AGMAZINE

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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

1996 BOARD OF GOVERNORS NOMINATIONS DUE

AGMA members are encouraged to review the list of Board seats that will be open for the '96 Board election and consider those best qualified to represent AGMA. Members may nominate their choices by petition requiring at least ten signatures of members in good standing as of February 1, 1996. To be a member in Good Standing you must be fully

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MUSICA SACRA REACHES AGREEMENT RULE ONE LIFTED

Gaining strength through unity, the Concert Singers in New York have reached an agreement with Musica Sacra. The dedication, hard work, and strong stand by the singers also laid the groundwork for multi-employer negotiations.

In an area in which it is often difficult to mobilize members, the Concert Singers were able to develop a strong base of support that extended to all aspects of the performing arts community.

Congratulations are in order to all of those members who actively took part in this most important agreement.

UNION PRIVILEGE NOW OFFERED TO AGMA MEMBERS

Members of AGMA are now eligible to participate in a wide variety of services through the AFL-CIO program known as Union Privilege.

Union Privilege benefits members across the nation and provides accident insurance, discount legal services and more. For further information call 1-800-452-9425.

ARBITRATION FILED AGAINST NEW YORK CITY BALLET

AGMA filed with the American Arbitration Association on January 10, an arbitration on behalf of the dancers of the New York City Ballet. The Ballet is currently at Lincoln Center's New York State Theatre through February 25. During the past two seasons, New York City Ballet has employed fewer than the 90 dancers required under the terms of the company's collective bargaining agreement.

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OVERCOMING OBSTACLES THROUGH UNITY

When I came to AGMA a little over two years ago, I found a confederation of areas and individuals beginning to participate in the governance of the Union as a nationwide labor organization. While some members still maintained it was a regional "guild" of master artists, a strong contingent of national volunteers struggled to bring unity while honoring diversity.

Progress has been achieved by teleconferencing Board and committee meetings, by a President and Treasurer who have maintained national organizational standards, by area executive and committee chairs who have been diligent and activist, by a Board which is ever vigilant, by dedicated delegates, loyal members, and a staff which acknowledges that member service is AGMA's reason for existence. Budgeting, economizing, and fiscal responsibility have been achieved by the imposition of stringent measures.

We are acknowledging at last that AGMA is a labor union and that we have common ties with other American workers. We have joined coalitions with other unions in several cities. In New York alone, this affiliation has been profitable in aiding both concert singers and our NEA efforts. We have been isolationists too long. We cannot endure alone. We must forge lasting links with others in the labor movement.

There is strength in unity and action. In the past year, two segments of our organization, concert choristers and principal soloists, have made significant gains. The Board's enactment of Rule One against Musica Sacra was successful, producing not only a one-season contract but a new coalition of New York area concert employers engaged in multi-employer collective bargaining with AGMA. By the very nature of the industry, these concert artists have been at a disadvantage in contract negotiations because they had not previously found the focus to bring them together into a unified body. In another major area of progress, there has been a surge of activity for Solo Singers, including the founding of the Action Committee for Solo Singers, continuation of soloist forums, more participation of principal soloists in Board and Committee work, and the growth of the Plan B Health Insurance program.

We set out to organize new companies last year. Tulsa Ballet, Arizona Opera, Atlanta Ballet, BalletMet and Ballet Hispanico have all negotiated contracts. This is an extraordinary 100% success ratio. It is phenomenal because most unions are unable to secure a first contract with two-thirds of all the shops they organize initially!

