



# AGMAZINE

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## Under the AGMA Umbrella



*Membership Has Its Benefits*

# Union Made

By Alan S. Gordon, National Executive Director



“It was the worst of times, it was the best of times”  
...with apologies to Charles Dickens

During the lengthy interview process before I was hired by AGMA, one of the things I shared with the selection committee that set me apart from the other candidates was, I was sure, that at AGMA I was never going to face a union problem or issue that I hadn't dealt with before. With one notable exception, that was 100% true. The exception: never before had I experienced anything like the AGMA of 1999.

When I first started, there were many, very obvious, goals: We had to better negotiate and enforce our collective bargaining agreements, hire key senior staff people; re-motivate some of the existing staff; put AGMA on a stable financial footing; better protect our members' funds; make sure that every role was filled, and filled with a member in good standing; assure that members met their financial obligations to AGMA, and that AGMA met its reciprocal obligations to them; reclaim jurisdiction from AFTRA and Equity; professionalize our internal operations, and make AGMA efficient, effective and member-friendly. And now, the AGMA of 2014 bears little relation to what was. But my overriding and continuing goal, shared by the staff and your elected officers, was to make AGMA relevant, meaningful and of consequence to the working lives of its members.

The work of the union changes, depending on the overall economic situation in the country. When things are going well, your union's job is simple: relevance and consequence is found in negotiating “more” and enforcing “better.” When times are troublesome, our job becomes much more difficult, and we have to preserve and protect as much work as is possible, at wages that reflect members' need to earn a reasonable living from employers struggling with fiscal problems, while continuing to assure that the only standard for finding employment is talent.

For AGMA to remain relevant in the working lives of our members in tough times, the union needs to be prepared to meet any challenge, to craft contracts that deal effectively with current conditions while also anticipating the future, to help any member in need and to provide a safety net for members who have problems.

And although the economy seems to be improving, the world in which we live, and work, is often a depressing place. Donor support for the performing arts is decreasing, almost every news story is disheartening, the vast majority of Americans distrust the government, Congress is a dysfunctional mess, the middle class is disappearing between the rich and the not rich, the union movement faces enemies at every turn, unions lose negotiating power for their members as union membership across America plummets, the AFL-CIO has become largely irrelevant, out of touch with modern conditions, taxes skyrocket while tax support for the arts is little more than a memory. In our little corner of the world, opera and ballet companies cut productions in a struggle to survive, some fail and become bankrupt, media critics seek out the bad and thus inherently discourage potential ticket buyers, unions are failing their core members as they are forced to merge into bigger unions to continue to exist (and then discover that “merge” really means “become assimilated” into the larger union and no longer exist), most entertainment unions operate at deficits, raise dues, expend members' dues money on ineffective organizing, exclude new performers from jobs in an attempt to control the labor market, and then wonder why young people shun unions, treat employers as evil adversaries rather than as partners and then can't understand why employers treat unions as evil adversaries. Granted, some employers are in fact evil adversaries, but trade union practices mired in the past don't reflect the paradigm shift in labor relations.

Although members do have to struggle to maintain their standard of living, you might ask why this is also “the best of times” for members of AGMA? The reason is that almost none of the foregoing affects your union. AGMA continues to make meaningful improvements in its collective bargaining agreements, and AGMA remains an effective force in supporting and defending its current, and future, members, without the need to merge, without the need to cut services, without hiding from the future, without a crushing bureaucracy that inhibits our ability to react quickly to change in support of our working members, and with the ability to respond meaningfully to any request from members.

AGMA is the smallest of the entertainment unions, yet is unique among them in several crucial respects. First, and foremost, the only qualification necessary to get an AGMA job remains talent. AGMA is, and will remain, a truly open union. We don't spend your money on organizing. We represent artists at new opera and dance companies only when they seek us out for help. We don't

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## Painting Fences



### *FROM THE PRESIDENT* JAMES ODOM

those of you who might not be familiar with the technique of preaching, a sermon illustration is exactly what you would think it is: a story that offers an example to point out the theme of the sermon. Most of them are like chain emails and Internet memes. There's a nugget of truth in them, but the details are a little suspect, and sometimes it's hard to find that nugget. In preaching circles, they prefer the term "parable". Probably because "parable" is ever so much more respectable than "fib". I collect these short stories because they're usually humorous, and I have precious few clean jokes in my repertoire. And also because I tend to be preachy. The collection isn't as useful as it may seem, because I am so very seldom in a situation where a racy joke is not more appreciated (Grandma would use this as further example of my heathenism), and because they seem to be stored in a section of my brain that has very limited access these days.

There is, however, one particular example of this genre that remains within easy reach. Although I don't remember the point of the sermon from which I liberated it, I use the tagline on rather too frequent a basis. Here's the story.

At the Kentucky Derby, there is a fence that runs around the racetrack. Before the days of power paint sprayers, there was a groundskeeper whose only job was to paint the fence. Painting the fence took a full year, so when the groundskeeper had made the complete round and reached the starting point of his painting, it was time to start again. For fifty years, this was his only job. Every day he painted a section of fence until he made his way around the track and began again. When he retired, one of the local newspapers sent a reporter out to interview him, thinking his story would make a good human interest piece. At the end of the interview, the reporter asked the old man if there was anything he'd like to say about his fifty years of service. The old man said, "Yes. Lordy, Lordy, I hate paintin' fences!"

Now writing *AGMAzine* articles is not exactly painting fences, and I don't hate doing it. But I do admit to a certain amount of frustration with the process in that I often feel I'm writing one of three basic articles over and over again. The three topics are:

1. The benefits of union membership;
2. The responsibilities of union membership;
3. Both of the above.

Even though my Grandma Beck would have told you that I am an absolute and unrepentant heathen, I have, over the years, collected a few sermon illustrations. For

I comfort myself with a reminder of what I learned in playwriting and directing classes: there are only seven plots. And if Shakespeare had to work with those limitations, who am I to complain?

Now that we have the exposition out of the way, I'll pick up my paintbrush and start on the fence. It was suggested to me that I might focus on the importance of AGMA members paying their dues in a timely fashion. I (very logically, in my opinion) pointed out that if a member was reading *AGMAzine*, they had paid their dues on time and I was preaching to the choir. I was then reminded (by someone patiently using small words and speaking slowly, so I could actually understand) that elsewhere in this issue are statements from Life Members who still pay their basic dues, and that I might speak to my perspective on that topic.

Well, that's slightly different. The actual term is "Active Life Member for Distinguished Service to AGMA". AGMA's Board of Governors awards this status to National Officers and Governors who have served a minimum of twelve years on the Board of Governors. The Board may also, at its discretion, award the status to others who have performed some service of distinction for the union. Life Members, if they choose, are excused from the responsibility of paying basic dues. Since the rewards for service to AGMA are mostly of the "take pleasure in the knowledge of important work, well done" variety, it seems a not extravagant recognition. That being said, a good number of us who have achieved Life Membership choose to continue paying our basic dues.

I was awarded Life Membership in 2007 after twelve years of service, first as a Governor and then as a National Officer. It was particularly meaningful to me because I was awarded the status at the same time I began my first term as President of AGMA. There was no question for me about paying basic dues. The issue is quite simple, in my opinion. I continue to be a working member, enjoying the benefits of representation by AGMA, therefore I continue to pay my basic dues. As aficionados of classic science fiction will tell you, TANSTAAFL. Don't go running for your obscure old German or Slavic dictionary, if you don't recognize the term. It's an acronym for "there ain't no such thing as a free lunch". Negotiating and enforcing contracts costs money, and I feel that if I'm working under and being protected by one of those contracts, I should pay my share of the bill. Now some will argue that I (or they) have paid "in kind" with my (or their) volunteer service. Well, yes. I will not disagree with that position, nor will I criticize anyone who takes it. But I knew what the job was when I signed on, and not having to pay that \$78 annually did not factor into my decision to take it on. (I feel compelled at this point to add the reminder that AGMA's basic dues and initiation fee are still, by far, the lowest in the entertainment industry, and that they have not been raised in decades.)

Once again we arrive at the end of the fence, and I remember another sermon illustration. A young pastor goes to an older pastor who is

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## In This Issue

By Sara Stewart Schumann, *AGMA's Third Vice President and MMRC Chair*



In this issue, entitled “Under the AGMA Umbrella,” our National Executive Director, Alan Gordon, starts us out with his report, which reminds us that AGMA has come a long long way from the AGMA of 1999. Today, AGMA is continually striving to stay relevant to its members in our ever-changing world. Notably, AGMA’s members are benefiting economically from the expertise of AGMA’s experienced negotiators at the bargaining table and in contract enforcement, even in this down economy. President Jimmy Odom writes of the importance of paying our dues, that members should be proud to pay their dues with the representation AGMA now provides. On that same note, several Gold Card members explain why they continue paying their dues even after receiving their Gold Card for their many years of service to AGMA. We also remember Carline Ray Russell’s lifelong commitment to paying her AGMA dues. We feature an article by Ballet West dancer, Allison DeBona, on the results of her company’s exposure from its participation in the *Breaking Pointe* series. Maren Montalbano, AGMA’s 4th Vice President, writes of some of the economically savvy things she has learned throughout her singing career. There are also articles on economically valuable information and resources to AGMA members that no artist should overlook. These include information on the Affordable Care Act, The Actors Fund, and Career Transition For Dancers, as well as Union Plus.

Of course there are plenty of *AGMAzine’s* regular features that we hope you now know to expect, such as: Area News, Who Inspired You?, *In Memoriam*, and a Day in the Life series that highlights a day in three very different solo singers’ lives.

Finally, as we come to the end of an extraordinarily economically challenging year, it is never too late to make a donation to the AGMA Relief Fund on behalf of your colleagues in need. Be generous if you can. For this purpose, a copy of the Annual Relief Fund Holiday Drive letter and donation form is located at the very end of this issue.

In addition to this issue of *AGMAzine*, do not forget to check out AGMA on the web, AGMA on Facebook and AGMA on Twitter. Stay connected to your colleagues; get involved with your union; consider running for the Board of Governors or serving as a delegate in your shop. AGMA grows stronger with your valuable input. Remember, 2014 is chock full of opportunities for you to write an article for the *AGMAzine* and include some photographs to go with your article. All submissions should be sent for consideration to [dbaker@musicalartists.org](mailto:dbaker@musicalartists.org).

This issue just would not be possible without all of the authors who contributed by writing the articles and sending in photos. I also must express my extreme gratitude to the Membership and Member Relations Committee and AGMA’s Denise Baker for their tireless work on this issue. All involved are hoping that YOU, the membership, enjoys it thoroughly. Thank you so much, everyone, for your part in making this issue a reality—and Happy New Year!

