

AGMAZINE

VOLUME XXXVIII No. 1

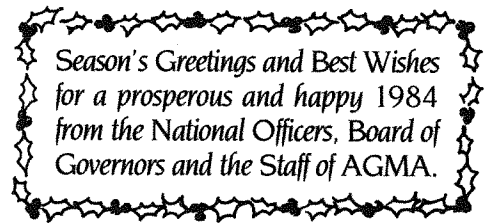
OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE AMERICAN GUILD OF MUSICAL ARTISTS
A Branch of the Associated Actors and Artistes of America, Affiliated with the AFL-CIO

December 1983

AGMA dancers achieve new three-year National Agreement

AGMA has just completed another six months of national dance negotiations, coordinating all dancers' various proposals into a new three-year National Dance Basic Agreement. Negotiations were held mainly "on the road" in Dallas, where the AGMA executives did multi-employer bargaining, resulting in exceedingly complex negotiations. Salaries will be increased by approximately 7% in the first year commencing on September 5, 1983. AGMA dancers in all companies can be proud of their delegates and committee members who con-

tributed many long hours to produce these substantial results. The new National Dance Basic Agreement speaks to the betterment of wages and working conditions for dancers throughout the United States, as they follow AGMA's leadership role in raising the standards of the dance profession in both wages and working conditions. We urge all dancers to confer with their own company delegates concerning the specific details of the agreement and to read it carefully in order that they may be informed of their rights and privileges.



NYC Opera labor ills settled temporarily

After 54 days of strike by the New York City Opera Orchestra, AGMA's 250 members of that opera company returned to work a brief, truncated fall season at the New York State Theatre, opening on September 21 with Massenet's *Cendrillon*. While the musicians agreed to a three-year contract, AGMA signed only a short-term one season agreement. Negotiations are thus still ongoing for next season and thereafter.

The work stoppage at New York City Opera was particularly acrimonious and painful for members because the 1982 season had been effected under wage freeze and the Spring 1983 season had been cancelled to create a Summer-Fall season for the financially beleaguered company.

Negotiations had begun in April for the scheduled July 7 opening, with a New York State mediator involved almost from the start. The prolonged labor crisis climaxed in late August with the eight unions of the Fact Finding Committee of the New York City Entertainment Unions taking the unprecedented step of admonishing the musicians to return to work and to accept binding arbitration.

The AGMA pact, which expires on May 31, 1984, provides a 6½% wage increase. All other contract details are essentially the same as in the 1979-82 contract. (The Fall season of 1982 was performed under a Letter of Extension.)

New Dance rates as of September 5, 1983

	<u>September 5, 1983</u>	<u>March 5, 1984</u>
New Dancers	\$345.00	359.00
Corps Dancers	407.00	423.00
Solo Dancers	444.00	461.00
Principal Dancers	480.00	498.00
Stage Manager	554.00	576.00
Assistant Stage Manager	432.00	448.00
Meal Money	26.00	26.00

Performer unions score a breakthrough in new Department of Labor directive

After years of frustration and consternation over the laxity of American government restrictions on foreigners performing in the United States, new regulations by the Labor Department have addressed several of AGMA's serious concerns about aliens working in our jurisdiction. Thanks in great part to the repeated protests and persistence of the AFL-CIO Department for Professional Employees (of which AGMA is a member), new rules have been sent to all regional administrators of the Department of Labor's U.S. Employment Service which take note of the high unemployment among qualified American performers.

Foreign singers, dancers and stage personnel may receive permission to work in the U.S. in one of two ways: An H-1 visa is granted for an in-

dividual of "distinguished merit and ability"; an H-2 visa is granted if there is no qualified American to perform the service or role. (Abuse of the B-1 visa for "Visitors for Business" has been more of a problem for the film industry than for AGMA.)

Previously, only 15 days' notice was required by employers of aliens, and AGMA has observed that that requirement was frequently ignored in last minute "emergency" requests for performers advertised months previously. The new ruling requires 45 days prior notification—adequate time for AGMA to research the "distinguished merit and ability" factor or to ascertain whether or not Americans are available for work in the H-2 category.

