



AGMAZINE

January, 1995

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Official Organ of the American Guild of Musical Artists

A Branch of the Associated Actors and Artistes of America Affiliated with the AFL-CIO

AGMA Members to Nominate National Officers and Board of Governors Representatives

A GMA members have the opportunity and the responsibility to nominate candidates to run in the upcoming election for National Officers and members of the AGMA Board of Governors.

Members may nominate their choices by petition requiring at least ten signatures of members in good standing as of February 1, 1995. Candidates must accept the nomination as well as be in Good Standing. To be a member in Good Standing of AGMA you must be fully paid in both basic and working dues. Should you

have your employer deduct your basic dues, it could be possible that your dues are not being paid in time and your signature or vote could be invalid. If you need to check your standing, please contact the AGMA membership department.

The democratic process, upon which the union is based, cannot serve the members unless each member participates in the selection of the candidates as well as in the final vote.

Information on the elected positions as well as petitions for nomination are contained in this issue.

AGMA Welcomes Four New Companies

Four companies have had their artists select AGMA to represent their interests. Four companies are organized and a fifth company has requested a vote for AGMA representation.

It is a very exciting time for AGMA and we are glad to welcome the following companies:

Arizona Opera Company

Tucson and Phoenix, Arizona

BalletMet

Columbus, Ohio

Tulsa Ballet Theatre

Tulsa, Oklahoma

Atlanta Ballet

Atlanta, Georgia

Negotiations are currently underway for the first Collective Bargaining Agreements with Arizona Opera Company, BalletMet and Tulsa Ballet. Atlanta Ballet dancers are close to submitting proposals to management.

Ballet Hispanico will vote on February 10, 1995 to join the ranks of professional companies represented by AGMA.

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**N E A In
F u n d i n g
C r i s i s**

**A G M A
R a l l i e s
I n
S u p p o r t**

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Support the National Endowment For The Arts

The American Guild of Musical Artists

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Jascha Heifetz, Founding Vice-President

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Thomas Jamerson, Assistant to the National Executive Secretary

Alexander Dubé, Administrator for Dance
Dianne James, Office Administrator
Carol Caldwell, Supervisor of Membership
Michael Rubino, Director of Public Relations
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Gerald Otte, President
Susanne Mentzer, 1st Vice-President
Chester Ludgin, 2nd Vice-President
Eugene Lawrence, 3rd Vice-President
Michael Byars, 4th Vice-President
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260 Richmond Street E.
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WAR VICTIMS —YOU AND I

Louise Gilmore
National Executive Secretary

You and I, our colleagues, and employers have been targeted as victims of the approaching civil war between the reactionary leadership of the incoming U.S. Congress and the arts community. On a platform touting fiscal conservatism and "family values," with rhetoric reflecting bigotry, hatred, and fear, right wing political victors have declared war on the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

At stake is the nation's cultural life, arts education, and freedom of expression. From a personal perspective, all of our jobs are threatened. 1994 NEA grants to major AGMA employers in New York City alone total more than one and a quarter million dollars! As most of these organizations leverage such grants for matching funds and loans by a factor of 10, the aggregate effect of withdrawing the grants would be catastrophic.

If you are not content to be a victim, you must act **NOW** to forestall the projected cancellations of funding for NEA, NEH, and CPB in the 1996 budget, due in mid-January. Write immediately to your senators and congressmen. The American Council for the Arts has suggested that your message include some of the following points:

*** The Arts are an Economic Investment in Your Community** - Arts create jobs, boost tourism, increase the tax base, and spur growth in related businesses. Last year \$123 million in NEA grants leveraged more than \$1.3 billion in matching funds. Each NEA dollar generates a 20-fold return in jobs, services and contracts and more than \$11 in matching funds. Private donations or increased ticket prices will not be able to replace a loss of federal funding.

*** The Arts are an Investment in our Children** - Artists and nonprofit arts institutions/organizations improve their quality of life through excellent artistic programming and extensive educational and community outreach activities. Research also indicates that the arts create better students, stimulating learning and creativity, improving overall academic performance, developing problem-solving skills, teaching discipline, promoting team work and enhancing self-esteem. These skills are invaluable if our next generation is to compete in the technologically advanced global community. As the arts have continued to be cut from school curriculum, the NEA has put thousands of artists in classrooms in every state.

*** The Arts are an Investment in our Communities and Families** - Since the NEA began in 1965 the number of symphonies has doubled; theater and dance companies each have grown seven-fold; and opera companies have quadrupled. Arts institutions (and NEA) bring families and communities together through: children's Shakespeare and music festivals; rural music tours; outdoor summer concerts; free and reduced tickets for concerts and plays; mobile museums for rural and inner-city areas. The NEA has been a major catalyst in establishing arts organizations in communities that previously had none as well as strengthening existing arts organizations. As a result, quality cul-

Continued on page 5

Retrenching, downsizing, privatizing are scary words in the performing arts world. Will there be an NEA next year? Will my choral society survive? As everyone's budget gets smaller, what is the role of the artists in our society?

I can only tell you what the role of this artist is. I intend to push in every arena I can to expand the arts in America. If we are truly in a period of reevaluating society, the role of government, and our economic priorities, then it is every artist's responsibility to be a leader in setting those priorities. Our collective activist voice can make a difference. The moment we communicate with each other in our communities, our regions, and our national union, we can make a difference.

What can you do? Write a letter to

your state representative, to your local paper. Organize, with your fellow singers and dancers, continuing outreach into your community. Maybe your local school board needs to know that you want arts education to be a high priority and not to be a last consideration.

Every time you speak up it is your voice that is heard. Elected officials keep track of the letters, visits and petitions they receive. Those who organize get responses and those who are silent are targeted for the deepest cuts. We have a responsibility to protect and nourish the arts -- and ourselves -- by being active and articulate advocates, helping to assure that our society places a higher value on the arts.

