



AGMAZINE

Official Publication of the American Guild of Musical Artists
A Branch of the Associated Actors and Artistes of America • Affiliated with the AFL-CIO

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

BY ALAN S. GORDON

What is AGMA?

Occasionally, members who don't have much contact with the union, and prospective members early in their careers or working at non-AGMA houses, ask: "What does AGMA do for its members?" I thought that this issue of *AGMAZine* might be an appropriate time to answer that question in a more formal manner.

Simply stated, AGMA, the American Guild of Musical Artists, AFL-CIO, is the labor union that represents opera singers, dancers, concert choristers, supernumeraries, and production personnel in the United States. Many performing artists will someday reach the point in their career when membership in AGMA, or in one or more of the other talent unions, will become compulsory. Thus, AGMA is, or will become, "your" union.

AGMA's goal is easy to describe: We strive to protect the rights and interests of those singers, dancers, supers, and production personnel.

Artists who perform at most major American opera and dance companies and work under AGMA contracts are required, pursuant to federal labor law, to become and remain members of AGMA as a condition of being employed by those companies.

Although performing artists live to perform, the beauty of their art is not always sufficient to pay their bills or to perfect their art free from employer interference, free from illegal discrimination, or free from the problems caused by a disadvantageous bargaining position.

AGMA members join in the long history of performers who find it much more advantageous to have their unions deal with their contractual and legal concerns while they concentrate on advancing their careers. AGMA is one of four unions that represent performing artists: Equity (in legitimate theaters), SAG (in motion pictures), AFTRA (on television and radio), and AGMA, which represents artists at all major opera houses, choral companies, and dance companies in the U.S.

So, what does AGMA do for performing artists? We protect them. We negotiate contracts, called collective bargaining agreements, that provide guaranteed wages, standardized working conditions, rehearsal and overtime pay, regulated work hours, vacation and sick pay, resolution of disputes, and protection against discrimination and abuse in any form.

We enforce those contracts. We ensure that our collective bargaining agreements provide for health insurance, pension coverage, and protection against unreasonable working conditions and unsafe work places; and we make sure that employers live up to their contractual obligations.

We protect the legal, civil, and artistic rights of our members, through an aggressive, litigious, and constant vigilance.

For choristers, many of our contracts provide for job tenure and for AGMA-

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FROM THE PRESIDENT JAMES ODOM

***There May Be Trouble Ahead***

Unless you have just this moment awakened from a deep coma, you should be aware that our great nation is facing some tough times. The economy, national security, health care – actually, that coma is starting to sound rather appealing.

Now, stick with me, here. I'm not going to be campaigning for the candi-

date(s) I'm backing in the upcoming election. I'm not even going to identify them, although if you've spent more than about ten seconds with me – or have even spent more than about ten seconds reading anything I've ever written – you should be able to figure that out fairly easily.

AGMA does not, as a matter of policy, engage in political action. I happen to think that is a good policy. Yes, there are issues and legislation that I think we should support, but I always come back to these two points: not everyone always agrees with me (I know, you're shocked) and our resources are limited and are better spent on direct member benefits like contract negotiation and enforcement.

However, not engaging in political action does not mean that we, as individuals, should not be politically active.

So what I am going to do is encourage, exhort, nag, annoy – well, okay – bully you about your responsibilities as an American citizen. You will recognize this as something I do on a regular basis, usually around election time. There is a reason for this. It is the central tenet of my political philosophy.

There is no greater responsibility as a citizen than exercising your right to vote.

I would be lying if I told you that I don't care which candidate it is for whom you vote. But I care more that you actually vote than I care that you vote the way I think you should.

And I care that you vote smart. I'm going to use an analogy here, and if you recognize some of your behaviors in this analogy, I both apologize and suggest that you might want to think about changing those behaviors.

Political campaigns are like the early stages of dating. (Well, some of them are more like bar hook-ups, but I'm going to try to keep this at a more civilized level.) In the early stages of dating, most people are very careful to show their best, most attractive sides. They try to present their opinions in such a way as to not offend, and they try to say things that they know the other person wants to hear.

The skilled dater always keeps in mind that behind all this charm and promise is a person who is going to leave their underwear on the floor, drink out of the milk carton and squeeze the toothpaste from the middle of the tube. What you have to decide is if the bright silver of promise is strong enough to survive the tarnish of reality.

So check facts and figures. Remember that if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Remember that knowing how to post something on the internet does not make a person an expert or even informed. Get all the information you can from the most reliable sources you can. Remember that the reliability of a source is usually related to the interest they have in any particular topic. Remember that you're probably not going to have drinks and dinner with the person you vote for, but you are going to have to live with the decisions they make about how your country is run.

Remember that I know you know all this. I just want to remind you. Well, and push a little.

November 4 is not that far away.

Vote smart.

Vote!

Executive Director's Report (continued from page 1)

member-preference at auditions. For solo artists, our contracts provide for pay-or-play provisions, so that once a principal singer is contracted for work, he or she gets paid even if their contract is terminated. For dancers, AGMA contracts assure living wages, safe dancing conditions, and self-empowerment. For stage directors and stage managers, we assure artistic freedom, adequate preparation time, and the right to demand compliance with our contracts and their health and safety provisions.

All AGMA contracts provide for absolute equality of workplace opportunity, and members' rights under AGMA contracts are enforced by our staff lawyers and outside counsel who comprise the most extensive network of legal services available from any entertainment union.

Despite the fact that AGMA is the smallest of the entertainment unions, it is unique in several crucial respects. First, unlike SAG, AFTRA or Equity, AGMA recognizes the need for performers to accept as much work as is possible and, consequently, AGMA doesn't prohibit its members from working non-union jobs.

Second, although it has the lowest initiation fees and dues of any talent union, AGMA has iron-clad contracts and a staff of exceptionally skilled negotiators and attorneys to protect those contracts and to provide extensive services to our members.

Third, it's the only entertainment union that, while being professionally administered, is actually run entirely by its members. Our leadership, members who are elected by other members, creates AGMA's policies which are then, in turn, implemented by its professional staff.

Fourth, AGMA does not have nationwide votes on its collective bargaining agreements. Only those members who actually work for any particular AGMA company can vote on the ratification of contracts that affect them.

Fifth, AGMA doesn't "organize" in the traditional union sense. We don't attempt to convince performers to join. Rather, when a non-member asks us why it's good to belong to AGMA, we tell them to ask any member. Once someone has

worked in an AGMA house after working non-union, they immediately understand the kind of protections guaranteed and enforced by an AGMA contract.

Sixth, despite a nationwide decrease in union membership, over the past seven years, AGMA's membership has continued to grow at a rate of 1% per month. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, AGMA is an entirely "open" union. Since membership in AGMA is available to artists at any time in their careers, emerging professionals can obtain a variety of benefits and assistance from joining AGMA, even when much of their work is non-union.

AGMA's basic philosophy is this: whatever hurts a singer or a dancer anywhere hurts singers and dancers everywhere, and we strive to prevent harm to those artists and to help them advance their careers.

Another thing AGMA does for its members is to oversee the relationships between singers and their agents. In theory, the relationship between AGMA and agents representing singers should be symbiotic — both represent the same artists and share the same goal of protecting their clients. In practice, however, it's often not the case. AGMA has promulgated a "Code of Professional Standards for Agents and Managers" so that artists can have a handy checklist of the kinds of things that should alert them to potential improprieties or unethical conduct. When a member has problems with an agent, AGMA solves those problems. Our extensive litigation efforts to assure that agents live up to their responsibilities to their clients have saved our members hundreds of thousands of dollars in what, otherwise, would have been personal legal fees.

As in any entertainment labor union, AGMA's structure includes both a professional staff of employees who administer the union, and a system of internal government that sets the policy for the union. Our governing entity is called the Board of Governors and is comprised of elected Officers and Governors who are members of the union and are elected by the members of the union. Any member, even new members, can run for election

to the Board of Governors and can help shape the policies that protect all artists.

AGMA's senior staff consists of lawyers, contract negotiators, and administrators. Some are lawyers who worked for unions or in the entertainment business and others are lawyers and negotiators who were, earlier in their careers, AGMA-represented performing artists and attained their negotiating experience while serving as shop stewards and union delegates at AGMA signatory employers. The one thing that AGMA's staff has in common with the professional staffs of the other talent unions, is the dedication of their professional lives to the protection of the men and women who, in turn, create America's cultural heritage.