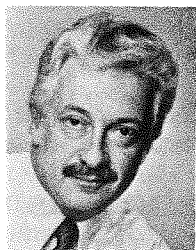
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Nikolais Dancers win AGMA accord

The members of the Nikolais Dance Theatre voted unanimously for AGMA representation in a Labor Board election held on July 11, 1983. Extensive negotiations followed the election period which have resulted in a new three year Basic Agreement for these modern dancers. Medical insurance, guaranteed employment, increased salaries and per diem were among the accomplishments of the dancers in their first break-through Basic Agreement. AGMA hopes to expand its role in representing smaller dance companies nationally as they develop throughout the United States.

The State of the Art or How do I get from the conservatory to show biz?

by Gene Boucher
National Executive Secretary



On November 14 and 15, I attended a seminar on Opera and Musical Theatre, assembled and sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts. We met in the splendid setting of the Green Room in Chicago's Opera House.

There 24 people sat in a squared-off oval for two extremely intensive days discussing the problems and triumphs of opera (grand and otherwise!), musical comedy, operetta, and theatrical pieces that are not clearly any one of the above.

After a couple of years of debate and pressures

from several sides, the National Endowment had removed opera from its Music Program and placed it in a category along with "Musical Theatre." Previously the NEA had paid scant attention to musical comedy and operetta, as the producers of such are largely in the realm of commercial theatre or "for profit," which is outside the NEA's mandate. Yet in repertory, and more and more frequently with American opera companies, works that are not clearly *opera* are being performed by non-profit organizations. While expanding the Endowment's coverage for theatrical-works-with-music in this logical manner, it has placed in tandem two segments of the performing arts which are clearly related but which are not fully com-

patible, like the relations of normal human beings, for example!

The seminar's participants included representatives of most of the major opera companies, significant producers of musical theatre (Joseph Papp, George Coates, and Stuart Ostrow!), three composers (Conrad Susa, Gary William Friedman, and Tom O'Horgan!) and a composer/performer Micki Grant, whose intelligence and wit explain why her *Your Arms Too Short to Box with God* is so appealing. I consider it particularly significant that it was Ms. Grant, rather than a "legit" singer like myself or a conductor like Kurt Herbert Adler, who made the very valid point that a dependence upon microphones is ruining American singers.

The symposium was chaired by the knowledgeable head of the National Endowment for the Arts, Frank Hodson, assisted by a man most able to evaluate any theatrical enterprise, Hugh Southern, and coordinated by the remarkable Ann Farris Darling, director of the Opera/Musical Theatre Program.

Our host for the symposium was the Chicago Lyric Opera, prominently represented by Ardis Krainik, its General Manager. Also representative of other activity in Chicago was Joan Harris of Chicago Opera Theatre. Critics included in the proceedings were panelist Samuel Lipman and several observers. (The entire issue of the arts and its journalistic critics could occupy a full symposium! I believe both producer and performer need to communicate more deeply with the media personnel who can often "make or break a show.")

Of greatest significance to AGMA was the conflict/conjunction of interests between classical opera and "lighter" musical theatre. The performing arts unions were represented by Alan Eisenberg, Executive Secretary of Actors' Equity, and myself. Divergent opinions about our separate business would seem to occur at non-professional or managerial levels and not because of our indecision about the nature of the works performed. *Porgy and Bess* is in the jurisdiction of Equity; modern America calls it an "opera." The legal jurisdiction is not in question. *How to deal with it is!* AGMA and Equity are actively cooperative within the Four A's (our duly authorized segment of the AFL-CIO). Whatever Sondheim calls *Sweeney Todd*, it is in the jurisdiction of Equity. *La Tragédie de Carmen* may be more Peter Brook than Bizet, but it is an AGMA show at Lincoln Center. Several persons at this seminar were disturbed about the juxtaposition of the two art

A G M A Z I N E

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Pacific Northwest Ballet signs first AGMA contract