AGMA faces a period of

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From the President

Gerald Otte

MEMO

TO: ***All AGMA Members****
(And I do mean YOU)

From: ***Gerald***

Do the members of AGMA want to be members of a union of performing artists dedicated to enhancing the wages, terms of employment, working conditions, and grievance resolution of those artists, or is it a guild of individuals with little in common who want an office to ensure benefits only for themselves in return for their dues money? This is not an easy question to answer. We all want something for our money. No one willingly spends their hard-earned money with the expectation that the money will be frivolously wasted. On the other hand, how do you measure the benefit to one person if everyone's condition improves? How do you measure the benefit of a contract that will not be negotiated for at least the next five years? Does it matter to you that a dancer or chorister across the country has a better chance of earning a living being a dancer or chorister because of your dues money? How do you measure the benefit of a stronger union? These are all questions that must be addressed by each of you. Being altruistic is great when it doesn't cost any money. A strong union does cost money. A strong union demands that the successful support the struggling, that the well-organized help the scattered. A union is the tool for the experienced to guide the inexperienced and for all members to rise on the economic tide.

The only way for that to happen is to remember that your actions are the actions of the whole union. The union does not exist but as your tool. As an AGMA member, there is no such thing as "those union people." If the union doesn't meet your expectations then change the union. If your delegate isn't doing the job to your satisfaction, tell them and then offer to help. If you can't get the information you need, call the

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AGMA MARCHES FOR LABOR

Members of AGMA joined with thousands of concerned citizens in voicing the importance of labor at the New York Labor Day parade.

AGMA marched with other unions including Equity, AFTRA, and SAG as members of the 4As. This year there was a noticeable increase in members participating from the performing arts unions.

AGMA members at the Labor Day parade included (l to r) Eileen Schauler, Lee Bellaver, Ken Young, Harris Davis, Julia Williams, Bob Kuehn, and Judy Davis.

HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFITS MEMBERS

Since being introduced last summer, members across the nation have joined the health plan offered to AGMA members in good standing.

Health care insurance had been identified as a primary concern among all areas of our union. AGMA members may now participate in a health care plan by virtue of their membership in AGMA. A notice went out to all members with the announcement in June, and the plan went into effect July 1, 1995.

The plan is through TEIGIT (The Entertainment Industry Group Insurance Trust). Many Principal Artists who have sung with opera companies that contribute to the plan may have funds available to use for the health plan through TEIGIT. Those Principal Artists with contributions to Health Fund Plan B will have their accounts updated so TEIGIT can help coordinate their payments. Other members may participate through a self-pay process. To apply for health insurance coverage, contact TEIGIT directly, either by phone, fax or mail. TEIGIT will be responsible for the administrative requirements relative to your application and enrollment for coverage and collection of your premium payments, less any AGMA Health Fund Plan B credits.

Requirements and coverage may vary due to state requirements, so contact your TEIGIT representative for more information. TEIGIT advises that a traditional indemnity dental plan should be available through CIGNA sometime in 1996. TEIGIT is located at:

845 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10022.

Telephone is (212) 758-5675 or 1-800-886-7504, the fax number is (212) 888-4916.

MORE ACTIVE MEMBERS IN 1996 ELECTION ALLOCATION CENSUS

This year the AGMA election census showed an increase of active members in good standing in all categories except for instrumentalists. The Board of Governors has stressed the need for more participation by members and this year the Choristers and Solo Singers increased their allocation count by over 100 members in each category.

Each member is urged to take an active part in the 1996 Board elections as it is critical to this organization to maintain an active membership base.

Area	*Active Choristers*	*Active Dancers*	*Active Solo Singers*	*Active Stage Managers & Directors*	*Active Instrumentalists*
1. New York & Vicinity	577	351	706	91	0
2. Southern California	299	34	94	14	0
3. Chicago & Vicinity	356	95	110	25	0
4. San Francisco & Vicinity	155	75	55	19	0
5. New Orleans Area	25	4	24	1	0
6. Philadelphia & Vicinity	97	31	45	3	0
7. Washington/Baltimore & Vicinity	206	32	119	10	0
8. Pittsburgh& Vicinity	45	31	6	3	0
9. New England	43	41	48	4	0
10. Texas	61	54	35	5	0
11. Northwest	95	43	31	4	0
Totals:	**1959**	**791**	**1273**	**179**	**0**