AGMA gives assistance across the country with representation in New York, Philadelphia, Washington/Baltimore, Miami, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle. Together, the staff and the elected officers provide a network of coverage that has one purpose: to protect artists' rights and to secure for them the maximum level of available benefits.

Among labor relations professionals there's little question that AGMA does the best job of protecting its members' rights; that despite the lowest dues and initiation fee structure, it provides the most extensive and comprehensive network of legal, contract, and other membership services; that it has negotiated beneficial contracts for its members without having to strike; and that it is, by far, the most open and democratic of entertainment unions.

To learn more about AGMA and what it does for its members, just ask any AGMA member, talk to any AGMA staff member, or e-mail AGMA's National Executive Director, Alan Gordon, directly, at AGMANY@aol.com, or call him at (800) 543-2462.

Whether you join AGMA now or later in your career, AGMA looks forward to and welcomes your membership. The movie *Ghostbusters* popularized the catch phrase: "Who you gonna call?" Whenever they need help, guidance or advice, AGMA members know who to call.

2008 ELECTION RESULTS

TOTAL NUMBER OF ENVELOPES MAILED: 5,916

TOTAL ENVELOPES RECEIVED: 845 TOTAL INVALID ENVELOPES: 24

2008 BOARD OF GOVERNORS ELECTION RESULTS

01 NEW YORK AREA

CHORISTERS (3 VACANCIES)

Timothy Breese	184
Rose Anderson	168
Robert Kuehn	161
Brian Baldwin	118
Write-in votes	2

DANCERS (2 VACANCIES)

Jonathan Pessolano	199
<i>Ian Thatcher</i>	12
Other write-in votes	19

SOLOISTS (2 VACANCIES)

Belinda Oswald	217
<i>Jonathan Green</i>	1
Other write-in votes	36

STAGE MGRS./DIRS./CHOR. (1 VACANCY)

Terry Ganley	206
Write-in votes	7

02 So. CALIFORNIA AREA

CHORISTERS (2 VACANCIES)

David Schnell	87
Tim Smith	74
Jonathan Curtsinger	70
Write-in votes	5

DANCERS (1 VACANCY)

Peggy Hickey	111
Write-in votes	2

03 CHICAGO/MIDWEST AREA

CHORISTERS (3 VACANCIES)

Joseph Fosselman	138
Margaret Harden	138
<i>John Concepcion-Wall</i>	17
Other write-in votes	31

DANCERS (1 VACANCY)

Sondra Karman	153
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STAGE MGRS./DIRS./CHOR. (1 VACANCY)

Peggy Stenger	152
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04 SAN FRANCISCO AREA

CHORISTERS (1 VACANCY)

Mark Hernandez	75
Write-in votes	1

SOLOISTS (1 VACANCY)

Antonio Nagore	70
Write-in votes	1

05 NEW ORLEANS AREA

All Board positions currently filled.

06 PHILADELPHIA AREA

CHORISTERS (1 VACANCY)

Evelyn Santiago-Schulz	38
Write-in votes	5

DANCERS (1 VACANCY)

<i>Amanda Miller</i>	1
Other write-in votes	3

07 WASH./BALTIMORE AREA

CHORISTERS (3 VACANCIES)

Erika Juengst	77
Christopher Rhodovi	75
<i>Anthony Torchia</i>	13
Other write-in votes	8

DANCERS (1 VACANCY)

Barbara Stuckey	64
Write-in votes	1

08 PITTSBURGH AREA

All Board positions currently filled.

09 NEW ENGLAND AREA

SOLOISTS (1 VACANCY)

<i>Marilyn Bulli</i>	2
Other write-in votes	8

10 TEXAS/OKLAHOMA AREA

CHORISTERS (1 VACANCY)

Matthew Woodbury	20
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SOLOISTS (1 VACANCY)

<i>Steven Hall</i>	3
Other write-in votes	3

11 NORTHWEST AREA

CHORISTERS (1 VACANCY)

Maria Leatha	56
Write-in votes	1

DANCERS (1 VACANCY)

<i>Rickey Klein</i>	1
Other write-in votes	5

SOLOISTS (1 VACANCY)

<i>Wade Baker</i>	25
Other write-in votes	14

KEY: **Bold** = newly elected Governors;
Italics = winners by write-in

2007-2009 NATIONAL OFFICERS*

PRESIDENT: James Odom

4TH VICE PRESIDENT: Sara Stewart

1ST VICE PRESIDENT: Gerald Otte

5TH VICE PRESIDENT: Gregory Stapp

2ND VICE PRESIDENT: John Coleman

TREASURER: Lynn Lundgren

3RD VICE PRESIDENT: Colby Roberts

RECORDING SECRETARY: Louis Perry

*Recording Secretary Mitchell Sendrowiz resigned from office, effective May 31, 2008. By action of the Board, Louis Perry was elected Recording Secretary beginning June 1, 2008, for the remainder of the term, which expires on May 31, 2009.

2008 BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

01 NEW YORK AREA

CHORISTERS

Rose Anderson 2011
Glenn Bater 2009
Timothy Breese 2011
Linda Doria 2010
David Frye 2009
Karen Grahn 2009
Robert Kuehn 2011
Robert Maher 2010
Pamela Smith 2009

DANCERS

William Agliata 2009
Stephanie Godino 2009
Christine McMillan 2010
Jonathan Pessolano 2011
Ian Thatcher 2011

SOLOISTS

Osceola Davis 2010
Cherry Duke 2009
Jonathan Green 2011
Greer Grimsley 2009
LeRoy Lehr 2009
Craig Montgomery 2010
Belinda Oswald 2011
Kyle Pfortmiller 2009
Melanie Sonnenberg 2009
Anita Terzian 2010

STAGE MGRS/DIRECTORS/CHOREOGRAPHERS

Terry Ganley 2011
Raymond Menard 2010

02 So. CALIFORNIA AREA

CHORISTERS

Scott Blois 2010
Joseph DeStefano 2009
Heidi Herzog 2009
David Schnell 2011
Tim Smith 2011
Jennifer Wallace 2010

DANCERS

Peggy Hickey 2011

SOLOISTS

Michael Gallup 2009

STAGE MGRS/DIRECTORS/CHOREOGRAPHERS

Lisa Kable 2010

03 CHICAGO/MIDWEST AREA

CHORISTERS

Matthew Carroll 2009
John Concepcion-Wall 2011
Chuck Coyl (Actor) 2010
Joseph Fosselman 2011
Margaret Harden 2011
Lorene Richardson 2010
Cole Seaton 2009

DANCERS

Michael Anderson 2009
Sondra Karman 2011

SOLOISTS

Christopher Feigum 2009
Rodell Rosel 2010

STAGE MGRS/DIRECTORS/CHOREOGRAPHERS

Peggy Stenger 2011

04 SAN FRANCISCO AREA

CHORISTERS

Julianne Booth 2010
Mark Hernandez 2011

DANCERS

Christopher Anderson 2010
Nicholas Smith 2009

SOLOISTS

Antonio Nagore 2011

05 NEW ORLEANS AREA

CHORISTERS

Julie Condy 2009

06 PHILADELPHIA AREA

CHORISTERS

Maren Montalbano 2009
Evelyn Santiago-Schulz 2011

DANCERS

Amanda Miller 2011

SOLOISTS

Sara Blann 2010

07 WASH./BALTIMORE AREA

CHORISTERS

Erika Juengst 2011
Joe Minor 2010
Christopher Rhodovi 2011
Anthony Torchia 2010

DANCERS

Barbara Stuckey 2011

SOLOISTS

J Austin Bitner 2010
Paul McIlvaine 2009

STAGE MGRS/DIRECTORS/CHOREOGRAPHERS

Lynn Krynicki 2009

08 PITTSBURGH AREA

CHORISTERS

Kellie McCurdy Ryan 2009

09 NEW ENGLAND AREA

SOLOISTS

Marilyn Bulli 2011

10 TEXAS/OKLAHOMA AREA

CHORISTERS

Matthew Woodbury 2009

DANCERS

Nicholas Leschke 2010

SOLOISTS

Steven Hall 2011

11 NORTHWEST AREA

CHORISTERS

Maria Leatha 2011
George Scott 2010

DANCERS

Rickey Klein 2011

SOLOISTS

Wade Baker 2011

Key: **Bold** = Newly elected Governors

**As of the September 15, 2008, Board Meeting.

AGMA Now Has A Guest Artist Agreement

by Alan S. Gordon, National Executive Director

AGMA's Board of Governors has approved a "Guest Artist Agreement" that any member in any category can use for work at non-AGMA employers. The Guest Artist Agreement can be used in either of two ways for any job you are offered.

