



UNA VOCE

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Message from the President

You are probably all aware that there has been a major change in the OCSM Executive Board. Rob McCosh announced a couple of years ago that he would be stepping down as OCSM President this summer, and his family has welcomed him back to a more normal life. We all owe Rob a great vote of thanks for his wise and energetic leadership of OCSM. (*see page 3 for other changes – ed.*)

This year's OCSM Conference could be called The Case of the Missing Persons. We lost most of our speakers because of the power outage in the east, and two of our expected presenters were unable to attend because of illness. Despite all this, we managed to have some lively discussions. As is quite often the case, there were no representatives from the Regina Symphony other than the longtime delegate, Gary Borton. This is not a problem just in Regina. We move our conference around the country not only so that travel costs can be equalized over the years but so that local musicians can attend. Watch for an OCSM conference near you – coming soon!

In September, I attended the Orchestras Canada board retreat, which took place over a weekend in Toronto. OCSM has not re-joined the OC board; I was there as an ex-officio, non-voting representative from OCSM. The weekend was devoted to determining which of the 30 recommendations for action that came out of the third phase of *Soundings* are actually do-able in the short term. We winnowed the recommendations down to about fifteen, and the *Soundings* project team (on which OCSM's representative is 1ST VP Eline Brock-Sanheim) will decide how to proceed with a long-term action plan.

It has come to my attention recently that not everyone who pays OCSM dues realizes quite how we operate. The 5-person board is not a board of overseers to direct the activities of fulltime employees in an office somewhere. We actually do the work, usually late at night and on weekends – in short, we act just like a players' committee -- and we must depend on all OCSM members for help with that. If you see that something needs to be done, please let us know. Talk to your OCSM delegate. Get in touch with a board member. Join the OCSM e-list <www.oosm-omosc.ca> and communicate your thoughts to your colleagues across the country. If you feel strongly about something, don't wait for someone else to handle it – write a petition or a position

paper yourself and solicit support via the list. Please don't come to us months after the fact and say that OCSM should have done this or that. In most cases, you're right, but perhaps we haven't been aware of the need or read the right article in the newspaper or known who to contact or simply had the time. Sometimes, our new officers burn with the zeal to make changes, and sometimes we're simply warm bodies who are willing to do some work (again, just as in many players' committees). Forgive me for preaching, and please give us your assistance. We want to hear from you.

Francine Schutzman

Soundings Update

These are active days for musicians. More and more we are being asked to participate in running our organizations and to share responsibility in the decision-making process. There are some which rely heavily on administrative work done by musicians, while others participate in the 'shared values' approach to contract negotiations in order to work out conditions that are mutually beneficial. We remain wary of that approach for our orchestras simply because of the concessionary agreements recently signed in orchestras such as the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra (see www.icsom.org for details).

At the moment, OCSM as an organization is exploring shared values with Orchestras Canada (OC) through *Soundings*. There is nothing earth shattering in the *Soundings* document; we all know where the problems lie. What is different this time is that everyone seems to acknowledge that the music is why we're here and that a strategic plan and vision for your orchestra's future are essential. It's not enough just to put out fires; we hope that *Soundings* will give us the tools for long-term stability. There are local crises but the entire industry is not in crisis and we have to build on the success stories.

Soundings is a three-part initiative launched last December. Phase 1 was a cross-country tour to visit ten orchestras. The team of a facilitator and recorder held separate sessions with musicians, board members, staff, volunteers, and in some cases with music directors. A questionnaire went to another ten orchestras. Phase 2 was the report to the Orchestras Canada biannual conference (June 5 – 8 in Toronto) of findings from the tour and questionnaires. For the first time, there was significant musician participation at the Orchestras Canada Conference and our presence was fully subsidized with grants from the Department of Canadian Heritage (there were 25 musicians, mostly from OCSM orchestras). All parties discussed the report in breakout groups and attempted to come up with a plan for Phase 3 – concrete recommendations and tools for best practices in our orchestras.