Artists Need To Perform Another Role

Gerald Otte
President



I have, from time to time, brought to light items which benefit the membership through the contract such as the "Pay or Play" clause and the requirement of opera companies to contribute to a health plan for Principal Artists in Opera. Here are recent examples of AGMA's assistance to individuals in the performing arts field.

A production for which an AGMA Artist had been contracted was rescheduled by an AGMA company several times over several years. Negotiations with the Artist's manager and the opera company had reached a legal "snag" which required AGMA's intervention. We were able to settle the situation by arranging for a future contract for the same fee but for fewer performances, while gaining the Artist a partial payment of the contract immediately and providing for a remedy should the company attempt to reschedule again. The Artist was well satisfied with the resolution and the company cooperated fully with the immediate payment of the settlement.

From time to time AGMA has been asked to assist a member with a problem which does not directly involve an agreement with an Employer or an Artist's management company. It is AGMA's policy to assist its members in situations of this type whenever possible. Recently, we were able to do just that for one of our members.

The problem arose when a negative determination was reached by an unemployment office on the West Coast requiring the artist to repay over \$4,000 in benefits, with the possibility of fines and penalties in addition. In brief, the determination was that the benefits were obtained falsely. Without going into detail, we found that this determination was made because of a lack of knowledge of the employment patterns of our profession. The Artist, having recently moved, now lives on the East Coast. The hearing was scheduled on the West Coast. Our legal counsel on the West Coast attended the hearing on behalf of the Artist while the Artist attended by telephone. With our counsel's assistance,

Continued page 10

**What
Has
AGMA
Done
For
Me...
Lately
???**

Tom Jamerson
Assistant to the National Executive Secretary

Officer Terms Expiring

In accordance with the Constitution, the following Officers' terms expire in 1995 and nominations for such positions shall be made at the same time as those for regular members of the Board;

President

Gerald Otte

1st Vice President

Susanne Mentzer

2nd Vice President

Chester Ludgin

3rd Vice President

Eugene Lawrence

4th Vice President

Michael Byars

5th Vice President

Franco Gentilesca

Treasurer

William Cason

Recording Secretary

Yolanda Antoine

Area	Active Solo Singers	Active Instrumentalists	Active Stage Directors	Active Choristers	Active Dancers
1. New York & Vicinity.....	645	2	88	537	347
2. Southern California	106	0	9	273	22
3. Chicago and Vicinity.....	105	1	26	328	108
4. San Francisco & Vicinity....	61	0	17	140	76
5. New Orleans & Vicinity.....	22	0	1	31	6
6. Philadelphia & Vicinity.....	41	0	1	89	25
7. Washington / Baltimore.....	91	0	12	208	25
8. Pittsburgh & Vicinity.....	6	0	3	50	20
9. New England.....	38	0	4	43	47
10. Texas.....	22	0	5	52	60
11. Northwest	24	0	4	79	30
Total	1161	3	170	1830	766

*Membership Count of Active and In Good Standing Members
For 1995 Board Allocations*

EXPIRING BOARD OF GOVERNORS' TERMS

Those Board Members whose terms are expiring are listed followed by a notation of **Entitlements/ Remaining Board Members / and Number of Open Positions.**

AREA 1

New York Area

Eight Solo Singers: Andrea Bradford, Gabor Carelli, Anthea DeForest, Alan Fischer, Leonore A. Lanzillotti, Gale Limansky, Dolores Mari-Galdi, Joseph Wolverton.
26 / 16 / 10

Three Stage

Directors/Managers: Bruce Donnell, Stephen M. Pickover, Lori Rosecrans
4 / 1 / 3

Four Choristers: Eleanore Lange, William Lyon Lee, Pamela Smith, Constance Webber
22 / 18 / 4

Seven Dancers: Charles D. Anderson, Karen Brown, Diana L. Brownstone, Kathy Buccellato,

Christine Dakin, Lawrence Leritz, Adam Sklute.
14 / 9 / 5

AREA 2

Southern California Area

No Solo Singers

4 / 3 / 1

Four Choristers: Natalie Beck, Janet Goggins, John Golitzin, Roger H. Lindbeck.

11 / 6 / 5

No Dancers

1 / 1 / 0

AREA 3

Chicago Area

Two Solo Singers: Robert Hovencamp, Arnold M. Voketaitis
4 / 2 / 2

No Stage Directors/Managers

1 / 1 / 0

No Choristers

13 / 13 / 0

Two Dancers: Patti Eylar, Alexies Sanchez.

4 / 1 / 3

AREA 4

San Francisco Area

One Solo Singer: Donna J. Petersen
2 / 1 / 1

No Stage Directors/Managers

1 / 1 / 0

One Chorister: Gregory De Silva
6 / 5 / 1

No Dancers

3 / 3 / 0

AREA 5

New Orleans Area

No Soloists

1 / 1 / 0

No Choristers

1 / 2* / 0

*Carrying one extra

AREA 6**Philadelphia Area****No Solo Singers**

2/1/1

No Choristers

4/4/0

No Dancers

1/1/0

AREA 7**Washington/Baltimore Area****Three Soloists:** Patricia Boyd,
Michael Consoli, Robert Williamson

4/1/3

No Stage Directors/Managers

1/1/0

Two Choristers: Nancy Kelso, Teresa
Reid

8/5/3

No Dancers

1/1/0

AREA 8**Pittsburgh Area****One Choristers:** Robert W. Simoni.

2/1/1

No Dancers:

1/1/0

AREA 9**New England Area****One Soloist:** S. Mark Aliapoulios.

2/0/2

One Chorister: Jenni Harrison.