First, if your employer agrees, it can be used as a binding agreement between you and the employer, for whatever terms you can negotiate or agree upon. The form, which appears on page 7, can be photocopied, and you or your agent can negotiate some or all of its suggested contractual provisions with any prospective employer. A downloadable copy also appears on our website, www.musicalartists.org. Use of this

form should be acceptable to non-AGMA employers because it does not require an entire AGMA shop and includes only those terms to which your prospective employer is willing to agree. Please note that, as with any non-AGMA employer, AGMA working dues are not payable on any such work.

The Guest Artist Agreement allows you and your employer to agree to designate Health Plan B contributions and/or Retirement contributions, and can be easily modified to include any mutually-agreeable terms and conditions for your employment.

If you and your employers agree to use this form, you must forward a mutually-signed copy of it to me at AGMA if

you want AGMA to be able to assist you in enforcing its terms.

Second, if any of your prospective employers are not willing to use the Guest Artist Form to make a binding contract with AGMA on your behalf, you can nonetheless still use the information on the form as a template for negotiating your own agreements.

As noted above, the Guest Artist Agreement can be used by any member in any category with any non-AGMA employer. If you need additional assistance or tips on ways in which to negotiate the use of the form with prospective employers, please contact me directly at AGMANY@aol.com or at (212) 265-3687.

AGMA Says "Thank You!" To Tom Jamerson

On September 3, AGMA staff, former and current members of the Board of Governors, and friends and family gathered to recognize and show their appreciation to Tom Jamerson upon his retirement from AGMA's senior staff.

Tom joined the professional staff of AGMA in 1984. Over the next twenty-four years he negotiated contracts, assisted in contract enforcement and grievance issues, served as the staff liaison to the Schedule C Committee, and processed visa applications for foreign Artists as required by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Tom also maintained the archives of original contracts and administered the AGMA website.

Tom represented AGMA at the Four A's and the Theatre Authority East, holding the position of Treasurer for both those organizations, and he served on the Board of the Department of Professional Employees (a department of the AFL-CIO) where he was on the Arts, Entertainment, and Media Industry Committee.

While his contributions and dedication to AGMA as a staff member are impressive enough, Tom's service to AGMA actu-



Tom was presented with an enlarged photo of himself as a young soloist that was signed by the AGMA staff. His wife Celeste looks on.

ally started much earlier. He was a member of the Board of Governors for eleven years prior to his joining the staff. During a seventeen-year career as a Principal Artist, he performed internationally, although his "home" company was New York City Opera. At NYCO he was the Soloist Delegate and a member of the negotiating committee.

During the celebration of Tom's career there were many remembrances of specific special moments. For instance, Membership Department Supervisor Candace Itow remembered Tom calming a nervous young dancer (Ms. Itow, herself) who had to put an enormous cape on a temperamental *Turandot*.

President Odom was unable to attend because of performance obligations, but sent a letter recalling his negotiating experiences with Tom. President Odom went on to commend Tom for his "assistance, cooperation, support and unfailing good cheer." President Odom concluded the letter by saying "Tom is the institutional memory of AMGA. He will be sorely missed."

Although Tom is retiring from his position at AGMA, he will remain active in the musical world through his position on the faculty of the Conservatory of Music of Westchester.

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GUEST ARTIST AGREEMENT

1. This Agreement, between the Employer, the Artist and AGMA is entered into on the ___ day of ___, 20__.

The services of such Artist shall be rendered during rehearsals of the production from ___ through ___ and during performances of the production on ___.

2. Gross Compensation: It is agreed that the compensation will be: Rehearsals: ___ Performances: ___

3. Benefits: [] Seven percent of the Gross Compensation shall be forwarded to the AGMA Health Plan B on the Artist's behalf.

4. Billing: The Artist shall receive billing in all programs. Each such program shall also state: Members of AGMA appear through the courtesy of the American Guild of Musical Artists, AFL-CIO.

5. Check applicable paragraphs. Employer may include such additional benefits as it may agree to accept: [] Except for unforeseen emergencies, Artists will not be required to rehearse more than 6 hours per day or thirty hours per week.

6. Check if applicable: [] Any dispute arising under this contract between Employer and AGMA on behalf of Artist shall be exclusively resolved pursuant to the Labor Arbitration Rules of the American Arbitration Association, in [] New York or [] ___.

Artist: ___ Employer: ___
Signature: ___ By (Signature): ___
Address: ___ Address: ___
E-Mail: ___ E-Mail: ___

Agent's name & contact info: _____

Note: A copy of this Agreement must be sent to AGMA by Artist or Agent. AGMA working dues are not payable for this engagement.

For Office Use Only: Received by AGMA on (Date): _____ by _____, AGMA.

AREA NEWS

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

The Show Must Go On

by Jennifer Wallace, AGMA Board Member, Area Chair, and LA Opera Chorus member; and Mark Lyons, Los Angeles Opera Editorial Manager



Lisa Kable and Nicholas

In addition to the heart-wrenching drama happening on the stage of Los Angeles Opera's recent production of *La Rondine*, there was an extra bit of drama going on behind the scenes when that production

opened on June 7, 2008. Stage Manager (and AGMA Board member) Lisa Kable-Blanchard went into labor shortly before the curtain rose on opening night.

After attending the final lighting rehearsal that afternoon, she went to her office where her contractions began. "At first, I wasn't completely sure that it was for real, and I knew it was still a little early to go to the hospital," she said. "Since I

was still able to do everything, I figured I might as well stay and finish." She notified her husband Michael, who came to the performance with the hospital bag, watched from the audience, and checked in with her backstage during the two intermissions.

"I'll admit I thought Lisa was a little nuts when I first arrived at the theater," Michael said. "But she felt good, and the only thing crazier than letting your wife call a show while in labor would be trying to STOP your wife from calling a show while in labor."

At the start of the performance, Lisa's contractions were seven minutes apart, but she was able to talk and concentrate through them and believes that it actually helped to have something else to think about while calling the show.

Production Stage Manager, Lyla Forlani stayed nearby throughout the evening and was ready to take over at any moment — but there was no need.

When the show ended at 10:30 p.m., Lisa and Michael headed to the hospital where Nicholas Charles Blanchard (8 lbs. 2 oz., 20 1/2 inches long) was born at 4:44 the next morning.

Lyla filled in for Lisa for the remaining performances; Lisa is scheduled to return to LA Opera later this season to work on the company's new Ring cycle.

Congratulations to the proud parents!

MEET THE CANDIDATES

A forum meeting will be held on Saturday, November 15, 2008 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the AFM Local #47 union hall, upstairs in the Board Room. The address is 817 Vine St., Los Angeles, CA 90038. For tele-conferencing, members can contact jenniferwallace@socal.rr.com.

NORTHWEST



While in town for the Seattle Area meeting on August 2, President Jimmy Odom made time to attend Seattle Opera's production of *Aida*.

Career Transition For Dancers Opens Chicago Office

Career Transition For Dancers is a not-for-profit organization that enables dancers to define their career possibilities and develop the skills necessary to excel in a variety of disciplines. In addition to offices in New York City and Los Angeles, Career Transition For Dancers now has an office in Chicago, graciously donated by Hubbard Street Dance Chicago at their Center.

The complete Chicago office address is:
Ms. Maryellen Langhout, LPC, NBCCC
Career Transition For Dancers
At Hubbard Street Dance Center
1147 W Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60607

Phone: (312) 666-0234; Fax: (312) 455-8240
Ms. Langhout is available on Monday and Thursday, 12 to 5 p.m. For more information, log on to careertransition.org.

NEW YORK



On Saturday, September 6, AGMA participated in the Labor Day Parade. Some of the attendees were: Choristers Bob Kuehn, Louis Perry, Julia Williams, Tim Breese (with son Evan Miller), former AGMA President Linda Mays, Principal dancer Jenifer Ringer with daughter Grace. New York Area Dance Executive James Fayette acted as photographer.

The New York Area Membership Meeting will be held on **Monday, November 3** at 4:00 p.m. at the AGMA office, 1430 Broadway, 14th Floor (between 39th and 40th streets). Free flu shots will also be available. E-mail gerry@musicalartists.org to reserve a shot.

