

# AGMA

Announcements

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**AGMA AND SDC JOIN TOGETHER  
IN ENGAGING MEDICAL EXPERTS  
TO CONSULT ON COVID-19,  
INDUSTRY REOPENING**

# AGMA

AMERICAN GUILD *of* MUSICAL ARTISTS



NEW YORK CITY - With discussions on reopening beginning around the country across various industries, the American Guild of Musical Artists (AGMA) and Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC) announce that they have engaged the services of medical experts to assist with COVID-19 safety planning and ensure that their members are protected.

The two unions—AGMA, which represents opera performers, choral singers, and dancers, and SDC, representing stage directors and choreographers—will be working with Dr. Mark Cunningham-Hill, Dr. Laura S. Welch, and Dr. Stephen J. Anderson, who have multiple decades worth of experience in protecting the health of employees and maintaining healthy workplaces.

“AGMA and SDC are ready to work together with our team of doctors and our signatory companies to navigate the complex decisions surrounding reopening,” said Leonard Egert, National Executive Director of AGMA and Laura Penn, SDC Executive Director, in a joint statement. “With the expertise of Dr. Cunningham-Hill and his colleagues, we are confident we will identify the risks, outline ways to protect everyone, and achieve an agreement for a safe reopening. We are confident that we will emerge from this crisis with the utmost focus on our members’ health and safety.”

Headed by Dr. Cunningham-Hill, the three doctors will work with AGMA and SDC leadership to help identify safety concerns in a COVID-19 environment and ensure that these concerns are addressed and best practices are implemented before artists return to work at AGMA’s 60+ signatory companies and SDC’s employers that include producers on Broadway, Off-Broadway, League of Resident Theatre (LORT), and others representing hundreds of signatory companies across the country.

“What AGMA artists do requires the ability to collaborate closely. Their art is then shared with even larger groups of people who gather to share an experience together, at the same time, in the same place. When talking about reopening, we need to first address the unprecedented safety and health risks that any performing artist may face,” said Ray Menard, AGMA President. “After speaking with membership and hearing their thoughts and concerns, we couldn’t fathom beginning this process without the guidance of trusted medical professionals.”

“Whether in the rehearsal hall, backstage, onstage, or in the theatre, SDC members and our collaborators need to know that the producers and theatre companies we work with have and are following science-driven guidelines for a safe workplace,” said Evan Yionoulis, SDC President. “There is much to be done, and we are pleased to be able to work with this expert medical team as we rebuild the means to share live stories of our common humanity, so necessary in this time.”

**Dr. Mark Cunningham-Hill** led the response to SARS, MERS, Zika, and Ebola for GlaxoSmithKline and Johnson & Johnson and is now aiding international and U.S.-based companies in navigating through this pandemic. A transformative senior executive and expert physician, his experience spans Occupational Medicine, Wellness, Mental Wellbeing, Work-Life Effectiveness, Personal Energy Management, Digital Health Technologies, Occupational Health and Hygiene Risk Management, and Well Building Design.

**Dr. Laura S. Welch** is an occupational medicine specialist, board certified in internal medicine and occupational medicine, licensed to practice in Maryland, and consultant. With over 30 years of experience, she has the acute ability to analyze the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of both groups of people and individuals, to best promote health and safety in the workplace.

For 15 years she served as medical director at the Center for Construction Research and Training (CPWR), a research institute affiliated with the Building and Construction Trades department of the AFL-CIO. She has served as a consultant to many federal agencies, including CDC, OSHA NIOSH and the National Academy of Sciences. Dr. Welch has worked with several union-management committees on health and safety issues, including United Auto Workers-Boeing.

**Dr. Steven J. Anderson** is a renowned sports medicine doctor who has provided medical care for the Pacific Northwest Ballet, the United States Diving Team, NCAA and Pac 12 sports, and numerous local high schools and club teams. Dr. Anderson has served as Chair of the Committee on Sports Medicine and Fitness for the American Academy of Pediatrics and has been a Seattle Magazine and/or Seattle Metropolitan Magazine “Top Doctor” on multiple occasions.

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## **ABOUT AGMA**

*The American Guild of Musical Artists (AGMA) is the labor union that represents over 7,000 artists from disciplines that create America's operatic, dance, and choral heritage. [www.musicalartists.org](http://www.musicalartists.org)*

## **ABOUT SDC**

*SDC is the theatrical union that represents 4,300 professional stage Directors and Choreographers throughout the United States, protecting the rights, health, and livelihood of all its Members working in jurisdictions including: Broadway and National tours, Off-Broadway, Association of Non-Profit Theatre Companies, New York City (ANTC), League of Resident Theatres (LORT), Council of Resident Stock Theatres (CORST), Traditional Summer Stock (TSS), New England Area Theatres (NEAT), Dinner Theatre (DTA), Regional Musical Theatre (RMT), and Outdoor Musical Stock (OMS). [SDCweb.org](http://SDCweb.org)*