2/1/1

No Dancers

2/1/1

AREA 10**Texas Area****One Soloist:** Carroll Freeman.

1/0/1

Two Choristers: George Eison,
Robert Sheets.

2/0/2

No Dancers

2/1/11

AREA 11**Northwest Area****No Soloists:**

1/1/0

No Choristers

3/3/0

No Dancers

1/1/0

NEW SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE FOR AGMA ARTISTS

National Executive Secretary, Louise Gilmore, has announced that the University of Toledo will administer scholarship money for AGMA artists pursuing undergraduate or graduate degrees (including law and medicine) at campuses in Toledo, Ohio. Applicants should be AGMA members in Good Standing or on Honorable Withdrawal. Length of time working under AGMA contracts is an advantage. (Work experience of five or more years under AGMA contracts is treated equally.)

The scholarship is the result of a bequest in the name of Ms. Gilmore's mother, Beatrice S. Jacobson, who graduated from that University. It has been designed by Ms. Gilmore to benefit AGMA artists in recognition of her family's commitment to the performing and classical arts.

The awards may be used for tuition or expenses and may be packaged with other loans and grants. Because of the tuition advantage that residency confers on students at state schools like Toledo, and although successful applicants may be full- or part-time students, it is most likely that recipients will be either Ohio residents, or AGMA Artists in transition.

It is expected that the funds will be available for the semester beginning this Fall, 1995. Details will be available soon through the AGMA's national office or at the following:

**University of Toledo,
Office of University Development
Driscoll Center
Toledo, Ohio 43606-3395.
(419) 537-2603**

Companies continued from page 1.

Members of the companies have worked hard and have shown commitment and devotion to their careers and their union. Our collective voice is heard.

Alex Dubé, Administrator for Dance, mentioned that "We have dancers from more companies who have contacted us for information, but they aren't yet ready to organize. Of course, we can't say who they are until cards are officially filed, but we're ready to represent them just as soon as they give us the word."

Congratulations and welcome!

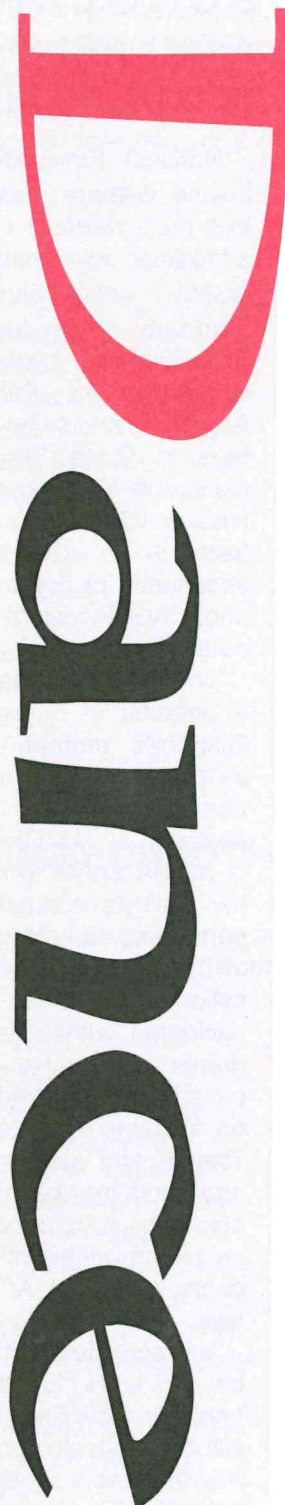
War Victims continued from page 2.

tural experiences now are more accessible.

Still unconvinced that YOU YOURSELF must take urgent action? Then find out the amount of your employer's NEA grant, multiply it by 10, and subtract the product from its total budget. Ask yourself if the company and your job will survive the reduction.

However you phrase your message, send it now. Fight intolerance and preserve the values that make life worthwhile and humane.

Refuse to be a victim!



Dance

Report on Dance Nationwide

Alex Dubé
Administrator for Dance

It has been a very busy and progressive time for Dance nationwide. Ms. Dorothy Kochiras, myself, and the dedicated Dance representatives continue to better the working conditions of our members.

Dance Theatre of Harlem

We recently concluded our negotiations for a 2-year agreement and the salary figures negotiated are a freeze in 93/94 and a 3.5% increase for 94/95 with pension contributions at 3 % for 93/94 and 3.5% in the following year. Provisions for exit pay have been preserved.

Merce Cunningham Dance Company

This contract is still in negotiations due to a busy touring schedule and the most recent changes of personnel within the administration.

Ballet Chicago

Management most recently withdrew its offer of a minimum guarantee of 20 weeks of work and offered 5 weeks of work for the 94/95 season, which they claim is due to extreme financial hardships on the administration. AGMA has requested all financial data from the company and we will conduct our own examination and only then will we be able to respond to financial issues. Our negotiations continue to focus on work rules and conditions.

BalletMet

We have reached complete agreement on many issues and our negotiations continue in good faith.

Atlanta Ballet

The Dancers' Committee is currently formulating its proposals and it is our desire to commence our negotiations before the end of January.

Ballet Hispanico of New York

The National Labor Relations Board is contemplating an election to take place during the first week of

February, and the members of this wonderful company will be able to exercise their right to vote.

Tulsa Ballet Theatre

There have been challenges finding mutually agreeable meeting times. While Nutcracker, touring and recent resignations of both the Artistic Director and the Executive Director have caused some delay, there is a good sense of cooperation between AGMA and management. We have reached agreement on many issues and continue to negotiate in good faith.

National Dance Basic Agreement Negotiations.