The Metropolitan Opera Announces Chorus Auditions for the 2009-10 Season

Unlike in previous years, there will not be an open call audition. All auditions will be by invitation only. Singers who wish to be considered for an audition should send a current resume and photo to:

ChorusAuditions@metopera.org

Or

Steven Losito, Chorus Administrator
The Metropolitan Opera
Lincoln Center
New York, NY 10023

Anyone invited to audition will be given an audition date and time drawn from the audition session dates listed below. Applicants should include a cover letter with their resume indicating 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th preference of audition session. Cover letters should also indicate any union affiliation. Members of the American Guild of Musical Artists (AGMA) will be given first consideration. Any singer who is offered employment and is not already a member of AGMA will be required to join. Any offer of employment is contingent upon providing documents that you have the right to work in the United States. **Resumes must be received on or before Monday, December 1st, 2008. Submissions received after this date, regardless of postmark, will not be considered.**

All applicants will be informed as to whether or not they have been granted an audition.

The audition sessions are:

Monday, December 8th, 2008	11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Thursday, December 11th, 2008	3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Friday, December 12th, 2008	2 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Tuesday, December 16th, 2008	2:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

The Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Extra Chorus offer unique and rewarding career opportunities for highly qualified performers. Classically trained professional singers who have been invited to audition should be prepared to sing two operatic arias in different languages from memory. Selections should demonstrate the applicant's ability to sing **lyrically**.

An accompanist will be provided.

Applicants will be considered for positions in the Extra Chorus and any openings in the Regular Chorus. As in the past, The Metropolitan Opera will not know about the availability of Regular Chorus positions at the time of the auditions.

Similar information may be found by contacting either of the following:

The Metropolitan Opera Web Site:

<http://metoperafamily.org/metopera/auditions/chorus.aspx>

The Metropolitan Opera chorus Audition Information Line
(212) 799-3100 Ext. 2839

The Metropolitan Opera is an AA/EO – Employer M/F/V/D
Donald Palumbo, Chorus Master

WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE

by Eleni Kallas, National Director of Organizing and Training and Mid-Atlantic Area Representative

OPERA

WASHINGTON NATIONAL OPERA HEADLINES 2008 LABOR DAY LIST AS AN EMPLOYER HONORED FOR ITS STRONG PARTNERSHIP WITH UNIONS

As the American Dream is drifting further out of reach for most workers, employees and employers are finding ways to work together through collaborative labor relations models that aim to curb this growing trend. In observance of Labor Day, American Rights at Work publicizes successful union and management partnerships. This year, in its fourth annual Labor Day List: Partnerships that Work, Washington's own Washington National Opera is one of the employers recognized for its commitment to workers' rights.



David Bonior, former Congressman from Michigan and Chair of American Rights at Work since the organization's founding in 2003, with Eleni Kallas

By fairly compensating employees and sharing decision-making responsibility with them through unions, the Washington National Opera joins a diverse group of employers that prove that embracing such a forward-thinking business model is a smart, ethical, and successful strategy.

"While job outsourcing, corporate bankruptcies, layoffs, and unfair negotiations are rampant, this year's Labor Day List employers and their employees' unions tell another story. They are proving that tumultuous labor relations are a thing of the past, not the future," says Mary Beth Maxwell, Executive Director of the American Rights at Work Education Fund. "These companies buck the trend and showcase the strength that comes when workers and management create long-lasting productive partnerships. Economic success does not have to come at the expense of workers' rights."

In particular, the Washington National Opera, holding its performances at Washington's The Kennedy Center, tells an inspiring turnaround story of how workers and management have worked jointly to improve relations and ultimately the services they provide. Together they have overcome years of labor-management conflict to provide distinguished performances to captivated audiences.

With permission from American Rights at Work, a nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated to promoting the freedom of workers to organize unions and bargain collectively with employers.

WASHINGTON NATIONAL OPERA HITS A HOME RUN

Opera, hot dogs, and beer at the Washington Nationals' ballpark! Approximately fifteen thousand people in the audience in Washington, DC were serenaded with the golden



Members of the Washington/Baltimore Area Committee and Washington National Opera (WNO) management. Seated: Christopher Rhodovi, J Austin Bitner, Tricia Lepofsky (Area Chair), Mark Weinstein (newly appointed WNO Executive Director). Standing first row: Don Schramm, Christina Schepplmann (WNO Director of Artistic Operations), Teresa Reid, Eleni Kallas (AGMA National Director of Organizing and Training and Mid-Atlantic Area Rep), Tim Kjer, Laura Krause, David Butler (Manager of Production Services). Standing back row: Scott Guzilek (WNO Artistic Administration Manager), Harvey Fort, Lisae Jordan, David Foti (WNO Production Director)



Washington National Opera's production of *La Traviata*, left to right: first row chorus ladies: Cecelia Korcsog, Linda Kirk, and Sheryl Perry; second row: Jane Ingalls and dancers Lourdes Elias, Rebecca Ludwick, Sara Jerez, Renee Lamont, Noncie Flores, and Lisae Jordan

tones of Elizabeth Futral and Arturo Chacón-Cruz in the lead roles of *La Traviata*, directed by Marta Domingo, in the free simulcast at the Nationals' stadium on September 13. In previous seasons, *Porgy and Bess*, *Madame Butterfly* and *La Bohème* were simulcast to the National Mall among Washington, DC's memorials. The *La Traviata* simulcast was made possible through generous corporate sponsorship.

DANCE BALLET ACROSS AMERICA

In June, The Kennedy Center presented a three-day dance festival entitled "Ballet Across America." Nine renowned ballet companies, eight of which are AGMA signatories, were brought together to perform triple-bill mixed

(continues on page 11)

Washington/Baltimore Area News (continued from page 10)

repertory programs each evening. The companies performing included Pennsylvania Ballet (*In the Night*), our own Washington Ballet (*Nine Sinatra Songs*), Boston Ballet (*Brake the Eyes*), Kansas City Ballet (*The Still Point*), Joffrey Ballet (*Lilac Garden*), Houston Ballet (*Velocity*), Ballet West (*Serenade*), Pacific Northwest Ballet (*Jardi Tancat*), and Oregon Ballet Theatre (*RUSH*).

The stylistic diversity executed so successfully during the festival had the performers receiving standing ovations each evening and Washington audiences asking for more. Many are hoping this festival will become an annual event.

One final note: The stellar performance of *Nine Sinatra Songs* by Washington Ballet dancers had even more meaning for the talented dancers who unionized three years ago. It marked the last performance of the full complement of dancers involved in the unionization, as seven of the dancers have since left the company. There were many mixed emotions when the final curtain came down, including tears of accomplishment and tears of joy for this close-knit company of talented dancers (see photo right).

WASHINGTON BALLET

Dancers held their first AGMA shop meeting of the season on



Kneeling center: Jared Nelson and Brianne Bland; kneeling right: Sona Kharatian and Jonathan Jordan; women standing left to right: Jade Payette, Erin Mahoney-Du, Laura Urgelles, Maki Onuki and Elizabeth Gaiter; men standing left to right: Runqiao Du, Luis Torres, Chip Coleman, John Goding (Ballet Master), Alvaro Palau, Zachary Hackstock and Jason Hartley

September 11. Laura Urgelles and Zachary Hackstock were elected as the Delegates for the 2008-09 season. Dancers elected to the Joint Committee include Jonathan Jordan, Sona Kharatian, Zachary Hackstock and Laura Urgelles.

Russell Allen is the newly appointed Executive Director of The Washington Ballet. He previously served as Executive Director of Orlando Ballet.

PHILADELPHIA

by Maren Montalbano, AGMA Board Member and Chorister



Backstage at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, foreground, from left to right, AGMA members Renée Cantwell, Carole Latimer, Ellen Peters, and Susan Weinman. In the back, knitting by the window: Leslie Sudock.

This past August, The Philadelphia Singers joined The Philadelphia Orchestra at their summer home, the Saratoga Performing Arts Center (SPAC), to reprise their Spring performances of Debussy's *Nocturnes*, Holst's *The Planets*, and Orff's *Carmina Burana*. Although The Philadelphia Orchestra has been going to Saratoga for many years, this was the first time they had invited an AGMA chorus. Thanks to the Delegates and the local Area Committee, AGMA was able to negotiate a satisfactory agreement with The Philadelphia Singers for this engagement. We hope this will mark the beginning of a long tradition of summers in upstate New York.