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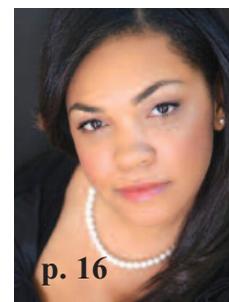
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**President's Message** (continued from page 3)

renowned for his preaching skills. The young pastor asks what the secret to a good sermon is. The old pastor says, "Well, first I tell them what I'm going to tell them. Then I tell them. Then I tell them what I told them."

What I told you is that you receive many benefits and protections from your membership in AGMA, which include the negotiating of contracts that establish working conditions and minimum compensation, and the enforcement of those contract provisions. And that paying your dues is what makes it possible to extend those benefits to you and other AGMA members.

Here endeth the sermon. ♦

## AGMA Awards Distinguished Service with a Gold Card

Osceola Davis, an opera soloist and long-standing Board member, was recognized by the Board for her service and received a Life Member Gold Card. She elected to keep paying her Basic Dues. "I was honored to receive the Life Membership award. AGMA is a wonderful union. I think it's fantastic and does an excellent job. And paying my dues is a further contribution I can make toward serving my union."

"As an AGMA Governor, AGMA First Vice President, and finally as AGMA's President," wrote Linda Mays, "I was part of a huge and difficult transition in AGMA, necessitated by extreme threats to AGMA's existence and unionism in general. I am tremendously proud of AGMA and of my AGMA Gold Card for Distinguished Service. Through

the protections of AGMA, I have had a 40-year singing career doing work that I love, while enjoying guaranteed compensation and benefits. Continuing as an elected leader and paying my annual basic dues seem like small demonstrations of my sense of responsibility, commitment and gratitude."

Peggy Stenger, Assistant Stage Manager at Lyric Opera of Chicago stated: "I did not join AGMA till I had been working almost 10 years, as staging staff in many of the large opera houses were not included in the bargaining unit. Once I did join, I realized that the only way to get staging staff included was to get involved. I ran for the Board and I am still serving on the Board. Our dues help to run the union and benefit all members. AGMA still has a way to go

and until we get to a place where all our members have insurance, pension, good salaries and working conditions, I will continue to pay my dues and I hope continue to serve on the board."

When asked about his Life Member Gold Card, Stage Director Bruce Donnell replied, "It has never occurred to me not to continue paying annual dues to AGMA. I am not yet retired, so I still pay some dues from time to time when I have an AGMA job. I am grateful to AGMA for all it has accomplished for me and for others. Especially when union membership in general in the United States is declining so much, paying my dues is a very small contribution to ensure that our union remains strong."

"I believe in this union. Continuing to pay dues is impor-

tant to me. It allows me to know that I actively participate financially in the future health of AGMA. I am proud to be a member of this union and will continue my dues payment," says long-time Board member and chorister George Scott.

*Editor's note: Any active member who has served as an Officer and/or Member of the Board of Governors for no fewer than twelve (12) years qualifies as an "Active Life Member for Distinguished Service to AGMA" and receives a Gold Life Membership Card. According to the Constitution, the member still has the same rights, privileges, duties and obligations as Active Members, except that they have the option to be excused from the payment of basic dues. ♦*

## Paying Union Dues—A Lifetime Commitment

By Osceola Davis, Soloist and AGMA Governor



Carline Ray Russell, born in 1925, was an AGMA member known to many as an excellent bass player and jazz singer. But she didn't begin her musical journey in the field of jazz. She applied for and was accepted to the Institute of Musical Art in New York City at the age of 16, majoring in piano. Two years later she changed her major

to composition in order to study with composer Vittorio Giannini. While still a student, the Institute of Musical Art merged with the Juilliard Graduate School and today is known as The Juilliard School. Carline graduated in 1946 with her Bachelor of Science Degree. She later attended the Manhattan School of Music's graduate program on a partial scholarship from the famous Metropolitan Opera baritone and AGMA's second President, John Brownlee.

Carline related that, as a chorister, she was excited to perform on the same stage with Marian Anderson, and enjoyed singing at Town Hall and Carnegie Hall with such greats as Dimitri Mitropoulos and Leonard Bernstein. In 1956, her graduation year from Manhattan School of Music, she married the Panamanian conductor, Luis Russell, the musical director of the backup orchestra for the great trumpeter, Louis

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## At My Breaking Pointe: Dealing with a Self-Destructing Ballet Community

By Allison DeBona, Dancer



Two years ago the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) approached Ballet West about the possibility of a reality show to be aired on the CW Network. Headed by producers Izzie Ashcroft Pick and Kate Shepherd, the show was introduced to us as a love child of the two women's passion for our art form and their desire to thrust ballet into the mainstream public eye. Initially, many at Ballet West had reservations about a project that would essentially showcase our most personal experiences, or how it has been put, "airing our dirty laundry." Other genres of dance had already seemed to figure it out. Contemporary, jazz, tap and ballroom had broken the barrier with shows like Fox's *So You Think You Can Dance (SYTYCD)* and ABC's *Dancing with the Stars*. Still, I remember how shocking it was to the ballet community the first time a ballet dancer showed up on *SYTYCD*. Ballet is stereotypically described as unattainable and high class. As ballet dancers, it is engraved in us that we are to make what we do look effortless; people leading perfect lives who are living the dream on stage every night. How could we (Ballet West) tarnish our company's reputation and even worse, devalue ballet? I never had to answer these questions. You know why, because I never saw the *opportunity* we were approached with that way.

I was an AGMA delegate in 2010 when Ballet West was due to renegotiate contracts. We fought hard to gain back our loss in wages and keep on par with our current health insurance. We sat for hours trying to figure out how we could cut touring costs so the company could afford to travel to the great dance venues around the country. The president of our board agreed to increase our wages, but with this increase came a promise from us, the dancers, to help promote the company in any way possible to gain attendees and donors. I knew he was taking a financial risk agreeing to our pay increases, but even more so, a risk on us as a company to help Ballet West gain more exposure. I was also very aware that Ballet West was not the only company struggling to survive. We were doing what we could to promote the company, but without any real significant change. A year later, *Breaking Pointe* came knocking at our door...I knew we had to answer.

To all the balletomanes of the world, we are forever grateful for your support of our beautiful art form. Unfortunately, in our day and age, that group of loyal supporters just isn't enough to help companies survive. When I was asked to be a "Key Participant" on *Breaking Pointe*, I never thought twice about getting on board with the project. In my eyes, it was an opportunity to reach out to a demographic that had never been to a ballet before and broaden Ballet West's horizon. I assumed that our fellow dance community would embrace our endeavor with open arms. I was completely wrong. We heard over and over about how the show did not showcase enough dancing and how it was a poor representation of our

world. At times, the ridicule became so severe that our peers publicly criticized us on social media.

This made me wonder about what the real problem the ballet community had with *Breaking Pointe*. Was it a misrepresentation of ballet or just a side that we, as performers, typically don't want people to see? I'm writing to offer my perspective and to inform you that this show was not meant only for the ballet devotee, but also for the novice. In order to grab a new audience we had to relate to them in a language they understood. I'm not talking French, I'm talking love triangles and petty teenage drama...REALITY TV.

I would love to present you with facts from Ballet West's *current* Director of Development, Denise Bégué. First, in the month *Breaking Pointe* premiered, Ballet West recorded a 1,287,368 hits increase on the company's website and in one month sold more signed pointe shoes than in the previous twelve months combined. The Ballet West Academy has also seen the summer program quadruple in size. Ballet West Academy has become a "must-go" ballet program as opposed to a fallback, second-rate choice. We have always had top-notch training at Ballet West, but now people know about it. Ballet West has also seen a 22% increase in "Friends of Ballet West" donors and 80% of conversation with new donors is focused on the Featured Artists of *Breaking Pointe*. Since *Breaking Pointe* has aired, Ballet West has also seen an increase in foundation and government funding due to the increased exposure of the company, Salt Lake City, and surrounding region. Personally, I have gained significantly, as well I have traveled the country teaching—each trip an opportunity to represent Ballet West as a Soloist. Denise Bégué put it best: "There has been an immeasurable impact that *Breaking Pointe* has had on Ballet West. It's built to bring in the non-ballet community."

Ballet West just returned from performing at the Auditorium Theatre in Chicago. We presented Adam Sklute's newly conceived *The Sleeping Beauty* and a Gala performance including George Balanchine's *Rubies* and *Diamonds Pas de Deux, Presto*—a new work by Nicolo Fonte, and Val Caniparoli's *The Lottery*. C.J. Dillon, the Chief Operating Officer at the Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, stated: "An audience engagement and excitement came with Ballet West. There was a significant awareness and social engagement with Ballet West compared to other troupes. There was a demand for merchandise signing and meet-n-greets." He also stated, "Usually, on Friday nights we see an older 'date night' demographic. We experienced an increase in a younger, demographic, ages 8-18, and we believe they were there to see *Breaking Pointe* stars." He also attributed the success of the weekend to the dancer's engagement in social media. We were live tweeting from backstage during rehearsals leading up to opening night. Dillon explained, "The dancer's

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## The Road Less Traveled

By Maren Montalbano, AGMA 4th Vice President, Philadelphia Area Chorister



©Becky Oehler

When I was eight years old, I thought I would grow up to be an astronomer.

We all have those dreams as children, when we are told that we can do anything, as long as we put our minds to it. Children can jump from career to career in their imaginations like crickets in the grass, and I was no exception. Over the course of my childhood, I was certain I would be everything from an astronomer to a social worker.

I never dreamt in a million years that I would grow up to be an opera singer.

I never did any apprenticeships at Chautauqua or Opera in the Ozarks, nor did I go overseas to study at AIMS or audition in Germany. I didn't even go to grad school, as was expected of me. All those programs cost quite a bit of money, and neither my parents nor I could afford the tuition, much less the cost of travel.

Instead, I jumped straight into performing after graduating college, letting experience teach me what I couldn't learn from academia. I kept my nose to the grindstone, tried to absorb as much as I could from whoever I met, and guess where I ended up? I'm now a bona fide working singer, making 100% of my living from music.

I thought I would be an astronomer; now I am an opera singer. Huh.

Of course, not everyone is able to sustain themselves purely through art, especially in this current economy. But over the years, my experience has shown me that some artists who work consistently and get the lion's share of the gigs also have certain traits, or perhaps "keys to success," if you will:

**1. Professionalism and Good First Impressions.** It is always a pleasure to work with people who show up prepared. Coming to rehearsal on time and ready to work goes a long way with directors, not to mention your colleagues. On a much more subliminal level, the people who show up well-dressed to rehearsal end up getting more respect than those who look like they just rolled out of bed. I learned this several years after college, when I started to pay more attention to my appearance; it's amazing what a difference a smart outfit makes!



