystal Stevens. "This adds insult to injury," she said. RSO actions have prompted the union to place RSO upon the AFM's International Unfair list, which effectively eliminates Union musicians from the RSO's roster. Union president Ray Hair has asked FMCS Commissioner Dave Renfro to contact Landis to request a mediation session between the parties. "We remain committed to good faith negotiations as a way to settle our differences," Hair said. AFM represents 90,000 professional musicians across the US and Canada. Until the RSO dispute is resolved, musicians will form picket and distribute leaflets to patrons to encourage them to refrain from attending RSO services. RSO members leafleted concertgoers at a May 8 performance to protest management's late wage payments, which have been chronically delinquent for most concerts over the past two years. A clip of [Conductor Anshel Brusilow's abusive rant](#) aimed at principal trumpeter Bert Truax who protested RSO's shabby treatment toward the orchestra, drew worldwide attention to the orchestra's struggle to get paid on time and to rehearse and perform with without injury and insult.

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