A draft of a questionnaire has been sent to all AGMA Delegates for their review and the results of these distributed questionnaires will soon be tabulated to formulate our proposals for a new National Dance Basic Agreement. A tentative timetable has been established to enable all parties concerned to conduct these negotiations in a timely manner so that all negotiations will conclude prior to the expiration of any and all National Dance Basic Agreements and Letters of Modification.

The tentative timetable is as follows:

Dec. 20, 1994

Questionnaires submitted to AGMA.

Jan. 7, 1995

Draft of National proposals to be distributed to delegates nationwide and approved.

Feb. 15, 1995

Finalized proposals submitted to managements nationwide.

March 15, 1995

Commence negotiations with management.

July 1, 1995

National Basic fully negotiated.

August 1, 1995

Commence negotiations for all Letters of Modification.

March 1, 1996

All negotiations for Letters of Modification completed.

Soloist Forums Formula For Future

Jonathan Curtsinger

Did you know that for the first time in memory some AGMA soloists were surveyed, invited to meet, asked to give their opinions, input, and to form a committee to discover their mutual interests in order to best serve all of AGMA's soloists? It's true!

This summer the first Soloist Forum was convened in Santa Fe by AGMA First Vice President, Susanne Mentzer, with National Executive Secretary, Louise Gilmore, in attendance. Artists were urged to give their input as to the condition and needs of solo artists. In September the National Office mailed out questionnaires and invitations to Principal solo Artists in the Greater New York Area for an October 3 meeting and "gripe session." Monthly meetings are now being held at the AGMA national office in New York area for solo artists to come together and discuss the current issues facing them.

The very act of sending out the survey and calling meetings, shows the new efforts of AGMA and the organized responsiveness of the National Office to operate in a healthier, more communicative and more caring manner. Some of this increased activity is due to a new activism of the Board of Governors, generated in part by a restructuring of the Board's committees, and in part by nationwide participation in Board business, made possible through the use of teleconferencing. As a result of these meetings and other soloists' input, a few mutually desirable interests are now being investigated and discussed.

The Membership and Member Relations Committee of the Board of Governors is recruiting activist soloists for a soloists' committee to be run by and for soloists with the assistance and guidance of the National Office and the Member Relations committee. The "hot" topics currently are health insurance, pension, and minimum fees. Any soloists interested in helping their committee should get in touch

with the Member Relations Committee through the National Office.

Another result of these meetings is the discovery of a shortage of information regarding what AGMA provides for its artists. Some solo artists were aware of the benefits of collective bargaining, such as health and safety requirements, professional colleagues, and contract enforcement and arbitration, but some were not. Some solo artists still don't know of all the details that AGMA is constantly dealing with on behalf of soloists, such as per diem fees, rehearsal timings, interpretations of terms of their contracts, and video and audio recording agreements.

Last but not least, AGMA resolves conflicts about payments. In the last few years, AGMA has settled either through the threat of, or use of arbitration, hundreds of disputes, not only between employers and soloists, but between soloists and their management companies or agents as well. The amounts of monies recovered are a tribute to our staff. They have recovered tens of thousands of dollars for AGMA soloists and one settlement alone was over \$40,000.

Progress is indeed being made. All members of AGMA will soon have the opportunity to help their union to make more progress, and be more responsive and more caring. Don't vote for the person who is the most well known or closest to you unless you know that they will actively represent your interests. Rather, vote for your peers whom you believe to be active in representing your needs and in organizing a response to them.

Take responsibility for being a part of your union. We must all work together so that our varied but mutual interests can be taken care of and communicated to our fellow artists.

All artists are part of the answer in how to better the conditions of performers in the United States. When

Continued on page 10.

order

Concert

New York Area Pickets, Petitions, and Progress

Pamela Warrick-Smith

The close of 1994 was a time of great change and activity for all AGMA, and in particular for the New York Area Concert Singers. A New York Area Executive Committee was formed at the last New York Area Membership Meeting on October 24, 1994, including an impressive number of singers active in the Concert Singers' field.

Among those elected were Betty Baisch, Megan Friar, David Frye, Greg Limansky, Jody Peterson, Pamela Smith, Phil Sneed and Alan Sokoloff. Warm congratulations to these singers, and to all of the AGMA members elected to the new committee. We are all hopeful that this new body will be another means to achieve greater strength, solidarity, and service to AGMA members.

Contact negotiations for New York Area Concert Singers have been slow and not altogether encouraging. AGMA has once again written to Musica Sacra to invite them to begin negotiations; thus far with no response. There has been no word either from Mostly Mozart.

There have been meetings, however, between the Opera Orchestra of New York and Louise Gilmore and members of the Concert Singers' committee. These talks have gone on for the past few months, and a number of issues have been resolved, but tough problems remain, specifically in the areas of amateur choruses, soloist coverage, and wages. Nevertheless, I am pleased that negotiations with the orchestra are going forward.

The informational picketing effort by the concert singers of AGMA has not yet prompted a response from the New York Philharmonic. However, the event was quite a success, with more than 6,000 flyers distributed. The col-