Dressed for Nabucco in a September production at Opera Philadelphia.

rehearsal on time and ready to work goes a long way with directors, not to mention your colleagues. On a much more subliminal level, the people who show up well-dressed to rehearsal end up getting more respect than those who look like they just rolled out of bed. I learned this several years after college, when I started to pay more attention to my appearance; it's amazing what a difference a smart outfit makes!

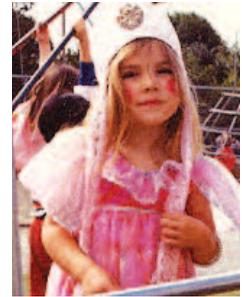
**2. Networking.** It is a universal truth that everyone wants to work with someone they already know and trust. So it behooves us all to make as many connections as possible on each job we do. While a superficial "Oh yeah, I think I remember that guy; he seemed kind of nice," connection does sometimes lead to a job offer, it's deeper connections and friendships that end up turning into longer-lasting and more meaningful opportunities.

**3. Online Presence.** We are living in the Internet Age and anyone who doesn't have a website or at least a YouTube channel is losing many chances to be noticed. How many employers use Google and Facebook to find out more about the people they intend to hire? Those with updated and vibrant websites as well as those who are active on social media are participating in public relations built for the 21st century.

Could I have become a successful astronomer? Given how bad my math skills are, probably not.

Could I have had a more illustrious career if I had gone to grad school or enrolled in those apprenticeship programs? Possibly. I might have met some more famous or influential people at that early stage who might have set me on a different road than the one I am traveling now.

But perhaps I've always been traveling down the same road, as unconventional as it is. I am happy with my career so far, and I consider myself to be successful. And one thing is certain: I have never stopped shooting for the stars. ♦



Maren never outgrew her love of playing dress-up.

## Membership Has Its Benefits

### The Actors Fund

The Actors Fund is a national non-profit human services organization that helps all professionals in performing arts and entertainment. The Fund helps people in film, theater, television, music, opera and dance. It assists performers as well as those who work behind the scenes. Its broad spectrum of programs includes comprehensive social services, health services, supportive and affordable housing, employment and training services, and skilled nursing and assisted living care. The Fund also makes emergency grants for essential needs. Administered from offices in New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago, The Actors Fund's mission is to help "all professionals in performing arts and entertainment. The Fund is a safety net, providing programs and services for those who are in need, crisis or transition." Below are programs that AGMA members have used:

**Health Services:** The Al Hirschfeld Free Health Clinic provides free healthcare, insurance, counseling and referrals from the Clinic. The Actors Health Insurance Resource Center (AHIRC) counsels about finding and maintaining cost effective insurance.

**Social Services:** Assistance is provided for mental health, chemical dependency issues and housing referrals, financial wellness training, patient navigation services, seniors/disability assistance and HIV/AIDS counseling.

**Financial Assistance:** Members who qualify are given financial assistance.

**Housing:** Some AGMA members live in Actors Fund residences.

**The Actors Fund Work Program (AWP):** The AWP is a comprehensive employment and training program that helps thousands of industry professionals explore their career options and maximize their chances of finding satisfying work by identifying their skills and interest. Participants who are interested in finding work to complement the earnings from their entertainment work typically look for sideline or parallel careers which provide income while maintaining

flexibility to continue their careers in the creative sector. Those who have decided to transition to another career—whether by choice or by circumstance—can explore a variety of career and job options by attending workshops and classes at their own pace or by meeting with individual counselors to identify their marketable skills and create a career plan. Either way, they can select from a menu of program components including workshops, seminars and training to help them achieve their career goals.

The Actors Fund Work Program is the only national workforce program that focuses on the unique needs of arts and entertainment industry professionals. Most programs limit services to short-term career counseling and training programs and once a training class is complete or a job is obtained, the individual's relationship with the program ends. The Actors Fund Work Program, on the other hand, provides ongoing career counseling services, comprehensive training and job development support.

In 2014, financial wellness will be incorporated into The Actors Fund Work Program. Industry professionals who come for employment assistance are facing severe financial challenges because of underemployment. These financial wellness workshops will teach cash management strategies and how to use credit wisely during long periods of unemployment to help make ends meet until new or additional employment can be found.

### Contact The Actors Fund:

[www.actorsfund.org](http://www.actorsfund.org)

**East Coast**  
(212) 221-7300; (800) 221-7303  
[eligson@actorsfund.org](mailto:eligson@actorsfund.org)

**Midwest**  
(312) 372-0989; (800) 221-7303  
[dtowne@actorsfund.org](mailto:dtowne@actorsfund.org)

**West Coast**  
(323) 933-9244; (800) 221-7303  
[intakela@actorsfund.org](mailto:intakela@actorsfund.org)

### Career Transition For Dancers

Career Transition For Dancers offers a variety of free programs and services for dancers to use in every stage of their career. Their programs help dancers to successfully transition into post-performance careers. As a non-profit arts service organization, they strive to provide comprehensive services that empower dancers to reach their unique potential.

Their programs can be grouped into three categories: career counseling, financial assistance and informational resources. All programs are provided free of charge.

### Career Counseling

Career Transition For Dancers helps dancers with the process of self-evaluation, guiding their discovery of practical options and motivating them to achieve their long-term goals. Created to provide dancers with an open-ended dialogue, career counseling helps define dancers' interests and skills. Career Transition For Dancers offers individual counseling and group counseling that introduces dancers to useful skills and topics.

Career Transition For Dancers has outreach projects on local and national levels to engage the most dancers possible. Career Transition For Dancers takes their career counseling services on the road to reach dancers who are unable to travel to the New York, Los Angeles or Chicago offices.

### Scholarships and Grants

Career Transition For Dancers is the only organization in the nation that provides financial assistance specifically to help dancers transition into new careers. There are two scholarships that provide assistance for dancers who are looking to earn undergraduate and graduate degrees, vocational certification, or the acquisition of new skills. The organization also provides seed money to entrepreneurial dancers to found new businesses, encouraging their community's vitality.

### Online Resources

Career Transition For Dancers has a variety of online resources available at  
*(continues on page 10)*

**Career Transition For Dancers** (continued from page 9) [www.careertransition.org](http://www.careertransition.org) that include videos of past seminars (“Video Career Conversations”), an extensive list of external resources on their “Transition links” page, and you can view or sign up to receive their monthly newsletter.

Contact Career Transitions For Dancers to schedule a free career counseling appointment in **New York**, (212) 764-0172, [info@careertransition.org](mailto:info@careertransition.org); in **Los Angeles**, (323) 549-6660, [info-la@careertransition.org](mailto:info-la@careertransition.org); in **Chicago**, (312) 666-0234; [info-chicago@careertransition.org](mailto:info-chicago@careertransition.org)

### Union Plus

A valuable benefit of your AGMA membership comes from AFL-CIO via Union Privilege and Union Plus who negotiate on behalf of more than 13 million union members to get the best consumer products and services for its participating labor unions.

This is the place to go for benefits and discounts ranging from insurance, prescriptions, travel and entertainment, to legal tips, scholarships and disaster assistance. Below are a few examples of benefits for AGMA members:

The Union Plus Scholarship program is an example of the U.S. labor movement’s commitment to higher education. Since 1992, Union Privilege, through the Union Plus Scholarship program has helped fulfill the educational dreams of students representing more than 13 million working families across the nation. The 2014 Union Plus Scholarship application is now available and scholarship information can be found at <http://www.unionplus.org/college-education-financing/scholarships>. The application link can be found under the **Applications** paragraph. The submission deadline is Friday, January 31, 2014 at 12 p.m. ET. See the article on page 21 about 2013 Union Plus Scholarship winner Denna Good-Mojab.

The Union Plus Credit Card is very competitive. Members can choose between a Rewards Card or a Low Intro Rate Card. There are newly improved assistance benefits for Union Plus Credit Card holders when times are tough. All provide grants that are paid to the cardholder by check—and these grants never have to be paid back. After only three months as a Union Plus Credit Card holder, you may be eligible for: a Job Loss Grant, a Strike Grant, a Disability Grant or a Hospital Grant. Certain restrictions, limitations and qualifications apply to these hardship assistance grants.

Are you looking for a smartphone or a **15% discount off your wireless phone plan**? AT&T, the only unionized wireless carrier, has new offers that can be found at [UnionPlus.org/ATT](http://UnionPlus.org/ATT).

Additional benefits can be found at [www.unionplus.org](http://www.unionplus.org). ♦

## Navigating Health Care Reform with Help from The Actors Fund

The Actors Fund’s Artists Health Insurance Resource Center (AHIRC) offers free workshops designed for professionals in performing arts and entertainment, including all AGMA members, to help you understand the Affordable Care Act and provide you with clear guidance on your health insurance options. These are excellent ongoing opportunities for unbiased information from experts in health insurance, and public benefits.

Please make note of these upcoming workshop dates and phone numbers to get assistance from The Actors Fund in navigating health care reform nationwide.

Every Artist Insured: Navigating Health Care Reform in **N.Y. City**  
No need to register. You can just show up! Upcoming dates:

December 19, 2013: 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.  
December 26, 2013: 12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

at The Actors Fund – New York City Office  
729 Seventh Avenue  
New York, NY 10019

Every Artist Insured: Finding Affordable Health Insurance with Covered California in **Los Angeles**. To reserve your spot, please RSVP to [AHIRCHealthReform@gmail.com](mailto:AHIRCHealthReform@gmail.com).

December 23, 2013: 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
December 30, 2013: 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

at the The Actors Fund – Los Angeles Office  
5757 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 400  
Los Angeles, CA 90036

For AGMA members nationally, please call The Actors Fund office nearest your home for questions on health care reform:

New York City: (917) 281-5975  
Los Angeles: (323) 933-9244  
The Actors Fund Covered California Helpline: (855) 491-3357

For more information on The Actors Fund’s Artists Health Insurance Resource Center latest workshops, please visit [www.ahirc.org](http://www.ahirc.org) and [www.actorsfund.org](http://www.actorsfund.org). ♦

# AREA NEWS

## CHICAGO/MIDWEST

By Cole Seaton, AGMA Governor, MMRC member, Chicago Area Committee member, Chicago Symphony Chorus Representative, Chorister



September brought some good news to the Chicago/Midwest AGMA members when the Chicago Symphony Chorus completed their contract negotiations and ratified a new three-year contract. Already the largest AGMA house in the Area with 95 fully paid professional members and some 60 associate AGMA members, the new contract now pays all of the associate members for rehearsals (albeit at a lower scale than the pros), giving us a total of over 150 paid singers!