IN MEMORIAM

*Michael Bjerknæs
Maurice Benowitz*
Steve Berning
Adelaide Bishop
Steven W. Johnson
Lorraine Keane
James Krulish*

*Sergei Larin
Jeremy Lemme
Mark Lundberg
Anthony Minghella
Lola Montes
John Mack Ousley
Nicola Rescigno**

*Piet Van Allen
Paolo Washington
Sallie Wilson
Sally Winnington
Frances Yeend*

**Indicates a distinguished individual in a related profession.*

PITTSBURGH

by Bill Buchanan, Area Chair and Chorister

WHAT'S NEW AT PITTSBURGH OPERA? JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING!

Well, not really, but a lot has happened recently.

Our own Christopher Hahn was recently appointed as Pittsburgh Opera's new General Director. He joined the company as Artistic Director in 2000 and revolutionized our company by expanding our repertoire and bringing in innovative productions and exciting new soloists and stage directors.

Pittsburgh Opera continues to explore newer repertoire by presenting Ricky Ian Gordon's *The Grapes of Wrath*, the third company (and the first AGMA signatory) to do so. Performances are set for November 15, 18, 21, and 23 at Pittsburgh's Benedum Center for the Performing Arts.

"Every now and then we look for an opera that expands the repertoire and appeals to a whole different audience," Hahn, explained. Chorister and AGMA Delegate Bill Fisher added, "Having the opportunity to perform newer operas and more innovative productions brings us new and exciting material that challenges us and allows both the artists and the audience to grow."

Ricky Ian Gordon will be in town for the production, and Pittsburgh Opera will also present two evenings of his songs: on November 1 the company will present a double bill of two songs cycles, *Orpheus & Eurydice* and *Green Sneakers*, and on November 19 it will present *Bright Eyed Joy*, an evening of his songs performed by resident artists of the Pittsburgh Opera with the composer at the keyboard. These performances will take place in our new home at 2425 Liberty Avenue in Pittsburgh's Strip District.

Yes, you heard right, our new home. Located in what was the first home of Westinghouse Air Brake Company in 1869, these new offices will allow Pittsburgh Opera to operate more efficiently, ultimately save money on costly rehearsal space, make scheduling rehearsals easier since we won't be competing for space with other companies, and make rehearsals more convenient and effective for all including the AGMA artists who work there. The building boasts two large rehearsal halls (one as big as the Benedum stage), space for every department, a new costume and wig room, several coaching studios, music libraries, reception areas for various public events, and eventually a blackbox theater — roughly 40,000 square feet in all under one roof.

"Just as a homeowner has pride of ownership, the company now has that same pride. You walk in and say, 'This is our place,'" said Jerry Sherk, Pittsburgh Opera's Director of Production. "This is where we all work together under one roof, and it gives everyone in the administrative staff a lot more closeness to and ownership of the production process."

Chorister and AGMA Delegate Bill Fisher observed, "It is truly an exciting time to be part of the Pittsburgh Opera Chorus. We know that our 'new home' is still a work in progress, but

seeing the building develop and trying to envision all of the great opportunities that this expanded space will provide the company has been thrilling and definitely is an occasion for celebration."

All in all, it's an exciting year for Pittsburgh and Pittsburgh Opera.

You can get more details about our company and its productions at www.pittsburghopera.org.



Pittsburgh Opera's new home

PITTSBURGH AREA MEETING

Fifty-six AGMA artists attended the Pittsburgh's Area meeting on September 20. Highlights of the meeting included reports from Nick Coppola, a Pittsburgh Ballet delegate, and Kellie McCurdy Ryan, the Area's lone Board of Governors representative, as well as the selection of a committee for upcoming negotiations with Pittsburgh Opera, and the election of a new committee member to replace Barbara McDonough, who resigned after many years of dedicated service. The meeting also served as an introduction for AGMA artists to some of the new facilities in Pittsburgh Opera's new home.

For the first time in anyone's memory, members of the Pittsburgh Opera's apprentice program, the Pittsburgh Opera Center (POC), attended the meeting along with dancers, choristers, and production staff from Pittsburgh's two AGMA signatories, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre and Pittsburgh Opera — a good sign that the Area Committee's outreach is paying off.

The Area Committee also continues to survey guest artists at Pittsburgh Opera about their experience working at the company and encourages artists to contact them with any issues they would like to see brought up in negotiations on their behalf. "It's hard to get artists like soloists and stage directors directly involved in negotiations," Buchanan observed, "but these artists can have an impact by completing our surveys and by contacting the Committee with suggestions and comments." He noted that all communications go through him and are kept completely confidential.

"It's important to let these young artists and our guest artists know that the Area Committee is not just there to assist choristers, but to help all AGMA artists working in Pittsburgh," said Buchanan. "It can be as simple as directing someone to some needed service or helping access Health Plan B funds, both of which I have done on more than one occasion."

Artists may contact Pittsburgh's Area Committee through Bill Buchanan at burghbill@yahoo.com.

SAN FRANCISCO

The Bonesetter's Daughter, based on the best-selling novel by Amy Tan, opened at San Francisco Opera on Saturday, September 13. Below are photographs from opening night.



Photo left: Youngest AGMA members Rose Frazier and Madelaine Matej; second photo: Laurel Rice, Wu Tong, Carole Schaffer, and Julie Booth Knell; third photo: Erin Neff, Natasha Leland Ramirez, and Mary Finch; photo right: David Kekewa; middle: Phillip Pickens, Clare Kelm, and Tom Reed; back: Jere Torkelsen, Wu Tong, and Chris Corley



At a San Francisco Ballet Joint Committee meeting, left to right, sitting: Elana Altman, Ruben Martin, Maragret Karl, Shannon Roberts, and Courtney Elizabeth Wright; standing: Nora Heiber, Julie Booth Knell, Tiffani Snow, Chris Mondoux, Davit Karapetyan, SFB's Operations Coordinator Jane Schaffer, Jane Green, SFB's Company Manager Robert Russo, and SFB's new General Manager Debra Bernard



This past June, AGMA staff members Eleni Kallas, National Director of Organizing and Training and Mid-Atlantic Area Representative, and Nora Heiber, National Dance Executive attended the National Labor-Management Conference sponsored by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service in Washington, DC. Nora is pictured with keynote speaker and bestselling author of "Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In."

AGMA's Leadership Meets in Los Angeles



Present at the May meeting were (left to right) first row: 2nd Vice President John Coleman, MMRC Chair Sara Blann, President Jimmy Odom, Membership Department Supervisor Candace Itow and Philadelphia Area Chair Evelyn Santiago-Shulz; second row: Recording Secretary Louis Perry, Eastern Counsel Deborah Allton-Maher, Washington/Baltimore Area Chair Trisha Lepofsky, San Francisco Area Chair Julie Booth Knell, Southern California Area Chair Jennifer Wallace, New Orleans Area Chair Julie Condy, Treasurer Lynn Lundgren, 1st Vice President Gerald Otte, and Western Counsel John Russum; back row: Work Rules and Contracts Chair David Schnell, New York Area Chair Tim Breese, 3rd Vice President Colby Roberts, 5th Vice President Gregory Stapp, and Pittsburgh Area Chair Bill Buchanan. Not pictured are 4th Vice President Sara Stewart Schumann, Director of Operations Gerry Angel, and National Executive Director Alan S. Gordon. Not able to attend due to personal commitments were Northwest Area Chair George Scott and Portland Area Chair Maria Leatha.

AGMA Procedure on Dues Objections

This is a formal notice, required by law, for all members, new members, joining members, and all other persons working under, or being hired to work under a collective bargaining agreement between AGMA, the American Guild of Musical Artists, AFL-CIO, and an opera, ballet, dance programming, concert, or other company producing operatic music, dance, concerts, or other types of productions. This notice covers all such singers, dancers, stage and production personnel, choreographers, and others rendering services to or employed by such opera, ballet, dance, concert, or other companies producing operatic music, dance programming, concerts, or other types of productions.

The following notice and the procedures related thereto were developed in response to the holdings in a U.S. Supreme Court case known as *Communication Workers of America v. Beck*, relating to the expenditure of dues income for non-representational purposes.

All persons working under an AGMA collective bargaining agreement containing a union security clause are required, as a condition of employment, to pay dues and initiation fees to AGMA. Employees have the right to decide whether they wish to be members of AGMA. Employees who decide not to join AGMA remain obligated, under the union security clause, to pay an agency fee to AGMA equal to regular AGMA dues.

Employees who are not members of AGMA, but who pay dues to AGMA pursuant to a union security clause of a collective bargaining agreement, have the legal right to object to supporting certain activities which are not related to collective bargaining, contract administration, or grievance adjustment (representational activities) and may obtain a reduction in their dues and initiation fee.