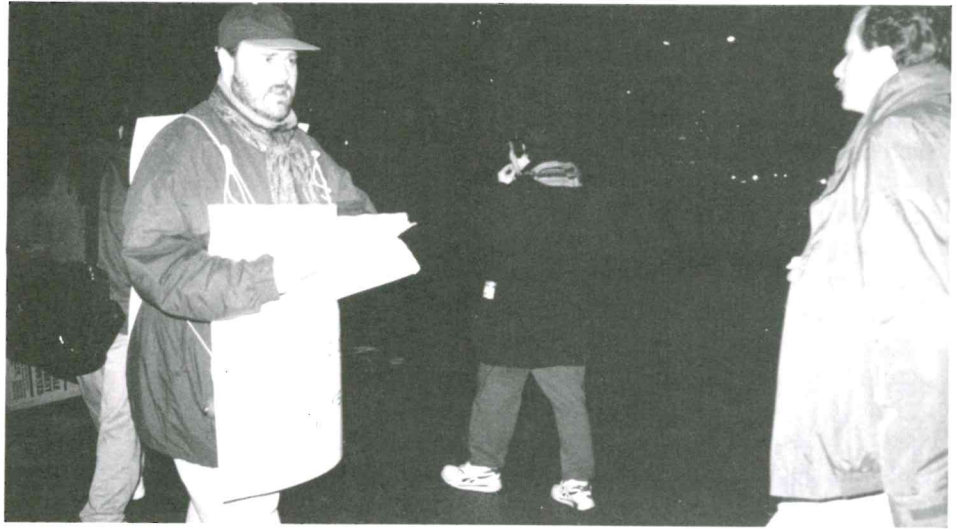
orful leaflets were very much in evidence throughout Avery Fisher Hall, both in the auditorium itself and throughout the building.

The leafleting of the Philharmonic took place on three consecutive evenings; December 8, 9, and 10, 1994, before performances of Midsummer Night's Dream. (These were the only performances in the last two seasons to use a professional chorus.) These evenings, complete with numbing cold, soaking rain and high wind, brought together the largest most diverse group of AGMA members and supporters to be assembled in many years; on December 8 alone, there were 35 or more participants.

All branches of AGMA were represented - President, Gerald Otte, Treasurer Bill Cason and a number of Board of Governors - Dancers, Opera Chorus, Opera and Concert Soloists, and of course a strong showing of Concert Singers, including a number of women from the Midsummer Night's Dream chorus who arrived early to distribute flyers, black gowns and all. In addition to AGMA members, the group was joined by IATSE, LOCAL 1, AGMA national counsel, Mortimer Becker, Judy West and Bill Dennison from The American Federation Of Musicians (AF of M), LOCAL 802, who have been generous with their support and advice, and a few unknown soldiers. There was very strong support from the AGMA execu-

tives and staff as well, with Louise Gilmore, Alex Dubé, Tom Jamerson, Dianne James, Michael Rubino, Susan Davison, Barbara Porter, and Stephen Rowe joining the ranks. In addition there was enthusiastic assistance at the AGMA office in preparing, mailing, creating and printing flyers, making phone calls etc. Flyers are still available at the AGMA office which can be mailed to The Philharmonic in order to register your support.

The concert singers spent many hours and days in order to bring this event to pass in such a memorable way, and we all can be proud of the image of determination and dignity shown on that cold December evening. Many, many thanks to all who participated and I hope that this important



skirmish in an admittedly bitter struggle to improve our professional life will start us on our way.

L.A. Master Chorale A Return to Sounds Past

It was known throughout the world as the Roger Wagner Chorale and later became known as the Los Angeles Master Chorale, the resident chorus of the Music Center. It had been identified by a "certain sound". Having moved towards a larger, operatic sound under John Currie, music director Paul Salamunovich is returning to the sound with a more mellow and gentler sonority.

In December the L.A. Times featured Paul Salamunovich in an article by Timothy Mangan. Salamunovich had been a singer under Roger Wagner starting at age 13 and later in Wagner's Concert Youth Chorus. From 1953-1977 Salamunovich was an assistant conductor for Wagner.

The article continues to talk about the return of the "old sound", with a lighter soprano section and stronger bass section. Salamunovich creates the sound from the lower voices up, much like Wagner did during his time as head of the Chorale.

However, the Master Chorale like so many other organizations must fight to retain its audience. They are faced with effects of the economy not to mention the ghosts of the 1992 riots. There are also concerns nationwide that poor musical education programs in the schools continue to erode today's audience.

In an effort to find and attract a larger audience base, the Chorale has performed culturally diverse programs, with music from eastern Europe to Latin American music. Still the audiences remain smaller than targeted.

Salamunovich criticized the influence of unions, feeling that the protections covering the singers were restrictive to how he would rehearse the ensemble (at one time rehearsals were extremely long, and much time was wasted).

Today more than ever, high quality professional singers are crucial in order to prepare the Christmas program in four rehearsals or a Mozart cantata in one.

Moved?

Changed Your Name?

**Not Received Your
Bill?**

**Call or Write The
AGMA
Membership Department !**

The Membership Department needs to hear from you if any of the above apply. The company you work for does not notify AGMA of any changes.

Help AGMA keep in touch with you. You may reach the Membership Department at the AGMA National Office.

**1727 Broadway
New York, NY 10019-5284
(212) 265-3687
Fax (212) 262-9088**

Do For You continued from page 3.

the determination was totally reversed, clearing the Artist of all charges and allowing the Artist to keep all benefits which had been paid.

In another instance, an Artist asked us to intervene in a very serious situation which required immediate attention. AGMA was able to provide legal advice from our National Executive Secretary, Louise Gilmore, as well as our National Legal Counsel, Mortimer Becker. Meetings were held with the Artist, Mr. Becker, and staff to ascertain the full depth of the problem, and to discuss a course of action. Several telephone calls, letters, and meetings involving all parties brought this most difficult situation to a satisfactory resolution. The many years of experience of Mr. Becker in matters quite similar to this specific problem were most beneficial to the Artist.

These examples are given for your information. They illustrate the broad scope of issues with which AGMA becomes involved on behalf of our members. These case histories have not named those involved, maintaining confidentiality and protecting the Artists' identities. However, the Artist involved in this last and most serious instance has sent the adjoining open letter.

These are just a few more ways in which AGMA, within the past few months, has been able to answer the question,

"WHAT HAS AGMA DONE FOR ME ... LATELY"?