In other news, several Chicago Area signatories celebrated the 200th Birthday of Giuseppe Verdi in grand style this fall! Chicago Opera Theater opened their season on September 21 with Verdi's *Joan of Arc*, while on the same evening at Orchestra Hall, the Chicago Symphony Chorus (CSC) opened their season with Verdi Opera Choruses for their Symphony Ball, and later in September the CSC presented four critically acclaimed concerts of Verdi's *Macbeth* under Maestro Riccardo Muti.

On October 5, the Lyric Opera of Chicago brought Verdi's *Otello* to the stage for their opening night gala, followed shortly thereafter by a beautiful new production of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. In November, Lyric Opera attendees saw the opening of two new productions, Wagner's *Parsifal* and Verdi's *La Traviata*.

On October 10, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus made history with their first ever worldwide live simulcast performance of Verdi's *Requiem*. This amazing concert was seen by nearly 55,000 people via the Internet on Facebook, YouTube, CSO.org and On Demand. Hosted by opera legend Samuel Ramey, the sold-out performance at Chicago's Symphony Center was also simulcast to a Jumbotron at Millennium Park (home of AGMA's Grant Park Chorus), allowing another viewing audience of nearly six thousand people to enjoy the concert outdoors. This performance can still be viewed and heard for free On Demand at [cso.org/verdi](http://cso.org/verdi).

Joffrey Ballet also has enjoyed an eventful season thus far. In August they were a part of the Blossom Music Festival in Cleveland where they danced with the Cleveland Orchestra at their summer home. They opened their 2013-14 season on September 19 with *Russian Masters*, performing ballets by Russian choreographers, set to the music of Tchaikovsky, Khachaturian, Rachmaninoff and Stravinsky. In October, their amazing and beautiful production of *La Bayadère: The Temple Dancer* showed off stunning costumes and gorgeous sets and great staging at the Auditorium Theater. December performances will of course feature the incredible dancers in their well-loved holiday production of *The Nutcracker*! ♦



Chicago Symphony Chorus (CSO) contract negotiations were held August 2013 with members of the AGMA Committee and Management shown from left to right (clockwise): CSO Vice President of Artistic Planning Martha Gilmer; Cindy Senneke, Shop Delegate Scott Uddenberg, AGMA Midwest Counsel John Ward, Andrea Amdahl Taylor; Benjamin Rivera, CSO Director of Artistic Administration Nicholas Winter; CSO Lead Counsel Marilyn Pearson and CSO Chorus Manager Carolyn Stoner. Photo by Cole Seaton.

## NEW YORK

### New York City Opera Alumni Luncheons

By Lila Herbert McGill, former New York City Opera chorister



Many people have wondered about how the gatherings for the New York City Opera Alumni Luncheons began. Below is a brief history of the luncheons beginning in 1993 through 2012.

In 1993, Edgar Joseph, the retired head of the costume department of New York City Opera (NYCO), called me from California; after that discussion he sent me a check for \$2,000 to promote the 50th anniversary of City Opera with a luncheon. The office staff assisted and we drew up a list of invitees associated with the company. The Empire Hotel, situated across the street from Lincoln Center, had just been remodeled and had a room available for a luncheon. With money left over for stamps, I sent out invitations to 425 persons who had performed on stage, including orchestra members, stage crew and dressers. All were informed that the first luncheon would be held in February of 1994. Special notices were sent to former directors Laszlo Halasz, Julius Rudel, Beverly Sills and Christopher Keene. Sponsors were also contacted: Lloyd Rigler, a philanthropist living in Los Angeles; Larry Deutsch (partners in the company Adolph's Meat Tenderizer); and New York lawyer and philanthropist Irwin Schneiderman. Rigler and Deutsch became interested and involved with NYCO during the years the company performed in Los Angeles and gave us fantastic parties.



Recording Secretary Louis Perry and Membership Supervisor Candace Itow both worked at NYCO for many years and enjoyed seeing everyone at the luncheon.

Theater at Lincoln Center. This luncheon was so successful another luncheon was held in 1999.

In the interim, tenor John Stamford and baritone Chet Ludgin formed a New York group who met in neighborhood restaurants to maintain interest in the alumni.

For the 60th Anniversary held in 2004, the festivities moved to Tavern on the Green in Central Park. This time alumni came from Germany, Austria, California, New Mexico, Michigan and Florida; there were 205 colleagues present. The weather was perfect. The group assembled in two large banquet rooms and the terrace was used for the open bar.

Another luncheon was held at Tavern on the Green in April 2008. This time there were only 175 people in attendance. Prices were going up, but again, we were glad to see each other. Unfortunately, Julius Rudel was away conducting an opera in Palm Beach, Florida, and Beverly Sills passed away in July 2007. We had a surprise visit from Plácido Domingo who took time away from rehearsing at the Metropolitan Opera to come and meet his old friends. He patiently stood, greeted everyone and posed for photos. Everybody was so happy!



Julius Rudel



Tito Capobianco

By 2012 Tavern on the Green had gone out of business. I tried to promote other locations, but prices were too high. Leslie Luxemburg suggested a French restaurant situated on the East Side called Le Perigord that had been used by her family for functions. It had room for 150, so the restaurant was chosen and the last luncheon was held there on April 20, 2012. The space was a little tight, but the food and service were fabulous and everyone seemed happy in this intimate space.

We were very glad that Mr. Rudel was able to attend and spoke about our "Family" (many people were in tears) and the demise of City Opera, which was soon to disappear from New York. Many people spoke, such as Tito Capobianco, Susan Halasz, Eileen Schauler, Rosalind Nadell and myself. There were many old-timers from the old Mecca Temple days and Lincoln Center. Some new faces appeared from later years.

Since 1993 I have been contacting everyone (over 400 people) by myself, and finding locations for all the gatherings. I asked at the last luncheon for other people to take over the responsibility of continuing "our family" gatherings, but only Neil Eddinger and Cynthia Edwards offered their efforts to contact everyone. I sent them a large envelope containing lots of names and addresses. Time will tell if the New York City Opera Alumni will continue using the list, Facebook and the Internet.

Shortly after the list was passed along to Neil and Cynthia, I sent a letter to the AGMA Relief Fund liaison Susan Davison that included a check for \$1,600 as a gift from the New York City Opera Alumni to the AGMA Relief Fund. ♦

(More New York News can be found on page 25.)

## PITTSBURGH



*Left photo: From Pittsburgh Opera's Spring 2013 production of La cenerentola, left to right, front: Area Chair and Opera Executive Committee Chair William Buchanan, Brian Doherty, Robert Pruitt, Richard Mikol and Christopher Laret; back: John Sereno, Delegate Joshua Mulkey, Brian Barrett, Jeffrey Link, Corey Nile Wingard, Robert Simoni, Delegate William Fisher, Eric Haines and Jesse Davis.*

*Right photo: Pittsburgh Opera opened its 75th Anniversary season on October 12 with Verdi's Aida in a production that it co-produced with Opera de Montreal and Utah Opera, playing to packed houses, enthusiastic audiences, and rave reviews. Front row, left to right, Bill Buchanan, Pittsburgh Area Chair and Chair of the Opera Executive Committee; Jeff Gross, Delegate; Bill Fisher, member of the Opera Executive Committee; Corey Nile Wingard, Delegate; back row: Daniel Curran, new Resident Artist in the role of the Messenger; Phillip Gay, new Resident Artist in the role of the King; Carol Wolfe, chorister and Vice-chair of the Opera Executive Committee; Kym Laret, Delegate; Kellie McCurdy Ryan, Board of Governors Representative for the Pittsburgh Area, and Cindy Pratt, member of the Opera Executive Committee.*



### Who Inspired You?



My inspiration comes from the music of my homeland, Germany, and the composer Richard Wagner. While my father did not approve of my interest in classical music, my love of opera began at the age of 8. As a kid, I went to the Deutsche Oper-Berlin, and I would pay pennies for standing room tickets to watch Wagner for hours on end. Inspired by what I heard, I asked my father if I could take voice lessons, which he flatly refused. So I paid for my own voice lessons with money I earned picking up bowling pins at the local bowling alley and a regular paper route.

I left Germany at the age of 18 to come to the U.S. with no knowledge of the English language and only \$100 in my pocket. Since I had been an apprentice meat cutter in Berlin, I was able to find employment with a supermarket chain in California as a meat cutter. While my day job saw changes, I never lost my passion for opera. I have been able to fulfill my dream of singing opera by living in America and singing with the San Diego Opera. I am pleased to be an ambassador for the San Diego Opera Chorus and living proof that it's worth following your dream.

Every time I rehearse and perform on stage, my heart sings as well, as my love for opera has never dimmed.

**—Rolf Barnick, San Diego Opera Chorister**

## SAN FRANCISCO

### San Francisco Area Negotiations—It's All About Respect

By Nora Heiber, National Dance Executive



Here in the San Francisco Area we completed negotiating the San Francisco Ballet and the San Francisco Symphony Chorus contracts on the same week. Both negotiations began in March of 2013. Both negotiations had a dedicated and passionate negotiating committee. But, the emotional tenor surrounding each was distinctly different. And given their recent negotiating history, the experience was pretty surprising, affirming and informative.

As is the case with most of our signatories throughout the country, the constant theme of our negotiations here in San Francisco over the past several years has been to achieve parity with the orchestra in wages and benefits. And, not surprisingly, these negotiations were no different.

Moreover, at the San Francisco Ballet, over the past few years, we witnessed a building amount of frustration and tension in response to an inefficient rehearsal process that has included degrading reprimands and critiques. In contrast, during the same period of time, the San Francisco Symphony has empowered a new chorus director to uplift the artistic pride of the chorus along with a new chorus manager who has given our professional choristers new-found administrative consideration. It didn't take long to see how these recent changes in the managerial attitudes daily directed towards our members have impacted the overall tone of each of these negotiations.

In the past negotiations at San Francisco Ballet, their management has been willing to admit the disparity between our members and the AFM, making a long-term commitment to break pattern in percentage increases between the two groups towards rectifying the situation, even if all parties recognized it

could take years, resulting in a mostly amicable negotiating process with both parties feeling quite celebratory at the end. In contrast, the San Francisco Symphony has been absolutely reticent in even recognizing any similarities between the two artist groups, often comparing the choristers to box office employees, creating a combative, demoralizing process that always culminated in informational picketing and down-to-the-wire strike threats. Surprisingly, the tables were completely turned in these past negotiations serving to underscore exactly how impactful such an acknowledgment of respect can be.