Employees who choose not to become AGMA members and object to paying full dues should be aware that by electing not to become full members, they forfeit the right to enjoy a number of benefits available to members only. Among the benefits available only to full AGMA members are the AGMA Relief Fund; Union Privilege, insurance, health, and loan benefits; the right to attend and participate in Union meetings; the right to run for Union office and to nominate and vote for candidates for Union office; the right to participate in contract ratification and strike votes; the right to participate in development and formulation of Union policies; and the right to participate in the formulation of Union collective bargaining

demands.

Audited financial statements are prepared for AGMA which calculate the percentage of expenditures made for representational and non-representational activities. While the exact amount varies slightly each year, approximately 99% of the expenditures each year are for representational activities. Non-members may object to payment of that portion of AGMA dues which are spent on non-representational activities. These include expenditures such as community service and charitable contributions; lobbying; legislative efforts and political activities; members-only benefits; and litigation which is not germane to collective bargaining, contract administration or grievance adjustment. Non-members are legally obligated to pay for expenses connected with representational activities, which include negotiations with employers; enforcing collective bargaining agreements; meetings with employer representatives; member and staff committee meetings concerned with matters relating to employment practices and/or collective bargaining provisions; discussion of work-related issues with employers; handling employees' work-related problems through grievance and arbitration procedures, before administrative agencies or in informal meetings; and union administration, litigation, publications, and professional services relating to any of the above.

We believe that without the concerted political activity of the union movement, the great social legislation of this century such as the Social Security Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, minimum wage laws and the Occupational Safety and Health Act would never have become law. This remains truer than ever today. In our opinion, community service, legislative activity, lobbying, political activities, and litigation related to broader issues of concern to Union members as citizens are critically necessary for the improvement of working conditions of all members we represent. It is for this reason that we believe that it is essential for AGMA to support such activities which benefit all working people in the United States.

You have the right to decide whether to be a part of this important effort.

AGMA's procedure regarding non-member dues-payers and their right to seek a partial reduction of their dues and initiation fees has been developed in response to decisions of the United States Supreme Court.

Pursuant to AGMA's procedure, there is an annual period for a non-member to indicate an

objection to AGMA's expenditures. Objections filed within thirty days of your receipt of this notice will be effective immediately. If you choose to object at a later time, an objection may be filed in the thirty days following your resignation from membership or in the objection period. The objection period is from December 1 through December 31. Non-members who express their objection within that period will have their dues (and, if applicable, initiation fees) reduced for the 12 months beginning January 1 and running through December 31. AGMA estimates that any such reduction will be less than 1% of total dues and fees otherwise due.

The AGMA objection procedure works as follows:

Dues and initiation fees payable by objectors will be based on AGMA's expenditures for those activities it undertakes to advance the employment-related interests of the employees it represents, described above as representational activities. Non-members who object to payment of full dues will receive an explanation of the basis for their reduced dues/fees. That explanation will include a list of the major categories of expenditures for activities deemed to be both "representational" and "non-representational," and an accountant's report verifying the breakdown of these "representational" and "non-representational" expenditures. Objectors have the option of challenging AGMA's verified calculation of the reduced dues/fees before an impartial arbitrator appointed by the American Arbitration Association, and a portion of the objector's dues/fees reflecting sums reasonably in dispute will be held in escrow pending the arbitrator's decision. Details concerning the arbitration process will be provided to any objectors who challenge the dues/fees.

Non-members who have objected to payment of full dues will be required to pay that percentage spent on representational activities and will have their dues reduced by the amount spent on non-representational activities. They will not receive any members-only benefits or privileges.

Objections should be directed to the AGMA Membership Department Supervisor, 1430 Broadway, New York, New York 10018. All objections must contain the objector's current home or mailing address. The reduced dues/fees of objectors will be calculated and reflected in the dues/fees bills. Individuals desiring to retain "objector" status must renew their objections during each annual objection period.

Lorraine Keane, AGMA Advocate

by Linda Mays, AGMA Relief Fund Trustee, Metropolitan Opera Chorister

“Feisty” and “fair” were the adjectives most often used to lovingly describe Lorraine Keane during a touching June memorial tribute attended by AGMA Board members (Lorraine had been a Board member for 38 years); Metropolitan Opera management representatives; Metropolitan Opera ballet, stage director, and chorus colleagues; fellow AGMA Relief Fund trustees and staff; and other friends and neighbors.

Before beginning her 44-year Metropolitan Opera Chorus career, Lorraine sang leading roles with various opera companies and on the NBC Television Opera Theatre series.

Once she arrived at the Met, Lorraine soon realized her natural leadership qualities and put them to use for the advancement and protection of her AGMA colleagues. Lorraine was on the AGMA negotiating teams that brought about groundbreaking achievements in the areas of wages, working conditions,

safety guarantees, and job security. She was respected by members on both sides of the negotiating table. Occasionally there would be a dispute over the seemingly intangible “spirit” of a negotiated contract provision and Lorraine would say, “I have notes on it somewhere.” The next day she would appear with detailed documentation that neither side could dispute. Her standards of fairness and honesty could not be compromised.

In addition to being a talented and conscientious chorister, Lorraine was entrusted with the daunting task of calculating the payroll for the Met regular and extra choristers. She would put up a feisty fight with management or soothe a disappointed colleague... always appropriate, always fair.

Lorraine was also an outstanding Met Chorus Ladies’ Delegate, discharging her duties with discretion, skill, strength, and tact. She fought

and won many career-saving battles for AGMA members.

As a trustee of the AGMA Relief Fund, Lorraine weighed the facts of hundreds of applications to the Fund, always with the goal of dispersing funds where they would provide the most benefit. Always — with fairness, diligence and compassion — Lorraine was able to improve the quality of life for her AGMA colleagues.

While listening to the wonderful anecdotes about Lorraine at her memorial, it became apparent that Lorraine Keane had lived a life of service, leaving a brilliant legacy as an example for future generations of AGMA leaders.



Holiday gift-giving made easy! Give a personalized AGMA Relief Fund 2009 calendar. Guaranteed to fit. Contact Susan Davison to customize your gift. sdavison@musicalartists.org or (800) 543-AGMA (2462).

AGMA RELIEF FUND DONATION FORM, PLEASE SEND TO:

Susan Davison, c/o AGMA Relief Fund; 1430 Broadway, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10018; (800) 543-2462
 Make checks payable to the **AGMA Relief Fund**.

My contribution to the AGMA Relief Fund is (contributions \$25 and over may be charged to your Visa or MasterCard):

\$500 _____ \$100 _____ \$50 _____ \$25 _____ \$15 _____ Other _____

Card #: _____ - _____ - _____ Exp. Date: ____ / ____ Bank V Code: _____ (last 3 digits on back of card)

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

In memory of: _____ In honor of: _____

Name of person to receive acknowledgment letter: _____

Address: _____



Use your AGMA Health Plan B monies before they disappear!
 Go to ASONET.com or call (866) 263-1185.

AGMA Audited Financial Statements

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Board of Governors
American Guild of Musical Artists

We have audited the accompanying statements of financial position of the American Guild of Musical Artists (the "Guild") as of December 31, 2007 and 2006, and the related statements of activities, and cash flows for the years then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Guild's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits.