Not surprising to musicians, volunteer boards were identified as a major problem. Henry Fogel of ASOL (American Symphony Orchestra League) commented that board education is

the top priority in the U.S., as it is in Canada, and that ASOL and Orchestras Canada should be working together to develop a board-training manual. According to the *Soundings* research, boards are not functioning properly, partly because there is no training in board leadership and no communication among boards.

The first two phases are complete and the preliminary report is at Orchestras Canada's website <www.oc.ca>. The most difficult task in the entire process will be Phase 3 – implementing the recommendations. *Soundings* discussions took up the better part of a day at the OCSM Conference, kicked off with a panel consisting of **Laura Brownell** (SSD), **Katherine Carleton** (Executive Director of the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony), **Eline Brock-Sanheim** (OSQ violinist), and **Bruno Jean** (from the Department of Canadian Heritage), all of whom attended the Orchestras Canada Conference in June. Unfortunately, the power failure that hit Eastern Canada on Aug. 14 meant that Dan Donaldson, the new Executive Director of Orchestras Canada and representatives from the Canada Council and CBC were unable to attend. Here are some of the points that came out of the panel discussion:

- No one expects this process to be a “magic bullet”
- There must be three aspects for this process to be successful
 - 1) It must place the music in the place of most importance
 - 2) It must be positive – i.e. it must emphasize the successes in our profession and always treat what we do as relevant
 - 3) It has to produce “tools” and they must be implemented, i.e. it must have a practical component and not simply be rhetorical
- It must be truly co-operative, and not concessionary (it must represent all parties fairly at the table)
- It must find ways to deal with both crises (“triage” was a word that was used) and long-term planning. Bridge funding (to help orchestras in need) is an essential component of the former.
- The progress that Canadian orchestras have made in the last fifty years, both in terms of artistic achievement and levels of compensation was discussed in light of the *Soundings* initiatives.
- The need for accountability (managers and boards) was also discussed. There is a very strong need for performance evaluation at the top levels of our organizations.

For more on the 2003 OCSM Conference in Regina, please see OCSM Secretary Bob Fraser's report in the October *International Musician*.

Steve Mosher, with notes from Bob Fraser

Report on Business

Recommendation No. 1

Resolved, That OCSM/OMOSC appoint the firm of Grant Thornton, Winnipeg, as Auditors for the 2003-2004 year of operations.

Carried

Recommendation No. 2

Resolved, That OCSM/OMOSC appoint Stefan Jungkind of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra as OCSM/OMOSC Data Bank Operator for the 2003-2004 year of operations.

Carried

Recommendations come from the OCSM Executive Board and these two are status quo housekeeping items.

Recommendation No. 3

Whereas, Recent re-openings of collective agreements have resulted in mid-term changes to those agreements; and Whereas, Ratification of mid-term changes to collective agreements are not addressed in the AFM Bylaws; therefore, be it *Resolved*, That OCSM/OMOSC submit to the 2004 Canadian Conference and 2005 AFM Convention the following proposed bylaw change:

That Article 5 Section 21 be amended to include the following:

“Any and all mid-term changes to a Collective Bargaining Agreement negotiated by a Local shall be subject to a majority vote, secret ballot ratification by those AFM members in good standing determined to be eligible to ratify the agreement.”

Carried

There was a situation last year where a Local and Orchestra Management dropped an agreed pension increase without the players (or committee) noticing until after the agreement was ratified. This bylaw amendment would prevent Locals and/or Orchestra Committees from making a deal, or changing terms of the agreement, without consulting the orchestra at large. (Note: In Canada, the proper term is ‘collective agreement’ but we must make our proposals consistent with the AFM Bylaws in order for them to fly at the AFM Convention. Any conflicting language causes problems and the U.S. nomenclature is stronger.)