For the first time, the San Francisco Ballet was unwilling to admit any difference between the two groups claiming that the same annual salary for 20 weeks of work by the players compared to 42 weeks of work for the dancers was parity. The San Francisco Symphony, on the other hand, responded to a particular proposal with the words, "You are right. The choristers should not get less than the orchestra." Needless to say, that was music to the ears of the chorus committee, many of whom have served in countless negotiations, waiting for eons to hear just those words.

To be clear, this is not about casting aspersions at any single company over

another. The San Francisco Symphony has never before given its choristers this type of serious consideration, and the amount of frustration and anger exhibited by many of the artists of the San Francisco Ballet during this process has



San Francisco Symphony negotiations

not previously been witnessed. One can only hope that the Symphony will continue to move in this direction given that our AGMA choristers still earn about 300% less per hour than an orchestra member and comprise only one third of what is currently called the San Francisco Symphony Chorus. And, we are confident that the artists of the San Francisco Ballet and AGMA will ultimately prevail in resolving the growing conflicts at the San Francisco Ballet.

When it gets down to it, negotiations are always about respect. The managers that are smart enough to truly understand what this means will do everything in their power to give an ample amount of respect to their artists before, during and after negotiations. ♦



Executive Director Alan Gordon and National Dance Executive Nora Heiber at the table with the San Francisco Ballet negotiators.

## WASHINGTON/BALTIMORE



Washington National Opera's *La forza del destino* chorus and dancer women posed backstage with Ketervan Kemoklidze, who played Preziosilla, reclining: Heidi Kershaw and Lauren Engleman; kneeling: Jennifer Anderson, Tricia Lepofsky, Patricia Portillo, Patricia Hussey, Leah O'Donnell and Katie Weir; standing, front row: Angela Knight, Leah Inger Murphy, Anamer Castrello, Katherine Keem, Denise Gulley, Joyce Lundy, Grace Gori, Suzanne Chadwick, Ketervan Kemoklidze, Annadaire Ingram, Jennifer Jellings, Nya Bowman, Marta Kirilloff Barber, Simone Paulwell; standing back row: Adrienne Webster, Alia Waheed and Laura Zuiderveen.



The 2013 Washington National Opera negotiation took place in May; left to right, seated: Laura Krause, J Austin Bitner, Harvey Fort and Vito Pietanza; on the table: dancer Lori Clark; standing: Heidi Kershaw, AGMA's National Director of Organizing and Training and Washington/Baltimore Area Representative Eleni Kallas, Alvaro Palau, Amber Mayberry, Blanche Hampton, Teresa Reid, Dorothea Bodner; and hidden behind Teresa Reid, Lisae Jordan.



Washington Concert Opera (WCO) met in July for the 2013 negotiations; left to right, seated: AGMA 5th Vice President J Austin Bitner, Negotiating Committee Chair Denise Gulley, Kehembe Eichelberger, WCO Board Member Harlow Case; standing: WCO Board Member Kenneth Hance, Tim Kjer, WCO Artistic Director Antony Walker, WCO Executive Director Nancy Petrisko and Eleni Kallas.



Negotiations for the Florida Grand Opera took place in late November; left to right: Enrique Estrada, Chorus Delegate Donna Lane, Alternate Chorus Delegate Nina Wall, Corine Lachtara, Chorus Delegate Michael Testa, Eleni Kallas, Emilia Acon, Alternate Chorus Delegate Ismael Canta, Assistant Stage Managers Megan Bennett and Bryce Bullock.



Members of the Washington Ballet Joint Committee—Brooklyn Mack, Delegate Tamas Kriza and Delegate Aurora Dickie—met with Eleni Kallas in October.



The 2013 Washington/Baltimore Area Fall Membership Meeting took place on September 7; seated: Katie Miller on lap of Maverick Lemons, Anne Sommers, Teresa Reid, and Barbara Stuckey on lap of Vito Pietanza; first row standing: Shaina Vatz, Corinne Hayes, Lynn Krynicki Bayer, Dorothea Bodner, Jennifer Anderson, Annadaire Ingram, Kehembe Eichelberger, Tricia Lepofsky, Shawnee Ball and Anamer Castrello; second row standing: Marta Kirilloff Barber, Connie Coffelt Bailey, Laura Zuiderveen, Michael Bicoy, David Prager, Richard Pelzman, J Austin Bitner, Sean Pflueger, Peter Burroughs, Harvey Fort, Jonathan Hoffman, Elizabeth Freeman, Adrienne Webster and Stephen Stokes.

“A Day in the Life” is an ongoing series to acquaint members with the various categories that AGMA represents. This issue features A Day in the Life of Soloists. If you are interested in contributing, please send your story to [dbaker@musicalartists.org](mailto:dbaker@musicalartists.org).

## A Day in the Life of an Opera Mommy

*By Janai Brugger, Soloist*



**7:30 a.m.** – Wake up to the giggles and slaps in the face of my adorable 9-month-old son, Sebastian. He is teething and needing lots of snuggles with mommy and daddy these days, so it’s wonderful starting the day to such a happy face!

**8:30 a.m.** – Playtime with Sebastian and prepping for breakfast. This kid can seriously crawl fast, and while I’m trying to stir his cereal and warm it up, I’m having to run back and forth from the kitchen to his room since he’s on the move and can’t be bothered with sitting still while I make his breakfast. This is also the time my husband begins making his breakfast (SLOWLY) and barely awake while I’m going batty and the day has just started! Hahaha!

**10:30 a.m.** – Sebastian is finally down for his morning nap which means I have a very small window to shower, brush a tooth or two, eat breakfast and make coffee! Sometimes I only make it to getting my teeth brushed before little stinker has awoken from his 15-minute slumber.

**11:30 a.m.** – Depending on the day, this is about the time I try and take Sebastian to a play group class at my favorite kid store, Books and Cookies! They have wonderful activities for all ages and it allows me some time to interact with other moms while the little ones play with the abundance of toys that lay before them. We sing songs and read stories and let the babies interact with each other, which in my case means Seba goes and drools on some kid’s head or tries to eat their foot!

**12:30 p.m.** – Lunch time! (Have I eaten anything at all yet?) My husband is usually working on the computer at this time and after Seba has had a little lunch he plays with him so I can finally eat something!! By this point I am ready to eat my furniture, the couch looks so appealing!

Our wonderful babysitter comes by to take over since I have to rehearse for the *Magic Flute* at LA Opera. I give her little instructions for Seba while I’m gone, kiss his little cheeks and hands and try to sneak out before he sees me go. I always hate this part, leaving my peanut, but I know he’s in good hands and that I’ll be back soon.



*Janai as Liù in Turandot at Hawaii Opera Theatre in Honolulu.*

**2:30-5:30 p.m.** – Rehearsal for *Magic Flute* with a great cast and team! I’m so exhausted from earlier but I seem to get a second wind midway through and I’m having a blast staging my scenes with an animated film projection!

**6:00 p.m.** – Sitting in the horrible rush hour traffic heading back home, anxiously awaiting to see my Seba!

**7:00 p.m.** – Dinner, Bath, Story and Snuggles with Seba before he goes to bed.

**7:30 p.m.** – Night time for Seba and dinner time for mommy and daddy! Nice glass of wine is ready, my husband is on the couch waiting for me with dinner ready, we catch up on each other’s day and then eat, drink and watch *The Walking Dead*! How romantic, right?! Haha!

**9:00 p.m.** – LIGHTS OUT FOR THIS MOMMA! ZZZZZzzzzzzzzzz! ♦

## A Day in the Life of an Opera Soloist

By David Cangelosi



A day in the life of an opera singer has many permutations depending upon the time of year, or where in the performance calendar one happens to be. On this particular day in late September, I have only begun my daily processions into the opera house by a week or so... in this case, the Lyric Opera of Chicago. As a multi-decade principal artist of this august organization, I have by now seen almost every post, from General and Artistic Director right down to the fine doormen and service staff, change hands. There is an old saying: "Hang around long enough and you will become part of the establishment." I know just about everyone here, and everyone knows me (for better or worse, in the case of the latter). But make no mistake, in the dynamic environment of a major international opera company; some things are *always* changing, while others *never* do.

I am up early on this day (6:00 a.m.) since the schedule indicates that I'll be rehearsing some of my big scenes today. Those paper rehearsal slips located in our artist mailboxes in the rehearsal department have now become a thing of the past. I head to my iPad to look at the new *online* schedule that we now receive daily via email while the morning coffee percolates. A quick glance through my emails, then it's right to that schedule. Yes, I remembered correctly, an 11:00 a.m. start... and I had better warm up my voice this morning! A few sips of half-caff coffee as the WGN Morning News plays in the background. Can't stand the damned iPad keyboard when I must write an email to my manager/agent about a free time period that I would like filled on my calendar, so it's up and out of my comfortable lounge chair and into my office to get my laptop. I write that snarky email, read it over and over again, send it off to my agent, and then persevere over it for the next 20 minutes. "Why won't they hire me?" I ask myself.

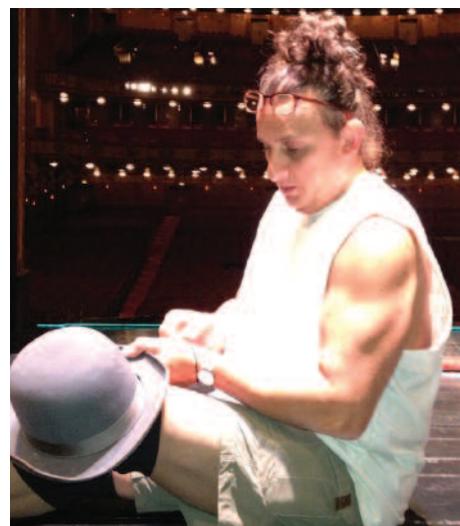
"Am I too old?" "Have I gotten too expensive?" "Do I not sing well anymore?" "Did I do something wrong?" ...wait a minute... "I have never even sung there, how could I have done anything wrong!?" I finally tell myself. Look at the clock; I'm going to be late for my 7:15 a.m. spin class at the gym. Out of the chair, into my gear and out the front door. Leave the gym by 8:15 and back home by 8:25. Pour another cup of coffee and take a quick look at MSNBC's "Morning Joe" before heading into the shower. Lip trills while shampooing gives me confidence... "lots of resonance in here," I say to myself.

It's 9:15, but I wait until 9:30 to sit at my piano and start the vocal exercises. Easy does it at first. Computer "ding" tells me I have email. I glance through the junk correspondence and focus like a laser-beam on the reply from my agent. He promises to call Houston again... (yeah, yeah, that's what they all say.) I want to be out of the house by 10:15 but thankfully I have a contract in quadruplicate that I must sign for a future engagement before I depart... one copy for me, one for AGMA, one for my agent, and one for the company. "Well, at least I have *somewhere* to work in the future," I tell myself. Envelope, stamp, return address? "Check!" Got 'em all; and into the outgoing mail on my way out.