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the American Guild of Musical Artists as of December 31, 2007 and 2006 and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

BUCHBINDER TUNICK & COMPANY LLP

American Guild of Musical Artists		
Statements of Financial Position		
December 31, 2007 and 2006		
	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
Assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents:		
Operating accounts	\$2,199,762	\$1,627,982
Money market funds	2,714,070	2,204,845
Certificates of deposit	697,080	663,741
Total cash and cash equivalents	<u>5,610,912</u>	<u>4,496,568</u>
Receivables:		
Dues	342,383	364,726
Other	194	123
Total receivables	<u>342,577</u>	<u>364,849</u>
Other assets:		
Cash - security deposits	93,626	92,258
Prepaid expenses	18,135	25,406
Security deposit	400	400
Total other assets	<u>112,161</u>	<u>118,064</u>
Net property assets	<u>33,652</u>	<u>65,554</u>
Total assets	<u>\$6,099,302</u>	<u>\$5,045,035</u>
Liabilities and net assets:		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$635,614	\$540,155
Security deposits	93,756	92,388
Total liabilities	<u>729,370</u>	<u>632,543</u>
Commitment and contingency		
Net assets - unrestricted	<u>5,369,932</u>	<u>4,412,492</u>

Statements of Activities		
For the years ended December 31, 2007 and 2006		
	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
Revenue:		
Working dues	\$2,582,881	\$2,365,674
Basic dues	533,585	619,781
Initiation fees	308,138	392,450
Reinstatement fees	47,377	24,351
Total membership revenue	3,471,981	3,402,256
Visa fees	553,300	408,250
Interest	167,176	126,380
Other	86,665	40,649
Total revenue	<u>4,279,122</u>	<u>3,977,535</u>
Expenses:		
Program services:		
Member services	2,169,434	2,301,169
Supporting activities:		
Administration expenses	1,152,248	1,174,920
Total expenses	<u>3,321,682</u>	<u>3,476,089</u>
Change in net assets	957,440	501,446
Net assets - unrestricted:		
Beginning of year	4,412,492	3,911,046
End of year	<u>5,369,932</u>	<u>4,412,492</u>

Statements of Cash Flows		
For the years ended December 31, 2007 and 2006		
	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Change in net assets	\$957,440	\$501,446

(continues on page 17)

AGMA Audited Financial Statements (continued from page 16)

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation and amortization	43,096	48,788
Changes in operating assets and liabilities:		
Decrease (increase) in dues receivable	22,343	(39,188)
(Increase) decrease in other receivable	(71)	16,422
Decrease in prepaid expenses	7,271	6,900
(Increase) in cash - security deposits	(1,368)	(1,248)
Increase in accounts payable and accrued expenses	95,459	2,092
Increase in security deposit payable	1,368	1,247
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>1,125,538</u>	<u>536,459</u>
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Purchase of property assets	<u>(11,194)</u>	<u>(11,213)</u>
Net cash (used in) investing activities	<u>(11,194)</u>	<u>(11,213)</u>
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	1,114,344	525,246
Cash and cash equivalents:		
Beginning of year	<u>4,496,568</u>	<u>3,971,322</u>
End of year	<u>\$5,610,912</u>	<u>\$4,496,568</u>

Notes to Financial Statements
December 31, 2007 and 2006

Note 1 - Nature of Operations: The American Guild of Musical Artists (the "Guild") is a union of performers in the opera, dance, oratorio, concert and recital fields. The Guild is a branch of the Associated Actors and Artistes of America. The Guild, along with the artists' managers/agents, markets legally binding contracts between artists and their employers. These are known as Basic Agreements, which among other provisions, may establish minimum compensation, limit rehearsal hours, specify the number of performers, provide for overtime compensation, sick leave, and appropriate travel conditions, and require employers to post security deposits as guarantees that they will abide by the terms of the Basic Agreements.

Note 2 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies:

Basis of Accounting: The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting.

Financial Statement Presentation: The Guild follows the recommendations of the Financial Accounting Standards Board in its Statement of Financial Accounting Standards (SFAS) No. 117, *Financial Statements of Not-for-Profit Organizations*. Under

SFAS No. 117, the Guild is required to report information regarding its financial position and activities according to three classes of net assets: unrestricted net assets, temporarily restricted net assets, and permanently restricted net assets. The Guild does not have any temporarily or permanently restricted net assets as of December 31, 2007 and 2006.

Use of Estimates: The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Valuation of Investments: Investments in money market funds and certificates of deposit are stated at cost, which approximates fair value.

Depreciation: Property assets are depreciated by the straight-line method, at rates calculated to amortize the cost of the assets over their respective estimated useful lives.

Note 3 - Concentration of Credit Risk: Financial instruments that subject the Guild to concentrations of credit risk include cash and short-term investments and dues receivable. While the Guild attempts to limit any financial exposure by maintaining accounts at high quality financial institutions, its deposit balances may, at times, exceed federally insured limits. The Guild has not experienced any losses on such accounts. Dues receivable represent amounts due to the Guild from various employers and members. Any concentration of credit risk related to such receivables is subject to each employer's financial condition.

Note 4 - Property Assets: Property assets at cost, consist of the following at December 31, 2007 and 2006:

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
Furniture and fixtures	\$91,573	\$91,365
Computer equipment	323,693	312,707
Leasehold improvements	<u>6,839</u>	<u>6,839</u>
	422,105	410,911
Less: accumulated depreciation and amortization	<u>388,453</u>	<u>345,357</u>
Net property assets	<u>\$33,652</u>	<u>\$65,554</u>

Depreciation and amortization expense amounted to \$43,096 and \$48,788 for the years ended December 31, 2007 and 2006, respectively.

Note 5 - Commitment and Contingency:

Commitments: The Guild rents office space at 1430 Broadway, New York, New York and 459 Fulton Street, San Francisco, California. These noncancelable operating leases expire on January 31, 2012 and February 14, 2011, respectively.

The future minimum annual rental is as follows:

<u>Years Ending December 31,</u>	<u>Amount</u>
2008	\$272,402
2009	272,893
2010	273,418
2011	261,087
Through January 31, 2012	<u>21,664</u>
Total	<u>\$1,101,464</u>

The New York lease includes escalation clauses for real estate taxes, porters' wages, and utility costs and requires minimum coverage for general liability and property. Rent expense was \$298,457 and \$291,800 for the years ended December 31, 2007 and 2006, respectively.

San Francisco rent expense was \$13,599 and \$13,564 for the years ended December 31, 2007 and 2006, respectively.

Contingency: The Guild has issued a \$43,000 irrevocable standby letter of credit drawn on a J.P. Morgan bank in favor of the landlord. The letter of credit is in lieu of a cash security deposit. The bank has collateralized a \$44,000 certificate of deposit in regard to this letter of credit.

Note 6 - Security Deposits: Security deposits consist of cash and certificates of deposit which are in the joint names of the Guild and the respective employer.

Note 7 - Functional Classification of Expenses: In the accompanying statements of activities, expenses have been reported by their functional classification, a method of grouping expenses

according to the purpose for which they were incurred. The primary functional classifications are program services and supporting activities. Program services are the activities that result in services being provided to members that fulfill the purposes or mission for which the organization exists. Supporting activities are all activities of an organization other than program services.

Note 8 - Related Party Transactions: The Guild is related to various employee benefit plans established to provide benefits to the Guild's members and/or employees.

Note 9 - Tax Status: The Guild is exempt from Federal income tax under the provisions of Section 501(c)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Note 10 - Retirement Plan: The Guild sponsors a retirement plan covering substantially all employees pursuant to Section 401(k) of the Internal Revenue Code. Employee contributions are voluntary and the Guild contributes on behalf of eligible employees. For the years ended December 31, 2007 and 2006 pension expenses were \$113,996 and \$103,157, respectively.

Note 11 - Subsequent Event: On January 15, 2008, the Guild's Board of Governors approved a merger with the Independent Artists of America ("IAA") for the purpose of protecting and expanding the union membership for artists employed by the American Ballet Theatre.

The merger, effective February 1, 2008, stipulates that IAA shall be merged into the Guild, with all current members of IAA becoming members of the Guild with full rights under the Guild's Constitution and Bylaws.

Brighten Your Corner

by Deborah Allton-Maher, Eastern Counsel

The Presidential Primary Campaigns and now the General Election Campaigns have dominated the news and have demanded our attention for almost a year now. This election year, more than any other that I can recall, has been particularly charged with intensity and urgency. The issues at stake seem more critical than at any other time in our history. Voter registration and voter turnout are already at a record-breaking high. This is both inspiring and daunting at the same time.

When I contemplate the enormity of this, I have to take a step back and ask myself how do I respond; is there something that I can do that will make a difference or have a meaningful impact? Perhaps you are asking yourself similar questions. When I feel overwhelmed by such a challenge, I am reminded of a phrase that inspires me, helps me to bring things into perspective, and

encourages me to take action. "Brighten the corner where you are." I don't know the origin of this phrase, or even where I heard it for the first time, but it strikes a chord with me.

In the context of elections and of AGMA, you don't have to look very far to find an example of what it means to "brighten your corner." This time of year, there are many of you in AGMA companies who have just been elected as an AGMA Delegate, possibly for the first time. Congratulations! You are now among those who have stepped up to create a better professional working life for you and your colleagues and, thereby, for all AGMA members.

As an AGMA Delegate, you are a key member of our union leadership. You are the "frontline" representative of the union and the on-site voice of its members to the leaders in management. Your efforts are critical to the strength

and success of the union in protecting workers rights, settling contract disputes and nurturing productive, respectful and open communication between labor and management. These responsibilities define the essential roles you assume as an AGMA Delegate: advocate, problem solver, and communicator.