Recommendation No. 4

Whereas, Robert's Rules is the universal standard for parliamentary procedure in English; and

Whereas, The Code Morin is the universal standard for parliamentary procedure in French; therefore, be it

Resolved, That OCSM/OMOSC urge that all member orchestras adapt their Player Association bylaws to recognize the use of the latest edition of Robert's Rules or the Code Morin in all duly constituted meetings and deliberations; and be it further *Resolved*, That AFM-Canada update, translate, and disseminate the SSD-Canada pamphlet entitled *Contract Administration*; and be it further

Resolved, That OCSM/OMOSC encourage Locals and Player Committees to hold annual training seminars on the role and responsibilities of Player Committees, based on the information provided by SSD-Canada.

Carried

There seems to be a lack of understanding in our orchestras regarding the use of Robert's Rules and the Code Morin. They are designed to facilitate debate, not squelch it, and keep everyone on topic. A user-friendly version of Robert's Rules is available from SSD-Canada <czach@afm.org>.

Recommendation No. 5

Whereas, Article 2 of the OCSM/OMOSC Bylaws dated October 31, 1998 states Vancouver as the location of the Head Office; and Whereas, OCSM/OMOSC sought and received approval from Industry Canada on May 5, 2003 to amend our Bylaws with changes approved by the 2002 and 2001 Conferences; and Whereas, The Head Office of OCSM/OMOSC was moved from Vancouver to Toronto after last year's Conference; and

Whereas, The change in the Bylaws is a housekeeping rather than substantive change; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the 2003 OCSM/OMOSC Conference give retroactive approval to the change made to Article 2 of the Bylaws dated May 5, 2003.

Carried

This was an oversight at last year's conference that we only caught when we proofed the new edition of the bylaws.

Recommendation No. 6

Whereas, The Recording Musicians Association is a Player Conference representing colleagues in the commercial recording area who make their living working under AFM National Agreements for motion pictures; and

Whereas, There is growing concern that symphony orchestras, especially those with Electronic Media Guarantees in their collective agreements, will be asked to accept lower payments for electronic media work, especially in non-standard symphonic areas as delineated and defined in the Sound Recording Labor Agreement and the Symphony/Opera/Ballet Audio-Visual Agreement, that could undercut our colleagues who make their income solely from this type of work; therefore, be it

Resolved, That all OCSM/OMOSC orchestras be urged to negotiate language into their collective agreements that will prohibit their managements from selling their services for rates which are lower than those of AFM National Agreements.

Carried

This is the OCSM version of the ICSOM resolution which dealt with Electronic Media Guarantees (EMG). ICSOM presented it in reaction to the recent St Paul Chamber Orchestra agreement. OCSM orchestras must not allow income-conversion i.e. live services traded off for media services with no appropriate increase in pay. Live services are paid at one rate; electronic media services are paid at a rate in accordance with AFM National Agreements.

Recommendation No. 7

Whereas, the Symphonic Services division, AFM Canada, is experiencing a marked increase in workload due to necessary attention to industry-level issues; and

Whereas, the OCSM/OMOSC membership requires quicker response and better availability of print resources in both official languages from SSD Canada; and

Whereas, OCSM/OMOSC supported an increase in symphonic work dues at the 2003 AFM Convention that will net at least \$15,000 in additional annual revenue for the AFM; therefore, be it

Resolved, That OCSM/OMOSC urge AFM Canada to allocate increased resources to the Symphonic Services Division.

Carried

The 2003 AFM Convention passed a comprehensive financial package that included a .05% increase to symphonic work dues this year (c. \$161k per year in new money) and raised per-capita dues by \$2 in each of the next 4 years (c. \$181k per year). These are not huge increases, but they will net significant revenue for the Federation, some of which must be channelled into the chronically under-staffed Symphonic Services Divisions in both Toronto and New York. The Player Conference Council had discussions with the AFM International Executive Board at the ICSOM Conference (the week after the OCSM Conference) and again in California in September. The AFM Finance Committee is on record, orally and in a letter from the Finance Committee Chair, pledging increased support to SSD.