I enter the Stage Door, and there he is, security doorman extraordinaire Mr. Holliday (one of the great things that *hasn't* changed)!! "How ya feelin'???" he says with a smile, and comes around to give me a hug. "You know, just trying to stay busy my man," I reply. Into the building and say hello to Gabby and Sal in the rehearsal department (two *new* members of our Lyric Opera family). "You have mail in your box, Mr. Cangelosi!"... "Please, call me David..." How nice, an invitation to the opening night party for the *Madama Butterfly* cast. No time to deal with that, as I must rush up to the music library on the 6th floor. Wendy, the librarian, helps me pull several scores that I need for current

and future reference. I duck into one of the practice rooms for five more minutes of warm-up, then on to rehearsal room 200 right on time!

It is the start of a four-hour rehearsal with so many familiar faces in the stage management staff, with hugs all around almost every morning. Everyone is in a good mood (Maestro Armiliato, James Valenti, Amanda Echalaz, Christopher Purves, just to name a few), including our wonderful understudy/cover cast; and I think how lucky I am to be working with such great colleagues. A break after 90 minutes sends most of us to the washrooms, or the coffee pot. Hello to John Coleman in the elevator and Lucy from wardrobe in the hallway, a hug to Marina whom I have just seen for the first time since arriving back, a sched-



David preparing for a rehearsal as Goro in *Madama Butterfly* at Lyric Opera of Chicago.

ule clarification from Ben, a favor to ask of Josie and Amy in the rehearsal department, a shout out to "Junior," Mack, and Charlie (stagehands)... all on the way to the coffee pot. DAMN, no one has made any fresh coffee!!! Stage manager Caroline Moores calls over the system-wide intercom (in her ever elegant English accent): "The *Butterfly* staging rehearsal will resume in

(continues on page 19)

## A Day in the Life of an Opera/Concert Singer

By Michelle DeYoung



To start this day, I actually have to go back two days. My last opera performance was Wagner, four and a half hours long. The day after, I woke up at noon, feeling like a ton of bricks was actually lying on me. I can't move my legs and arms and am completely wiped out. I cry from my bed....COOOFFFEEEE... and my husband just laughs his evil laugh. Yesterday is the first day I am feeling human again. I am already thinking about the performance for today. I again try to lure/guilt my husband into waiting on me hand and foot, using the in-between-shows excuse as leverage... again, evil laugh.

**10 a.m.** The house cleaner is ringing the bell and I roll over and go back to sleep.

I try to sleep in as late as possible, so usually get up around 11 a.m. I start humming almost immediately, just softly and easily. I make a lot of coffee, and a couple of eggs. Then I like to do a light workout. Usually a fast walk, with some yoga afterwards. I continue to slowly warm up my voice throughout the day. Before I go to the show, I eat a protein veggie meal. I have to shower hours before I go to the theater, as they usually use my own hair for the show, and my hair takes a very long time to dry! I like to take long (way too long) showers for the steam. I also use a NeilMed sinus rinse every morning, which helps a lot with dryness and allergies. (TMI?)

Upon arriving at the theater, I find out that there is a new production that has started. I am now sharing a dressing room with four other singers, a Latvian ballet troupe, and a monkey. I also find out that the floor I am on has only one bathroom shared by the entire cast. It seems to be the only water supply available, and house employees can't find a bottle of water in the entire building. My husband is shooed off on a *Raiders of the Lost Ark* bottle of water search. I contemplate pitching a fit to administration about the situation. Thankfully, this fit has already been thrown by at least one other colleague...and I can sit and smile and reap the benefits of said fit.



In July, Michelle appeared as Amneris in Cincinnati Opera's production of *Aida*.

I like to get to the theater early because I don't like to be rushed. I usually am in a practice room warming up one half hour to an hour before my makeup call. Every time I perform—opera or concert—I like to go through my entire part, not on pitch, just marking. I do a good solid warm up, and might hit a few spots that are challenging. Then they do my makeup and hair, and I get into costume. Show days are very much about the performance for me: what I eat, what activity I do, even what I ate the day before and how physical I was that day. I drink a lot of water throughout the day and the show. When in German-speaking countries, I always drink an “*apfelschorle*.” I have no idea why I don't always do it, as it's very hydrating and has natural sugars. I am careful not to eat too much or too spicy the day before or the day of, and also I'm cautious of talking in loud areas. I don't eat a lot during the show, but usually have a snack at every intermission. I also usually do a few more warm-ups. If I have a long time between singing, I will re warm up completely.

Afterwards, I am always very hungry and want a beer! It takes me hours to come down after a show. I usually lay in bed re-playing the music and the performance, and contemplating how to get my husband to make me coffee! The next morning (I say very generously!), I wake up sore, yelling for COOOFFFEEEE... evil laugh... ♦

**A Day in the Life of an Opera Soloist** (continued from page 17)

five minutes, all principals and maestri to Room 200 please.” (Didn’t really need coffee anyway, I tell myself.)

Back in the rehearsal room: I am surrounded by delightful people, stunning vocal talent, fabulous pianists, and outstanding conductors, directors, and choreographers. We laugh as we make mistakes, compliment each other as we work, ask for a costume piece or prop that we have forgotten, lumber up the raked stage, trip up a stair, or lose our balance slightly on a ramp. The set is new, and we are getting our bearings. “I love this job,” I sigh to myself. “Thank you Lord,” I whisper in virtual silence, as we all attempt to stay relevant. We check our cell phones for emails, sneak out a text message to our friends and loved ones, or look at photos on these hand held marvels and wonder what we did before they existed as a ‘palm accessory’.

We finish our work after four hours (but we usually rehearse for six); there is more to

do, but I am done for the day at the opera house. I stop by the FedEx Office to make a few copies of items I need, then head home. I live two short blocks away, by design. Sometimes we have two to three hours of break in between rehearsal periods, and commuting long distances in between became too much for me about 10 years ago. Because I’m so close, no matter the circumstance, I never have to worry about being late and can always run home in between rehearsals or for lunch.

I arrive home by 4:00 p.m., but my workday hasn’t finished. Seated in my study chair... the one that faces away from the television, I crack open that score of *Cunning Little Vixen*. Czech isn’t my best language, and I struggle mightily trying to put the text to the rhythm. I’ll be singing it with the Cleveland Orchestra in the Spring, and it’s got to be perfect. That’s what a lot of folks simply don’t understand; we work at home in silence, or at

our pianos for hours on end, and do not get paid for it... that’s just part of our profession. I grow weary, frustrated, and angry because the text just won’t come out!! C’mon David, c’mon!!! I slam the score shut and curse my lot... I make a light dinner, pay a few bills online, check in on the news of the day, FaceTime my fiancée, and call my parents. But still I see that score sitting on the piano... it taunts me. I *hate* you, you “Cunning Little Vixen”; I can bear you no more today. The phone rings at 6:30 p.m. (7:30 in New York), I recognize the number. It’s *him*. “Yes John,” I answer without saying hello. “Daaaviiiid, Houston just hired you for back-to-backs in 2015... what do you think?”

“I love you, John... and thanks for this.”

I guess I CAN study that Janacek score for another 45 minutes before “calling it a day” after all....♦

**Union Made** (continued from page 2)

need to spend your dues money to convince performers to join AGMA and we don’t try to maintain illusory controls over the talent pool under the guise of “organizing.” When a singer or dancer wants to know why it’s good to have AGMA represent them, we simply suggest that they talk to any member who’s worked under an AGMA contract. We don’t cripple our members by prohibiting non-union work. Rather, we recognize that our members need to take as much work as they can, union or non-union. Because AGMA is an entirely open union, singers and dancers can join AGMA at any point in their careers, even before they secure work with signatory employers.

Remarkably, despite the overall national downward trend in union membership, AGMA membership grows every month. In support of that membership, we are scrupulous and risk-adverse in protecting members’ assets, and unlike other talent unions, AGMA doesn’t run at a deficit and doesn’t need to raise dues. In fact, despite our extensive network of negotiating, legal and contract enforcement services to its members, AGMA has the lowest dues and initiation fees of any talent union.

We don’t treat non-members as the enemy and we provide assistance to any professional singer or dancer, even before they join

AGMA: We believe that there are two kinds of professional singers...those that are AGMA members and those who aren’t yet AGMA members, because eventually every successful opera singer will become an AGMA member. And as for dancers, we believe that what hurts one dancer anywhere hurts all dancers everywhere, so likewise, we also help non-AGMA dancers, secure in the knowledge that helping any dancer helps those dancers that will inevitably become AGMA members.

Finally, we take pride in the fact that the percentage of AGMA members who regularly work is far greater than similar percentages in Equity or SAG-AFTRA.

Together, your elected officers and staff provide a network of coverage that has one purpose: to protect your rights and to secure for our members the maximum level of available negotiated contractual benefits, without having any need to strike, and through the most democratic, open and effective of entertainment unions, all in our effort to remain relevant in your working lives, in good times or in bad.

Times may be tough, but whenever you need us, we’re here for you. If you need help with any problem, tell any AGMA staff employee or contact me, directly and confidentially, at [AGMANY@aol.com](mailto:AGMANY@aol.com). ♦

### 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 formula-

tion 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. ♦

### *IN MEMORIAM*

*Bruno Bartoletti, Maestro  
at Lyric Opera of Chicago  
Gregory Carroll, Soloist  
Elizabeth Coss, Soloist  
Rosalita Green Mallia, Soloist  
David Howard, Dancer,  
Teacher*

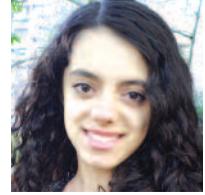
*Robert Linder, Chorister  
Lotfollah Mansouri, Stage  
Director  
Blaise Claudio Pascal, Soloist  
Roger Pillet, Chorister  
Carline Ray (Russell), Chorister  
Frank Ream, Chorister*

*Regina Resnik, Soloist  
Richard S. Thomas, Dancer  
Caroline Thorn Binney,  
Dancer  
Ray Willingham, Chorister  
Lilly Windsor, Soloist*

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

## Congratulations!

Congratulations to AGMA member Denna Good-Mojab, who has been awarded a Union Plus scholarship. Denna is a 16-year-old junior at the University of Washington, where she is studying voice, piano, conducting and business management, with the goal of continuing her career as a professional singer. She joined AGMA at age 10, when she performed as one of the Spirits in Portland Opera's 2007 production of *Die Zauberflöte*.