Foreign Artists May Be Affected By State Decisions

"Recent decisions by the State Departments administering unemployment benefits in Massachusetts and New York have denied foreign artists unemployment benefits because they are employed in the Country under a special '01' visa status authorizing them to work only for a specific employer" notes attorney Ira Sills. The change in policy may

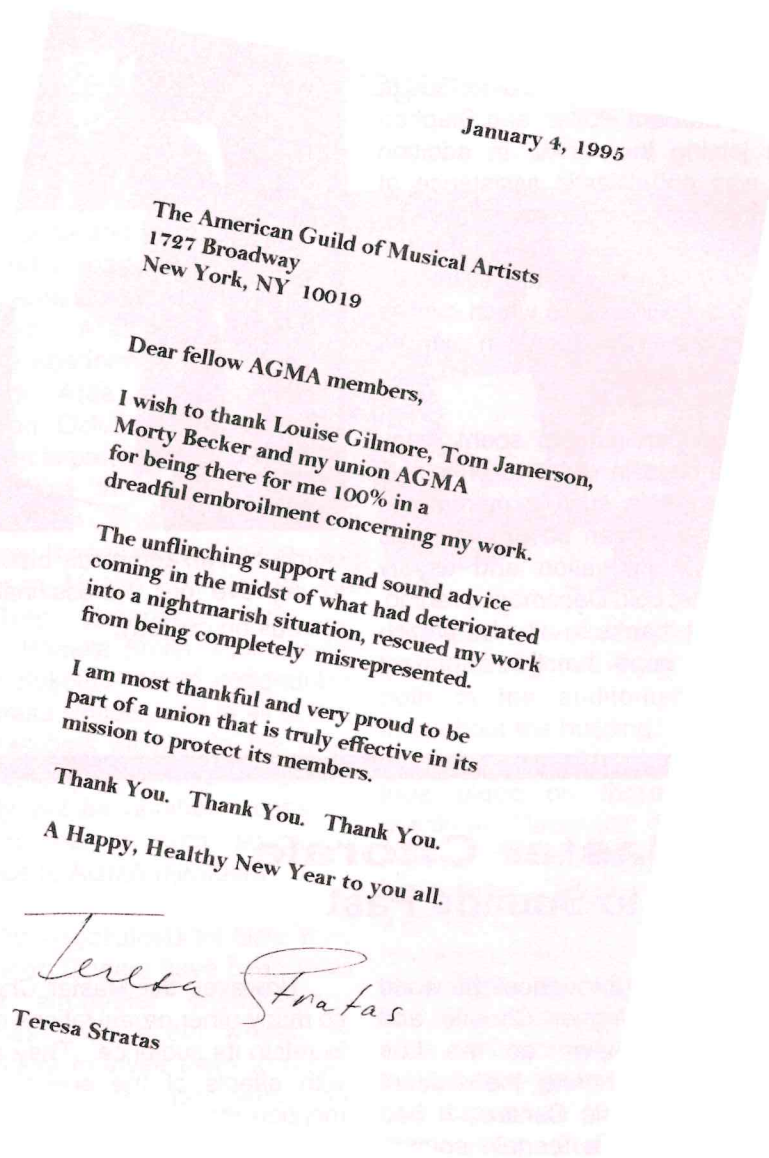
be a result of financial pressures placed on State unemployment agencies, reducing costs by disqualifying groups that have in the past been able to receive unemployment between contracts.

Artists working under the special visa should not assume that they will be eligible for unemployment even though they received it in the past.

Opera continued from page 7.

National Basic negotiations begin, solo artists must be prepared to speak out about their issues as members of the negotiating team, to come together with their AGMA colleagues and representatives to demand from the companies the conditions they need as solo artists.

Be a part of a future. Get involved.



AGMA Staff Notes

If you call or visit AGMA you may be contacting several new additions to the staff which serves our members.

Dianne James joins the AGMA staff as Office Administrator. Her background includes 14 years at Xerox Corporation and a background in Office Administration. Her responsibilities will include management of the AGMA staff, coordinating staff / member requests, and the systems at AGMA.

Ms. James also has a performance background in both opera and musical theatre with degrees from Texas Christian University and Sam Houston State University. Her previous involvement with AGMA includes serving as an AGMA Delegate, a Board of Governors member for over eleven years, and part of the negotiating team for several AGMA contracts.

Carol Caldwell has joined the staff as Supervisor of Membership. Ms. Caldwell has a strong background in management in the visual arts field, having worked for Magidson Fine Art Inc., Charles Cowles Gallery, Inc. and Christie, Manson & Woods,

Ms. Caldwell is a graduate of Chestnut Hill College in Philadelphia, Penn.

During the past holiday season, members of the AGMA staff adopted a charity to assist. This year the charity was Gay Men's Health Crisis. Members of the staff donated gifts to help those suffering from A.I.D.S. and in need of basic items. Ivan De Gonzalez (Membership) presented the idea and was chairman for the drive.

A G M A
Hotline
(212) 247-0247

Call the hotline for news and auditions, services available, union business, fellowships, competitions, and career assistance. AGMA shares a Hotline with SAG and AFTRA in San Francisco, at (415) 433-6266.

Protecting Your Rights As An Artist

Know and Understand Your Contract.

The Individual Artist Contract you sign is only a part of your contract. Read all terms and conditions, usually found in the Individual Artist Contract, Addendums, a Basic Agreement and a Letter of Modification.

If you have a question, contact the AGMA national office. Some contracts may not provide all of the terms and conditions which an artist feels are necessary to the successful performance.

Occasionally, managements insert into contracts unauthorized provisions which AGMA regards as void, but which might give rise to undue worry and stress in an employment situation. For instance: One opera company has been known to insert in its contracts a clause that the solo artists will indemnify the opera company for any accidents which occur -- even those for which the employer is at fault.