Recommendation No. 8

Whereas, OCSM/OMOSC Delegates from the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra have for several years expressed concern

about unfair competition from the non-union orchestra known as the National Academy Orchestra; therefore, be it

Resolved, That OCSM/OMOSC urge AFM Canada to respond favourably to any requests for assistance or rulings that might arise from this situation.

Carried

The OCSM Conference has been monitoring the situation in Hamilton for many years. The latest information that the Conference received was that the Hamilton Local is negotiating an agreement with the mentors of the National Academy Orchestra. The OCSM Executive proposed this recommendation to acknowledge that an agreement between the Local and mentors of the NAO is a good first step; to convey that we hope the students will be brought into the agreement in the next round of negotiations and; to encourage the AFM Canadian Office to keep an eye on developments so that they may assist in securing a comprehensive agreement.

Resolution No. 1

Whereas, The 2003 CBC negotiations left an unresolved matter regarding the appropriate use of the existing program audition clause in the CBC agreement (Article 3.2.1) regarding orchestral remote broadcasts; therefore, be it

Resolved, That OCSM/OMOSC call upon Bobby Herriot, AFM Vice President from Canada, to enter into a side letter agreement with the CBC as soon as possible that states that Article 3 shall not apply for orchestral remotes; and be it further

Resolved, That, in the event that the CBC uses Article 3 for orchestral remotes, the AFM will grieve said use.

Carried

Apparently, there were two different side letters with two different dates regarding the interpretation of Article 3. There is a lingering misunderstanding and OCSM requests that the new VP from Canada clear up this situation in no uncertain terms.

CODA

This summer we experienced big changes in the makeup of the OCSM Executive. Our new President is Francine Schutzman of the National Arts Centre Orchestra. Francine is a tireless advocate for musicians and is also a member of the board of Ottawa Local 180. She has participated in twenty-one OCSM Conferences as a delegate or member of the executive and we know that she will continue to serve well. Eline Brock-Sanheim of l'orchestre symphonique de Quebec is the new First Vice-President, a one-year term to replace Brian Larson. The new Second Vice-President is Karen Foster of the Vancouver Symphony. Bob Fraser is another veteran of OCSM Conferences and former Secretary-Treasurer of Victoria Local 247. He joins the executive as Secretary, a one-year term to replace Francine. Elaine Thompson continues as Treasurer – her fourth year in that position.

Those changes mean that we said goodbye to three of the five board members – Rob McCosh, Brian Larson and Steve Mosher. First Vice-President Brian Larson resigned just prior to the conference and is taking a one-year leave from the Vancouver Symphony to work with the Malaysia Philharmonic in Kuala Lumpur. Second Vice-President Steve Mosher did not stand for re-election this year. He is also taking a one-year leave (from the National Ballet Orchestra) and is living in Ireland where his wife is doing a teacher exchange. (*The grass is always greener... – ed.*) He will continue as the Editor of UNA VOCE.

Rob McCosh has been through the wars with OCSM, the AFM, and as a horn player with Symphony Nova Scotia and now the Calgary Philharmonic. He forged some very strong connections in his years with OCSM and is a respected voice in

the AFM, Orchestras Canada and in the orchestral community. The OCSM Executive dusted off the bylaws to discover that, despite President Rob McCosh's wish to step down, we are able to keep him shackled to us by making him a 'Member of Distinction'. This means that OCSM can deputize Rob to speak on our behalf in whatever forum we see fit, pending his acceptance of the task of course. Rob, we'll let you know when you can take a break.

The 2003 OCSM Conference unanimously adopted the following **Recommendation No.9:**

"Resolved, That Rob McCosh be named the very first 'Member of Distinction' of OCSM/OMOSC, that we may call on him for his assistance and expertise at our whim."