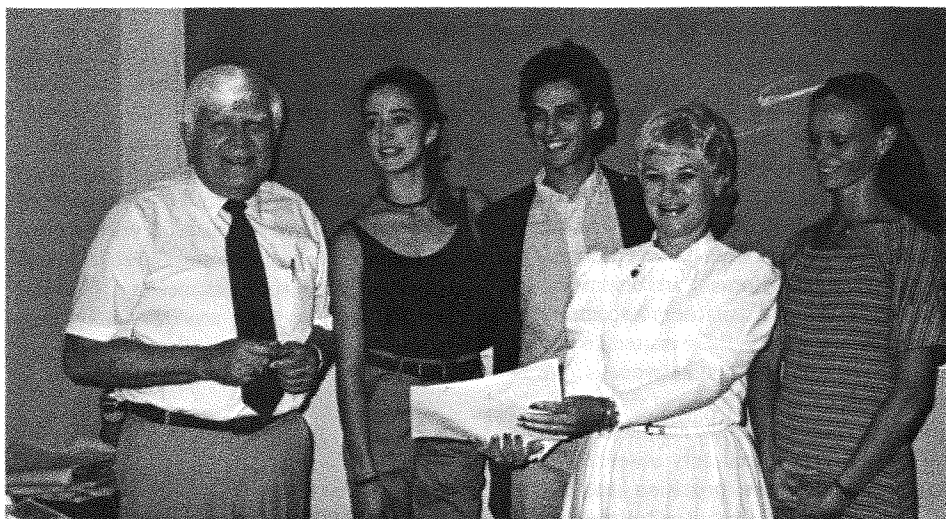
Following four months of negotiations, the Pacific Northwest Ballet has signed its first AGMA contract. In operation for several years as an amateur company founded by the Seattle Opera Association, the dancers had shown increasing interest in becoming unionized. Our Northwest Representative Carolyn Carpp began meeting with the dancers over a year ago.

A local executive committee was formed, including Adam Miller, Susan Rowe and Maia Rosal, already AGMA members. Negotiations with Margo Donaldson, PNB General Manager, produced an agreement reflecting a major wage increase in a guaranteed 38 week season. After Ms. Donaldson's resignation from the company, the final contract

was signed by Jerome Sanford, President of the Board of Pacific Northwest Ballet, on August 8, 1983.

The latest issue of PNB News quoted Dancer Representative Adam Miller: "The dancers here at PNB feel they are accepted with more prestige by the dance community now that we have become a part of the union. Joining AGMA enables us to become a part of a national family of dancers that set common standards and explore ideas for the future."

Company member Susan Rowe added: "Not only does this move raise our own self-esteem, but it will also increase the interest of other dancers who are considering joining our company."



AGMA's Northwest Representative Carolyn Carpp proudly displays the first Basic Agreement with Pacific Northwest Ballet, signed by President of the Board Jerome Sanford, smiling on the left. With them are (l to r) Negotiating Committee members Maia Rosal, Adam Miller and Susan Rowe.

Annelise Kamada is Membership Director

The AGMA Board of Governors has named Annelise Kamada as the Director of Membership in the National Office. In the restructured department, Mrs. Kamada becomes the person with whom most routine union membership business is conducted, and AGMA members can expect to see her signature on multiple communications.

Mrs. Kamada brings to her new position 24 years of experience in all aspects of our union's affairs. When she first came to AGMA as a secretary her name was Schuller, which one could easily expect to follow "Annelise." Her marriage to a Japanese accounts for the misleading Ori-

ental name. Indeed, when not conversing in English at the AGMA offices, she can be heard to communicate in fluent German when the occasion necessitates it.

The name "Annelise Kamada" can be found prominently displayed on more than AGMA letterhead. She has successfully written and published two historical novels: *A Love So Bold* and *A Banner Red and Gold*.

Her union position would appear to be influencing her literary endeavor, however; her next "fictional" project will be about opera singers and their agents!

ATTENTION!

Experienced Opera Choristers

The San Francisco Opera
WILL HOLD AUDITIONS
in March in the following cities:

New York City—March 9, 10, 11, 1984

Dallas —March 12, 1984

Minneapolis —March 13, 1984

Chicago —March 14, 1984

Professional Choristers interested in relocating to San Francisco should send a resume and picture by February 15, 1984 to:

Janet Houser
San Francisco Opera
War Memorial Opera House
San Francisco, CA. 94102
(415) 861-4008 Ext. 133

Wed

Ellen Marx and Stephen Best, members of the Gregg Smith Singers, were married August 9, 1983 at Saranac Lake, New York. Alan Olsen of the New York AGMA office was present to wish the couple much happiness.

Gilma Bustillo and Charles A. Maple, former members of the American Ballet Theatre, were married on July 31, 1983 at Irvington-on-Hudson. The couple will live in Basel, Switzerland as members of the Basel Ballet.

Meg Potter of the American Ballet Theatre and Eric Dirk Clopper of the Joffrey Ballet were married on July 23, 1983. The ceremony was performed at the Hampshire House in New York City.