AGMA sets minimum conditions. No contract should provide for less than the AGMA agreements. *It is important to be sure you are performing for a signatory company and under an AGMA contract.*

Protect That Offer

If you receive a contract from a company, agree to the terms, and sign it, AGMA considers that a binding contract, usually whether or not an agent of the company has signed it. If the company later reneges, AGMA may take it to arbitration on your behalf to uphold the contract.

In order to safeguard your rights and to provide evidence in any contract dispute of this sort, please save cover letters and forwarding documents from the companies (or ask your artists' management company to do this for you). Make a copy of the contract offered to you and send back the contract signed and dated by you via Certified Mail Return Receipt Requested, with a cover letter noting the return receipt number (or have your management company do this for you.). These contract precautions apply to all AGMA artists.

Honor Your Contracts

Both the artist and the employer have obligations to adhere to the terms of the contract. Artists sometimes commit to a contract quickly and then decide they want to accept another offer. This weakens everyone's position.

First Fridays For Dancers In The New York Area

All AGMA dancers are invited to attend a dancers meeting held the first Friday of every month. The meetings are held at the AGMA offices and begin at 6:15 P.M.. These meetings are an informal opportunity

for professional dancers to meet and discuss the issues that are facing the dance community. Any AGMA dancer whether a resident or "passing through" is invited to attend.

PETITION

For Nominations for NATIONAL OFFICERS OF AGMA

We, the undersigned members of AGMA, in Good Standing, hereby nominate

_____ for _____ of AGMA .
(Office)

	<i>Print Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____
11.	_____	_____
12.	_____	_____
13.	_____	_____
14.	_____	_____
15.	_____	_____
16.	_____	_____
17.	_____	_____
18.	_____	_____
19.	_____	_____
20.	_____	_____

10 signatures of members in Good Standing are required.

THIS PETITION MUST BE FILED WITH THE NATIONAL OFFICE IN NEW YORK BY FEBRUARY 28, 1995

I, _____, agree to run for the office of _____.

Signature of nominee

Additional signatures are advised in the event that one or more may be invalid due to late payment of dues, inactive status or some other irregularity.

PETITION

For Nominations for Members of the AGMA Board of Governors

We, the undersigned members of AGMA, in Good Standing, hereby nominate

_____ as a _____
(Solo Singer, Stage Director/Stage Manager, Chorister or Dancer)

member of the AGMA Board of Governors from the _____ area.

	<i>Print Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____
11.	_____	_____
12.	_____	_____
13.	_____	_____
14.	_____	_____
15.	_____	_____
16.	_____	_____
17.	_____	_____
18.	_____	_____
19.	_____	_____
20.	_____	_____

10 signatures of members in Good Standing are required. Both signatories and nominees must be residents of the above area.

THIS PETITION MUST BE FILED WITH THE NATIONAL OFFICE IN NEW YORK BY FEBRUARY 28, 1995

I, _____, agree to run for election to the AGMA Board of Governors.

Signature of Nominee

Additional signatures are advised in the event that one or more may be invalid due to late payment of dues, inactive status or some other irregularity.

Deceased

George Bardyguine*
 McHenry Boatwright
 Richard Bollig
 Karl Donch
 Machael Van Engen
 John Fernely
 Thomas Fulton*
 Zelma Watson George
 John Gilmore
 Erik Hawkins*
 Gerald Hennig
 Jack Harrold
 Robert Hichborn
 Annelise Kamada
 Antonia Kitsopoulos
 Ludwig Lustig*
 Desire Ligeti
 Dru McCain
 Angele Marie Michaud
 Henry Niemann
 David Randall
 Robert Scevers
 Thomas Skelton
 Nina Stroganova
 Andrea Velis
 Marion Williams
 Mara Yavne

* Distinguished individual in related profession

Annelise Kamada Past Head of Membership at AGMA



Annelise Kamada, who had served as AGMA's Head of Membership until her retirement this past year, died on November 30, 1994 after a brief illness. Annelise began at AGMA as secretary to then Assistant Executive Secretaries DeLloyd Tibbs and Howard Laramy before assuming the duties as Administrative Assistant. In 1983 she became Director of the Membership Department. Ms. Kamada worked for AGMA for thirty three years.

Born in New York City on May 2, 1929, Annelise Florence Schuller was born to German immigrants. Annelise attended the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City to further her interests in design and drawing. In 1969 she married Toshi Kamada.

Ms. Kamada authored two published novels and had recently completed a third - *The Shattered Harp* which had been researched in Wales.

Wales, its folklore, music, and culture had been a special interest of Annelise. She was a member and supporter of the Women's Welsh Club of New York, serving most recently as its Corresponding Secretary; she was New York City correspondent for *NIN-NAU* - a newspaper serving the Welsh community of North America. She was a member of the St. David's Society of the State of New York and the Welsh Congregational Church Eglwys Y Cymry, New York.

AGMA National Conference on Dance Injuries February 27, 1995 12:00 Noon (EST)

The Work Rules and Contracts Committee is sponsoring a conference on company policies to help dancer injuries. Delegates and interested AGMA dancers may attend at the AGMA National Office or at teleconference sites across the nation. For more information contact Michael Byars, Work Rules and Contracts Committee Chairman, at (212) 769-9478 or the AGMA office.

NEW YORK CITY OPERA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The success of the New York City Opera reunion in New York, February 1994, has prompted an organization, New York City Opera Alumni Association. They have already a good base of membership. All it takes is a \$15 check made out to:

NYCO Alumni Association
c/o 949 F Street
Salida, CO 81201

They plan to issue a directory of members shortly, followed by a newsletter. If you have news and reproducible photos of the reunion, they would like these too.