We will miss Rob's leadership at the Conference but more important, we will miss his ongoing commitment to the issues confronting orchestras, his ability to get to the core of the problem, and his no-nonsense approach, all the while showing utmost respect for an adversary.

Closing remarks to the 2003 OCSM Conference Rob McCosh

Yeats once notated the title of a book of poems by Delmore Schwartz – "In dreams begin responsibilities". When I read that title a whole shopping list came to mind; a shopping list that, for the most part, cannot be bought but one that can only come to fruition through hard work and vision by all. Here, in no particular order, is my list of dreams for our profession.

- I dream of an AFM Canada and Locals that evolve from being a trade association which musicians voluntarily recognize to become a true union as in the U.S.;
- I dream of managements and boards that let the artistic vision of their organization always inform and lead their decision-making processes;
- I dream of musicians recognizing that the professionalism they bring to performing needs to guide their actions and behavior both on and off the stage;
- I dream of a Canada Council which creates for orchestras the same type of crisis intervention system currently enjoyed by the theatre and dance companies;
- I dream of a union which finally recognizes the chilling effect of employer-influenced Local boards;
- I dream of a strike fund which becomes universal, offering protection not just to symphony musicians but to all members of the AFM;
- I dream of a society which recognizes the critical importance of the Arts in creating better societies, and so demands commensurate support for the Arts through arts-based education;
- I dream of governments which listen to its citizens and in so doing structures tax laws which promote greater philanthropy;
- I dream of funders who fund artistic excellence and who place the product above the bottom-line;
- I dream of a stronger OCSM that has closer communication with the Players Committees in our orchestras to raise our profile and perception of relevance to their orchestra;
- I dream of managements that bring the same level of expertise and competence to the organization as the musicians bring to the stage;
- I dream of conductors who take their leadership skills off of the podium and into the community within and without;

- I dream of a day when AFM Canada has a strong lobbyist in Ottawa to effect the kind of dialogue and agenda that is already being enjoyed by our brothers and sisters in the U.S.;
- I dream of an Orchestras Canada organization that truly represents orchestras and not just the managements of those orchestras;
- I dream of an AFM Convention where politics takes a back seat to proactive legislation for the greater good;
- I dream of musician board representatives who always remember they are there to represent the musicians;
- I dream of a CBC that gets back to recording our orchestras which reflects Canadians back to Canadians;
- I dream of Players Committees who run their meetings in an established democratic fashion and communicate with the rank-and-file;
- I dream of negotiations where each side always treats the other with respect and dignity; and where revenge is never a motive for a bargaining position;
- I dream of boards which operate according to best practices in governance;
- I dream of a continuation of the increased dialogue between the Player Conferences; and in that dialogue recognizing that we will not always agree on everything; but we will respect our differences;
- I dream of more money for our organizations so that we can take risks by performing new music in new ways to move the art form forward;
- I dream of more money so that the training and human resources needed to make our organizations strong and effective can take place;
- I dream of more money so that our size, seasons and salaries can grow;
- I dream of more money so our organizations can stop operating hand-to-mouth and make long-range plans for the future.

The one problem identified across the board in the *Soundings* project was the lack of money. Somerset Maugham wrote in *Of Human Bondage*, "There is nothing so degrading as the constant anxiety about one's means of livelihood... Money is like a sixth sense without which you cannot make a complete use of the other five." Many of the things that I hope and wish for can be achieved without money. But the most critical challenges will only be solved through increased funding for the Arts.

So even though I am stepping down as President of OCSM/OMOSC I will continue to dream. And because I will continue to dream I will never completely leave the industry's landscape. Give me a call. Let's share and work on our dreams together. Our world needs responsible societies.

OCSM EXECUTIVE 2003 - 2004

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1st Vice President – Eline Brock-Sanheim (OSQ)
2nd Vice President – Karen Foster (Vancouver)
Secretary – Bob Fraser (Victoria)
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