Births

Joshua Kaufman, Representative of the Washington/Baltimore Area, is the proud father of Jay Laurence, born on October 25, 1983. Young Master Kaufman was so anxious to arrive that he made his appearance two months earlier than expected. Young Jay is the Kaufman's first child, as well as first grandchild of both sets of grandparents.

Peggy Lyman, Principal Dancer with the Martha Graham Company, gave birth on October 18, 1983 to a 9 lb. son. Peggy and her husband, Tim Lynch, have named their son Kevin.

Actors' Equity adopts new admission policy

Effective January 1, 1984, performers who have been members of another union of the Four A's, including AGMA, for a year or longer will be eligible to join Equity. The previous policy had limited membership to participation in their Membership Candidate Program or to obtaining work under an Equity contract.

The new liberalized admissions policy will give a maximum credit of up to 50% of the Equity initiation fee (based upon the amount previously paid to the parent union). To satisfy Equity's new ruling, an AGMA member would have to prove that he has been a member in good standing in AGMA for at least a year and offer as evidence of his performing employment a copy of an AGMA contract (or a letter from AGMA attesting to his working under AGMA's jurisdiction).

Equity Executive Secretary Alan Eisenberg in his letter announcing the new policy said: "This action by the Equity Council represents not only a symbolic gesture towards eventual merger of performer unions, but also recognizes the fact that actors must and do work in every entertainment medium. Performers are indeed members of a singular work force and Equity wishes to encourage them to work within all jurisdictions with as few restraints as possible."

In memoriam

Thomas J. O'Donnell, former Chairman of the Pittsburgh Local Area Executive Committee from 1963 to 1976, died on September 6, 1983. AGMA's Board of Governors and Officers extend their deepest sympathies to Tom's wife, Jennie, his family and many friends in the Pittsburgh Opera Chorus. His devotion to the needs of our members, his love of music and genuine concern for all of the members in Pittsburgh leave us saddened.

Deceased

Bruna Castagna
Anton Dolin
John Gilpin
Gilbert V. Helmsley, Jr.
William W. Hinshaw
Iva Kitchell
Ceil Maria Kopet-Goldberg
Joseph Noto
Thomas O'Donnell
Louis Statham
Sam Sternberg
Sir David Ward

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

(continued from page 1)

National Executive Secretary Gene Boucher recently spent a full day at the Department of Labor and with other government officials at a briefing arranged by the Department for Professional Employees' Director Jack Golodner in Washington, D.C. The dialogue between the several Executive Secretaries of the performing arts unions and the federal agencies represents the most comprehensive communication in these matters to date.

Increased communication and requests from the Department of Labor in recent months to the AGMA National Office would indicate that the new rulings are being genuinely observed. Most significantly, the new provision that the appropriate union be contacted will assure ongoing involvement and input, whether or not the bureaucracy agrees with the labor union on the specific visa request.

BOUCHER

(continued from page 2)

forms, and there was much discussion of the matter—with no resolution or consensus.

The wonderfully divergent nature of the participants added to the caliber and pertinence of the seminar; a designer (John Conklin) gave impetus to ideas from a playwright (Megan Terry) and from an art collector/producer (Paul Walter)—all with viewpoints too easily missed by performing artists!

I was particularly impressed (in this *video* era) by the succinct comments of PBS Vice-President in Charge of Programming, Suzanne Weil. AGMA member Rhoda Levine "zapped" me early on in the proceedings with her phrase "Connect!"—good advice for life as well as live stage performance. AGMA Baritone Timothy Nolen demonstrated his expertise *off-stage* with the most salient points about "Training" or, to be more accurate, "Lack of Training" evident in modern America. Jessie Woods and Robert Fitzpatrick ably presented ideas from the standpoint of enlightened educators.

My own opinion that classical singing and ballet dancing are a part of "Show Business" and hence are *entertainment* is not always greeted with accord. This was true at this NEA Seminar, but the harsh economic circumstances of our professions in 1983 makes it very difficult to argue with my thesis, even at such distinguished levels; but argument is there! Fortunately and correctly, AGMA is a present part of such vital meetings. I applaud the NEA for all its work and contributions, including this seminar. *Avanti! Allegro, senze pausa!*

Alive and well

Apologies are extended to AGMA member Anna Levitski who was erroneously reported to have passed away earlier this year. From all reports, Ms. Levitski is very much alive and recently performed with the Seattle Opera.

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