Any question, call Saba McWilliams at (719) 539-7486 or Lila Herbert McGill, 120 West 70th St., Apt 6B, New York, New York, 10023-4441. (212) 787-3472.

AGMA Task Force On NEA Issue

Responding to political pressure to end or severely curtail government funding for the arts, the AGMA Board of Governors has formed the AGMA National Endowment for the Arts Task Force. Here's how you can join our efforts:

- ♦ Urge your employer to join the battle through curtain speeches, program inserts, lobbying by Board members, etc. -- and find out how AGMA members can participate.
- ♦ Write and urge your friends and families to write your Congressmen in support of the NEA. Two toll numbers will send mailgrams to your Senators and Representative: 1 800 651-1575 for a \$9.50 charge; and 1 900 370-9000 at \$1.99/minute (about \$6 to \$8 total).
- ♦ Watch for our petition drive.
- ♦ Come to the rally in Washington, D.C. on March 14th.

Join us! contact Task Force members with your ideas and assistance:

John Beauchamp, Andrew Black, Michael Byars, Shirley Harned, Bob Kuehn, Eugene Lawrence, Bette McGee, Joan Morton, Michael Rubino, Pam Smith, and Ken Young.

AGMA Emergency Relief Fund

At this special time of year, when we take a moment to reflect on our lives and set goals and aspirations for the future, we would like to share the following excerpts from Desiderata, circa 1692:

*Go placidly amid the noise and haste,
and remember what peace there may be in silence.
As far as possible without surrender be on good
terms with all persons.*

*Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.
Keep interested in your own career, however humble;
it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.*

*Be yourself. Take kindly to the counsel of the years,
gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture
strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune.*

*With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is
still a beautiful world. Be careful. Strive to be
happy.*

In many ways, the AGMA Relief fund is a haven for performers in changing or difficult times, offering counsel, support and financial assistance according to individual need.

We are here for you when you need us most -- Please take a moment now to send your contribution to the AGMA Relief Fund.

Floran Yagoda and Katherine Leonard

The Lighter
Side
of the
Performing Arts

A Mite-y Problem In San Francisco

San Francisco Opera went to battle this fall with ointments, chemical sprays, fumigant, etc. to combat an attack of mites that appear to have traveled with a production set and costumes.

The theatre has had reports for years of opera-loving fleas, mice, and rats seeking shelter there, but the mites afflicted about four dozen performers and about 200 members of the orchestra, chorus, and backstage crew who were given prescriptions for an anti-scabies lotion.

One newspaper wondered if all the puns associated with the incident would "spell curtains for Lotflea Mitesouri." Patrons, performers and the press were itching to find out if the upcoming seasons would include such operas as the following:

Die Miterster Singer
Marriage of Fleagaro
Scales of Hoffman
Dialogue of the Carmelmites
A Little Mite Music
Billy Bug
Cosi Fan Cootie
The Girl of the Golden Pest
Simon Buganegra
Amahl and the Mite Visitors
Gianni Scratchy
Der Fleagender Hollander
The Infestation of Poppea
Itchin in China
Dangerous Flea-aions
Mefleastrofele
Madame Butterflea
Die Fleadermaus

Career Transition For Dancers Expands West

Career Transition For Dancers (CTFD), the non-profit organization dedicated to helping professional dancers find satisfying new careers, is opening a West Coast office in January, 1995. The office, the organization's first outside of New York City since its founding in 1985, has been made possible by a grant from the Screen Actors Guild/Producers Industry Advancement and Cooperative Fund.

The National Office of Screen Actors Guild in Los Angeles also has generously donated space to the

Transition program, which will be located on the 8th floor of the SAG offices at 5757 Wilshire Boulevard (phone # (213) 549-6660; FAX (213) 549-6603). The counseling staff will be headed by Eleanore Robinson, Ph.D., a career counselor with more than 20 years experience in targeted industries, including arts and entertainment.

CTFD-LA will be open for career counseling services, to provide resource materials, and for information beginning Friday, January 6th, 1995. Orientation sessions will be scheduled to acquaint dancers with specific services. **All services are free of charge to professional dancers.** Counseling appointments may be scheduled by calling (213) 549-6660.

The East Coast office is still located at AGMA's national office in New York.

AGMA Area News

Note: This column strives to strengthen the union by sharing the news and achievements of the eleven Local Areas of AGMA. Many of the challenges of a Local Area may have been faced by AGMA colleagues somewhere else in the country. It also serves to bring a variety of news from across the nation. AGMAZINE seeks stories from all the Areas. Copy can be mailed to the AGMA address in New York, or E-mailed to AGMA staff Dianne James at PRCG90A@PRODIGY.COM.

Washington - Baltimore

James Pierce

Placido Domingo becomes the Artistic Director of the company effective July 1, 1996 for an initial term of four years. The noted tenor and conductor will assume responsibilities of selecting repertory and casting, as well as oversight of all stages of the creative process. Mr. Domingo will still continue his position as Artistic Consultant to the Los Angeles Music Center Opera.

Retiring General Director, Martin Feinstein, will serve as consultant to the company and direct the rehearsal process for all productions during the 1995-96 transition year.

Washington has completed a new four-year agreement with AGMA. The new contract targets several areas including job security, auditions, protection and clarity of free days and rehearsal restrictions, as well as a sub-

stantial increase in compensation. *More details in future issues.*

Washington-Baltimore has also established a training program for Delegates.

Baltimore Opera has also agreed to a new four-year agreement with progress made in the areas of compensation, job security, and safety requirements.

Texas

A small chorus of Houston Grand Opera is currently working on the premiere of Harvey Milk, an opera based on the life of the title character, the openly gay city official murdered in California. The opera company is also presenting the soon-to-tour Porgy and Bess and a production of Dido and Aeneas as its winter season.