Denna is also the recipient of a 2014 award for exceptional artistic achievement from National YoungArts Foundation (formerly known as the National Foundation for the Advancement in the Arts).

YoungArts is an organization committed to identifying and supporting the next generation of artists and investing in the artistic development of young artists. In addition to her performances and studies, Denna also contributes substantial amounts of time to community service and campaigns for social justice as an international youth leader.

*For more information about scholarships and other benefits available to AGMA members from Union Plus, visit [UnionPlus.org](http://UnionPlus.org).*

### Lifetime Commitment (continued from page 6)

Armstrong. She went on to have a very successful career in jazz as a vocalist and playing the Fender® electric bass guitar, and was a mentor to many women.

When asked why she continued to pay her AGMA dues after joining 54 years ago, with her deep, lush, resonant voice, Carline replied, "I do not know. I thought it was my duty. I belong to four

unions: Equity, [SAG-]AFTRA, AFM's Local 802, and AGMA. I haven't dropped any of them, so why drop one? I don't drop a union just because I'm not active. I never thought about it."

On a sad note, Carline Ray Russell passed away on July 18, 2013, after the writing of this article. A customary donation was made to the AGMA Relief Fund in her honor. ♦

**At My Breaking Pointe** (continued from page 7)  
social media engagement helped with ticket sale increase." I personally met at least ten attendees of our opening night performance who mentioned that it was their first time seeing the ballet and that they wanted to see Ballet West live because they were avid *Breaking Pointe* viewers. I can assure they were not the only ones.

New York City Ballet has undergone its own online reality docu-series, *city.ballet.*, and as I see it, this is a great testament to what Ballet West has achieved in its risky choices. We did perform George Balachine's *Emeralds* on Season 1, repeatedly giving credit where credit was due.

We also introduced a new audience to not only the work of ballet great George Balanchine, but also Marius Petipa, Yiri Kylian, and Sir Fredrick Ashton. Ballet West, and particularly those of us featured on the show, educated a new community on the art form of ballet as well as the great ballet innovators and juggernauts. So why doubt it? How could an increase in interest in the arts call for bad-mouthing? How can the arts grow/stabilize if it acts like a control fire to a wildfire, suffocating itself?

Ballet West has undoubtedly seen the benefits of opening our world to a new audience—an audience that lives in the digital, fast-paced world of TV and the Internet. The

ballet community cannot live in fear of the past. We need to find ways to stay relevant so that the legacy of our art form can survive the changing world we live in. We have not yet heard about a Season 3 of *Breaking Pointe*, but I hope that if we do continue with the show, our peers and ballet community can help embrace our effort. I truly believe that if it continues, Ballet West will not be the only company that can benefit from ballet going mainstream. It is time that our community stops acting as if we are elitists who do not share love for the same beautiful art form of Ballet.

Follow Allison DeBona on Twitter @allidebona ♦

### Remember to follow AGMA on:

[www.musicalartists.org](http://www.musicalartists.org)

[www.facebook.com/AmericanGuildofMusicalArtists](http://www.facebook.com/AmericanGuildofMusicalArtists)

<https://twitter.com/AGMusicalArtist>

## Who Inspired You?



Recently, I celebrated my 42nd consecutive opening night in the chorus of Lyric Opera Chicago and when asked what *has* inspired me and *continues* to inspire me over this length of time, I would have to say great singers and great teachers. “Maestro” means “teacher” and over these many years, I’ve had many, both in the chorus room and in the orchestra pit. But before coming to Lyric, I also had several school teachers who introduced me to classical music and helped me to develop my passion for opera.

My grammar-school music teacher introduced me to classical music. The Saint-Saens’ *Danse Macabre* caught my attention and was probably the first recording of classical music that I ever owned. By high-school, my interest was initially musical comedies, but an outing to see a visiting opera company perform *Iolanthe* hooked me seriously on Gilbert and Sullivan. I started collecting recordings of all the operettas, and began committing every word to memory. Then, the summer before college, I was singing in a local production, and two of the lead women noticed that I played the piano rather well. They asked if I would like to play for their voice teacher’s pupils. I knew no operatic repertoire at all, but their voice teacher, Eleanor Gardner, told me to learn the arias for the pupils, each week, by listening to recordings and learning the various tempos and styles. One of the first operas I got out of the library was *Rigoletto*, starring Joan Sutherland. THAT was the beginning of my absolute love and obsession with opera. First, it was Sutherland. Then, it was Tebaldi, Callas, Caballe, Del Monaco, DiStefano, Pavarotti, Domingo, Merrill, MacNeil, Milnes, Ghiaurov and Siepi (among many, many others). This was my inspiration as I discovered recording after recording of the great operatic works by great singers.

Right after college, I was told that Lyric was looking for supernumeraries, and to go down and see if I could be part of their *Don Carlo* production, in 1971. I was accepted and, of course, loved the experience. How could I not? I was onstage in the auto-da-fé scene with a huge chorus and Pilar Lorengar, Fiorenza Cossotto, Nicolai Ghiaurov and Sherrill Milnes!!! During a conversation, backstage, with a couple of chorus women, I was told that I might want to audition for the chorus. I did and was accepted. That was it. Then the *great* teaching really began. My first chorus master, Michael Lepore, taught me more about the discipline of making music in four weeks, than I had learned in four years of college. The three years I spent under Maestro Lepore were the foundation of all the music-making I’ve done since. Nine fine chorus masters followed, each focused on his own priorities, whether or not it was color, rhythmic precision, blending of voices, thoroughness of memorization and perhaps most important, the ability to adapt to the ultimate maestri, the conductors in the orchestra pit who always have the final say on tempi, accents, phrasing and expression.

My moments of inspiration sometimes occur in rehearsal. Most recently, the entire chorus of *Parsifal* was assembled in a rehearsal room for the first time, and we heard the off-stage women and tenors sing with such a perfectly blended and rich sound it was almost unearthly. It is a great feeling to know that inspiration still *can* occur after all these years and that there is hope for so many more such moments to come.

## AGMA Audited Financial Statements

### INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Board of Governors

American Guild of Musical Artists

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of American Guild of Musical Artists (the "Guild"), which comprise the statements of financial position as of December 31, 2012 and 2011, and the related statements of activities and cash flows for the years then ended. Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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 involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit 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, 2012 and 2011, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

**BUCHBINDER TUNICK & COMPANY LLP**

| <b>American Guild of Musical Artists</b> |                     |                    |
|--|---------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Statements of Financial Position</b>  |                     |                    |
| December 31, 2012 and 2011               |                     |                    |
|  | <b>2012</b>         | <b>2011</b>        |
| <b>Assets:</b>                           |                     |                    |
| Cash and cash equivalents:               |                     |                    |
| Operating accounts                       | \$1,493,043         | \$529,164          |
| Money market funds                       | <u>46,004</u>       | <u>17,338</u>      |
| Total cash and cash equivalents          | <u>1,539,047</u>    | <u>546,502</u>     |
| Certificates of deposit                  | <u>99,717</u>       | <u>98,673</u>      |
| Investments, at fair value:              |                     |                    |
| U.S. treasury obligations                | <u>8,298,506</u>    | <u>8,322,503</u>   |
| Receivables:                             |                     |                    |
| Dues                                     | 320,722             | 347,082            |
| Other                                    | <u>2,187</u>        | <u>2,137</u>       |
| Total receivables                        | <u>322,909</u>      | <u>349,219</u>     |
| Other assets:                            |                     |                    |
| Cash - security deposits                 | 55,763              | 97,318             |
| Prepaid expenses                         | 33,090              | 25,945             |
| Security deposit                         | <u>45,410</u>       | <u>44,762</u>      |
| Total other assets                       | <u>134,263</u>      | <u>168,025</u>     |
| Net property assets                      | <u>27,155</u>       | <u>33,854</u>      |
| Total assets                             | <u>\$10,421,597</u> | <u>\$9,518,776</u> |
| <b>Liabilities and net assets:</b>       |                     |                    |
| Accounts payable and accrued expenses    | \$ 999,588          | \$ 942,170         |

|   | <b>2012</b>         | <b>2011</b>        |
|---|---------------------|--------------------|
| Security deposit payable  | <u>55,818</u>       | <u>97,498</u>      |
| Total liabilities   | <u>1,055,406</u>    | <u>1,039,668</u>   |
| Commitments and contingencies                                       |                     |                    |
| Net assets - unrestricted   | <u>9,366,191</u>    | <u>8,479,108</u>   |
| Total liabilities and and net assets                                | <u>\$10,421,597</u> | <u>\$9,518,776</u> |
| <b>Statements of Activities</b>                                     |                     |                    |
| For the years ended   |                     |                    |
| December 31, 2012 and 2011  |                     |                    |
|   | <b>2012</b>         | <b>2011</b>        |
| <b>Revenue:</b>   |                     |                    |
| Working dues  | \$2,498,938         | \$2,383,889        |
| Basic dues  | 594,628             | 587,382            |
| Initiation fees   | 312,778             | 275,986            |
| Reinstatement fees  | <u>35,393</u>       | <u>61,537</u>      |
| Total membership revenue  | 3,441,737           | 3,308,794          |
| Visa fees   | 799,425             | 698,175            |
| Unrealized appreciation (depreciation) in fair value of investments | 650                 | (700)              |
| Interest  | 7,829               | 11,953             |
| Other   | <u>86,274</u>       | <u>43,116</u>      |
| Total revenue   | <u>4,335,915</u>    | <u>4,061,338</u>   |
| <b>Expenses:</b>  |                     |                    |
| Program services:   |                     |                    |
| Member services   | 2,245,035           | 2,253,880          |

|   | <u>2012</u>        | <u>2011</u>        |  | <u>2012</u>         | <u>2011</u>       |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|--|---------------------|-------------------|
| Supporting activities:  |                    |                    | Decrease (increase) in cash                          |                     |                   |
| Administrative expenses   | <u>1,203,797</u>   | <u>1,383,664</u>   | - security deposits                                  | 41,555              | (148)             |
| Total expenses  | <u>3,448,832</u>   | <u>3,637,544</u>   | (Increase) decrease in prepaid expenses              | (7,145)             | 2,338             |
| Change in net assets  | 887,083            | 423,794            | (Increase) in security deposit                       | (648)               | (639)             |
| Net assets - unrestricted   |                    |                    | Increase in accounts payable and accrued expenses    | 57,418              | 26,280            |
| Beginning of year   | <u>8,479,108</u>   | <u>8,055,314</u>   | Increase in security deposit payable                 | —                   | <u>147</u>        |
| End of year   | <u>\$9,366,191</u> | <u>\$8,479,108</u> | Net cash provided by operating activities            | <u>1,020,778</u>    | <u>509,267</u>    |
| <b>Statements of Cash Flows</b>   |                    |                    | Cash flows from investing activities:                |                     |                   |
| For the years ended December 31, 2012 and 2011  |                    |                    | Purchase of property assets                          | (10,156)            | (13,066)          |
|   | <u>2012</u>        | <u>2011</u>        | Purchase of certificates of deposit                  | (1,044)             | (1,367)           |
| Cash flows from operating activities:   |                    |                    | Sale of certificates of deposit                      | (41,680)            | 51,597            |
| Change in net assets  | \$887,083          | \$423,794          | Purchase of U.S. treasury obligations                | (8,298,249)         | (25,596,830)      |
| Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities: |                    |                    | Sale of U.S. treasury obligations                    | <u>8,322,896</u>    | <u>24,816,681</u> |
| Depreciation and amortization   | 16,855             | 17,448             | Net cash (used in) investing activities              | <u>(28,233)</u>     | <u>(742,985)</u>  |
| Unrealized depreciation in fair value of investments  | (650)              | 700                | Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents | 992,545             | (233,718)         |
| Changes in operating assets and liabilities:  |                    |                    | Cash and cash equivalents:                           |                     |                   |
| Decrease in dues receivable   | 26,360             | 41,292             | Beginning of year                                    | <u>546,502</u>      | <u>780,220</u>    |
| (Increase) in other receivable  | (50)               | (1,945)            | End of year  | <u>\$ 1,539,047</u> | <u>\$ 546,502</u> |