ADVOCATE

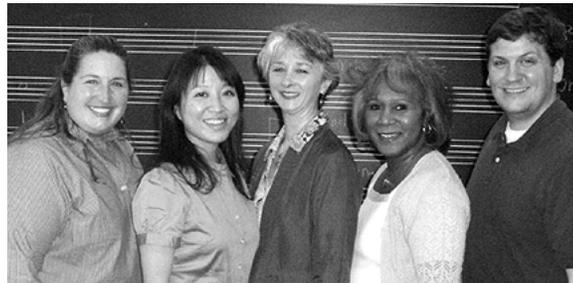
A successful advocate is not necessarily someone who fights hard for every issue, but rather someone who applies intellect, integrity, skill, and common sense to determine what the issue is, what position to take, and how hard to fight for it. Your guide is the collective bargaining agreement. As the on-site representative of the union on behalf of its members, it is the Delegate who identifies contract violations when they occur, and brings them to the attention

(continues on page 19)

A Return to Juilliard

by Osceola Davis, PAAC facilitator, AGMA Board Member, and Soloist

The Pre-AGMA Awareness Committee (PAAC) delegation, made up of Deborah Allton-Maher, Sara Blann and I, visited students at The Juilliard School in New York one day last April. The prospective members listened attentively as each of us shared some aspects of PAAC's objectives — to teach future members about AGMA. Deborah opened the presentation by explaining what AGMA is, its benefits, and some of its accomplishments. Sara continued, but on a more personal basis, and I talked about some of my performing experiences. We all enjoyed the question and answer segment. Interestingly enough, AGMA was known to some of the students, which contributed to a flowing exchange. Jane Cho, Associate Director of Juilliard's Career Services, who organized our visit, has always expressed gratitude for AGMA's outreach through PAAC. As before, the hour concluded with pizza for everyone and another invitation to return!



Left to right: Board Member and Soloist Sara Blann, Juilliard Career Services Associate Director Jane Cho, AGMA Eastern Counsel Deborah Allton-Maher, PAAC facilitator, AGMA Board Member and Soloist Osceola Davis, and Juilliard Career Services Administrative Assistant Andrew Warner.

A New Look for AGMA's Website

by Sara Blann, Membership and Member Relations Committee Chair, AGMA Board Member, and Soloist

Perhaps you noticed quite by accident. Perhaps someone told you that you simply HAD to go and take a look. Or perhaps this is the first time you are hearing about it. The exciting news is that our website has a great new look! After several years and a few missteps, our brand new website is up and running.

You will see that the new site has several features not previously seen on the website before. There are now fly-out menus along the left-hand side of the site. Photo galleries are broken out by Area, with easy navigation through each window. You can still find the usual contact information, audition information, and links to the home page of all of the signatories where such a link is available. On the Schedule C page, you can "cut and paste" the information into Microsoft Word, Text Edit, and Excel, the latter two options available to those who wish to see the

information without the color.

I realize, however, that one important feature is missing. The planned "Members Only" section is not yet completed. Because of the complexities involved in creating a "log in" area and determining just what will be included in that part of the site, our goal is to have a "Members Only" section in place by the summer of 2009. However, until then, enjoy your new website!

Look through the photos and get copies of your Collective Bargaining Agreements! If you would like to see something added to the website, please let Gerry Angel know at gerry@musicalartists.org, or call her at the National Office.

MMRC, Gerry, Denise Baker, and James Fayette all did a tremendous job! Make sure you thank them next time you have the opportunity!

Brighten Your Corner (continued from page 18) of management to correct. It is this fundamental responsibility that invokes the Delegate's role as problem solver and ultimately as communicator.

PROBLEM SOLVER

In seeking a solution, a successful problem solver must build consensus among those on both sides of the issue. As the Delegate, you identify work-related issues and personal welfare concerns of your fellow AGMA members. When you bring these concerns to management you must also offer a remedy. Whether it is a remedy to a contract violation or an equitable solution to a work-related problem, you

have the greatest chance of success if you bring to management a well thought out resolution that has the full support of the members you represent; hence your role as communicator.

COMMUNICATOR

A successful communicator speaks with conviction, respect and clarity. Establishing respectful and productive communication between the union and management may be the single most important responsibility a Delegate undertakes. It is the Delegate who sets the example for both the members and for management of ethical and collaborative communication, which ultimately garners

the trust on "both sides of the table."

It must be said, that in performing each of these roles and carrying out your responsibilities as a Delegate, you are not alone. At all times, the AGMA staff, the Area Chairs and Committees, and the elected officers and members of the Board of Governors are there to guide you, to support your efforts, and to take action on your behalf and on behalf of the members you represent, whenever and wherever the situation calls for it.

In conclusion, to those of you who are contemplating this challenge, step up, you won't regret it. Your efforts will "Brighten the corner where you are," and by doing so, will make all our lives better for it.

AGMA Answers: Basic Dues

What are “Basic Dues” and why do I have to pay them?

Basic Dues, as well as Initiation Fees and Working Dues, are monies used to pay for the negotiating, enforcing, and administering of contracts. AGMA does not make political contributions or spend your money on anything that is not directly related to collective bargaining. All entertainment unions charge Basic Dues on an annual basis. Paying your dues is a reciprocal financial obligation in return for the protection your union affords you and for the privilege of working under an AGMA collective bargaining agreement.

Plus, it's a good idea to stay a “member in good standing.”

Why should I want to stay a “member in good standing”?

You can then work for an AGMA company, participate in negotiations, and vote on contracts. You are eligible to run for office and vote in union elections. You may receive any of the ancillary benefits of membership — to name a few: AGMA's Relief Fund, Union Plus/Union Privilege services,

and career transition assistance.

How much do Basic Dues cost and when are they due?

\$78.00 per year, payable by January 1 of each year.

How do AGMA's Basic Dues compare to other unions?

AGMA's Basic Dues are among the lowest in the entertainment industry.

How can I pay my Basic Dues?

You can pay your Basic Dues with a check made payable to AGMA or by calling the office with your Visa or MasterCard information.

What happens if I don't pay by January 1?

You have 90 days to pay before your dues become “delinquent.” If the dues are not received by March 31, you will be “suspended.”

What happens if I get suspended?

You will no longer be classified as a “member in good standing.”

How can I be reinstated from suspension?

You must pay \$250 to be reinstated from suspension in addition to paying the \$78.00 annual Basic Dues.

So, please, do your pocketbook a favor and pay your Basic Dues as close to the first of the year as you can. It will be worth it to automatically do it every December, even if you don't receive a bill from the office, keeping in mind that it is always your responsibility to do so. The Membership Department will happily send you an electronic reminder if they have your e-mail address. And it can't be stressed too strongly: Always make sure AGMA is notified if your contact information changes by sending an email to Membership@musicalartists.org or calling (800) 543-2462.

Write to AGMA@musicalartists.org if you have a question for AGMA Answers and perhaps your question will appear in a future column.

ASSISTANCE FOR UNION PLUS PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS IMPACTED BY GULF COAST HURRICANES

Union members living in areas impacted by the recent hurricanes in the Gulf Coast area and who participate in Union Plus programs may have one less financial worry.

The Union Plus Credit Card Disaster Relief Fund is available to help cardholders who are facing financial hardship due to the storms. Union cardholders are eligible to apply for Disaster Relief Fund grants of \$500. The money does not have to be repaid.

To apply for a Disaster Relief Fund grant, cardholders can call the Union Plus Credit Card Disaster Relief Fund at 1-877-761-5028.

Other special assistance for cardholders includes skip payments, lower rates, fee waivers and other help.

Disaster victims who participate in the Union Plus Loan, Auto Insurance, Mortgage, and UnionSecure Insurance programs may be eligible to receive payment extensions or other special help from the program providers. Assistance plans vary by program provider.

To find out more, call:

- **Union Plus Loan:** 1-800-224-5920
- **Union Plus Auto Insurance:** 1-877-244-0304
- **Union Plus Mortgage:** 1-866-766-2164
- **UnionSecure Insurance:** 1-800-393-0864

All members are also eligible for free credit counseling through the Union Plus Credit Counseling Program and free legal advice through the Union Plus Legal Service:

- **Union Plus Credit Counseling:** 1-877-833-1745
- **Union Plus Legal Service:** 1-888-993-8886

For more information about the Union Plus benefits visit www.UnionPlus.org.