## AGMA Participates in Collective Bargaining Class



*After teaching a class at Cornell University on collective bargaining, National Executive Director Alan Gordon and Sara Ziff, Executive Director of The Model Alliance, are pictured on either side of Rick Hurd at Cornell's School of Industrial and Labor Relations. Dean Hurd served as a consultant to AGMA during its period of restructuring in 1999 and 2000.*

## Leadership Holds Annual Conference



The annual Leadership Conference was held in New York over the weekend of July 20-21. Above are the attendees, left to right, front row: Louis Perry, Recording Secretary, Personnel Committee Chair and New York Area Chair; Jimmy Odom, AGMA President and Chicago/Midwest Area Chair; Evelyn Santiago Schulz, Philadelphia Area Chair; Jennifer Wallace, Southern California Area Chair; standing, Candace Itow, Membership Department Supervisor; Gerry Angel, Director of Operations; Maria Leatha, Northwest Area Board Member; Harvey Fort, Washington/Baltimore Area Chair; George Scott, Northwest Area Chair; Linda Mays, former AGMA President; Bill Buchanan, Pittsburgh Area Chair; Sara Stewart Schumann, 3rd Vice President and Membership and Member Relations Committee Chair; back row: John Coleman, 1st Vice President and Work Rules and Contracts Committee Chair; Matt Woodbury, Texas/Oklahoma Board Member; Gregory Stapp, 2nd Vice President and Administration and Policy Committee Chair; J Austin Bitner, 5th Vice President. Photo taken by Alan Gordon, National Executive Director.

## New York Area Concert Singers Negotiate Contracts



The New York Area Concert Singers Committee at the AGMA office after a negotiation, left to right: Governors Karen Grahn and Doug Purcell, former Governor Robert Kuehn, AGMA Counsel Gail Lopez-Henriquez, Committee Chair and Governor Pamela Smith and Governor Charles Sprawls. Current members of the Committee not shown: Rose Anderson, Matthew Kreger, Mark Rehnstrom, Rachel Rosales and Jim Seiler. The Committee represents New York Area concert choristers in negotiations with The Discovery Orchestra, Melodious Accord, Music Before 1800, Musica Sacra, Opera Orchestra of New York, the New York Philharmonic and Voices of Ascension.



James and Luke  
ask you to support the  
AGMA Relief Fund

## AGMA Relief Fund

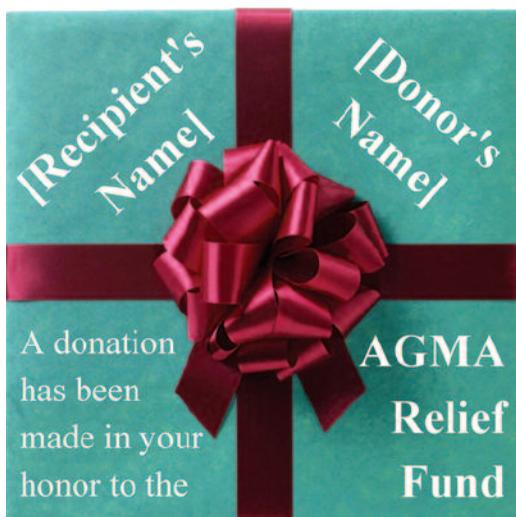
Your commemorative donation turns into a unique gift for colleagues, clients, teachers, coaches, doctors, conductors, secret santas, friends, relatives, etc.

Our technology combined with your sentiments and creative imaginations make the possibilities boundless.

Using your photographs (digital images preferred) or one of our examples, we can customize calendars, certificates, cards, and gift enclosures.

- \* Holidays
- \* Year-end giving
- \* Anniversaries
- \* Births
- \* Business/Professional gifts
- \* Bequests
- \* Birthdays
- \* Openings
- \* Tributes
- \* Planned Giving

Place holiday orders early to avoid the rush.



**Donation Form — Please send to:**

Susan Davison, c/o AGMA Relief Fund; 1430 Broadway, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10018;  
Phone: (800) 543-2462; Fax: (212) 262-9088; E-mail: [susan@musicalartists.org](mailto:susan@musicalartists.org)

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: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 2013 Holiday Message from Jenifer Ringer and James Fayette

### “Because Bad Things Happen...”



Dear Fellow Donors, Union Members and Friends,



This is the AGMA Relief Fund annual letter of appeal asking you to donate to the Relief Fund. The Relief Fund Trustees traditionally invite a notable artist to act as the Honorary Chair of their annual Holiday Drive. This year Jenifer Ringer, a Principal Dancer with the New York City Ballet, was asked to be the Chair. Just as she was about to write the letter, our family experienced a horrifying event and it reminded us of how essential it is to have community support in a time of desperate need. Therefore, instead of the traditional letter, Jenifer and I, James Fayette (AGMA’s New York Area Dance Executive and former NYCB principal dancer) would like to share with you our story and ask you to consider the fact that bad things happen all the time. They are never expected and during those times we have to rely on the support of others to see us through.

On the morning of October 1st our eighteen-month-old son, Luke, and I, James, were stabbed by a man who left five people seriously wounded. We were whisked away to the emergency room where Luke received several stitches for his wounds and I ended up in the Intensive Care Unit. Thankfully, we were protected from more serious injuries that could have been much worse. My son is doing very well and after three weeks I am mostly recuperated, however that day showed our family that we are not in control and, in an instant, an unexpected event can rob you of so much.

Due to the traumatic nature and news coverage of this event, many people from the AGMA community heard what happened and offered their support which our family thankfully received. However, every day individual AGMA members experience difficult hardships and unexpected events that the broader AGMA community is not aware of. Bad things happen to people every day and that is where the AGMA Relief Fund can and does help. As performers we are part of an exclusive group where we are all connected through the experience of our art. When one of our own suffers, we empathize with their suffering.

You received this letter because you are one of the exceptional individuals who make up the AGMA Relief Fund Community. We ask that you consider participating in this year’s effort to help provide for fellow Artists in need by making a donation because . . . bad things do happen, even to great Artists.

Thank you for your support.

Jenifer Ringer

James Fayette

and



AMERICAN GUILD OF MUSICAL ARTISTS  
 1430 BROADWAY  
 14<sup>th</sup> FLOOR  
 NEW YORK, NY 10018

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### CONTACT LIST OF ASSISTANCE AND MEMBER-ONLY SERVICES

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| <b>Actors Federal Credit Union</b>   | (212) 869-8926 in NYC (8 p.m. EST)<br>Outside of NYC: (800) 2.ACTORS (800-222-8677) | www.actorsfcu.com  |
| <b>The Actors Fund</b>   |   | www.actorsfund.org   |
| <b>The Actors Fund - National Office-NYC</b>   | (212) 221-7300 (800) 221-7303   | seligson@actorsfund.org  |
| <b>The Actors Fund - Central Region</b>  | (312) 372-0989 (800) 221-7303   | dtowne@actorsfund.org  |
| <b>The Actors Fund - Western Region</b>  | (323) 933-9244 (800) 221-7303   | intakela@actorsfund.org  |
| <b>The Actors Work Program</b> (www.actorsfund.org/services-and-programs/actors-fund-work-program) |   |  |
| <b>The Actors Work Program - New York</b>  | (212) 354-5480  | blevinso@actorsfund.org  |
| <b>The Actors Work Program - Los Angeles</b>   | (323) 933-9244  | csorenson@actorsfund.org   |
| <b>AGMA Relief Fund - Donations</b>  | (800) 543-AGMA (2462)   | susan@musicalartists.org   |
| <b>AGMA Relief Fund - Intake East</b>  | (212) 221-7300 ext. 119 or (800) 221-7303   |  |
| <b>AGMA Relief Fund - Intake Midwest</b>   | (312) 372-0989 or (800) 221-7303  |  |
| <b>AGMA Relief Fund - Intake West</b>  | (323) 933-9244 ext. 55 or (800) 221-7303  |  |
| <b>AGMA Retirement and Health (Plan A, AGMA Retirement Plan and AGMA Health Plan)</b>              | (212) 765-3664  | www.agmaretirement-health.org<br>agmaretirement_health@yahoo.com |
| <b>AGMA Health Plan B ("Administrative Services Only")</b>   | (866) 263-1185 (Toll free)<br>(516) 396-5543 (Outside of the U.S.)                  | www.asonet.com   |
| <b>Artists Health Insurance Resource Center - NY</b>   | (917) 281-5975  | www.ahirc.org  |
| <b>Artists Health Insurance Resource Center - LA</b>   | (323) 933-9244, ext. 432  | ahirc@actorsfund.org   |
| <b>Career Transition for Dancers - New York</b>  | (212) 764-0172  | info@careertransition.org  |
| <b>Career Transition for Dancers - Chicago</b>   | (312) 666-0234  | info-chicago@careertransition.org                                |
| <b>Career Transition for Dancers - Los Angeles</b>   | (323) 549-6660  | info-la@careertransition.org<br>www.careertransition.org         |
| <b>Union Privilege/Union Plus</b>  | (800) 472-2005 (202) 293-5330   | www.unionplus.org  |