Membership Count of Active and in Good Standing Members For 1996 Board Allocations

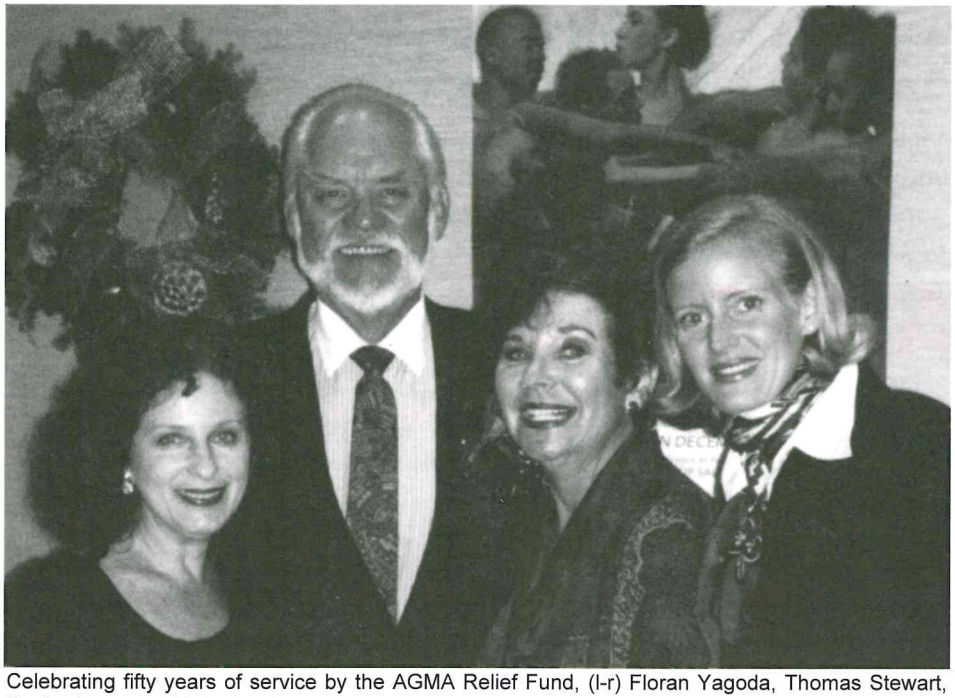
AGMA RELIEF FUND CELEBRATES GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

For fifty years the AGMA Relief Fund has served AGMA members in times of need. In recognition of the achievements and the goals of the Relief Fund, a special benefit launched the anniversary year.

Hosts Evelyn Lear and Thomas Stewart joined with friends and patrons in acknowledging the valuable contribution the Fund has made to the artists of opera, concert and dance.

Those attending saw the world premiere of Alvin Ailey's *Fathers and Sons*, a tribute to Alvin Ailey in *Hymn*, and a renewal of the soul in *Revelations.*

Across the nation, artists are joining together to help the Relief Fund continue its service to our members. There will be concerts, raffles, and other special events as we remember those in need.



Celebrating fifty years of service by the AGMA Relief Fund, (l-r) Floran Yagoda, Thomas Stewart, Evelyn Lear, and Katherine Leonard at the Alvin Ailey premier of *Fathers and Sons.*

For more information, contact the AGMA Relief Fund at the National Office.

Otte (Continued from page 3)

National Office.

Somewhere in this union of artists is someone with the ideas to make your job better, your contract stronger, and the chances of resolving your problems that much easier. As this Union improves, the whole of our industry will strengthen. As opera, concert, and dance companies strengthen we all benefit. Can this be measured? Yes! Every time a wage increases, a working condition improves, safety is enhanced, a pension is started, overtime is paid, health care is provided, and a grievance is settled.

BUT, of course, that's only if each of you wants a union!

Nominations (Continued from page 1)

paid in both basic and working dues. Members may also be nominated by the local area nominating committees. In both cases, petitions and committee nominations are due by March 1, 1996.

AGMA is governed by the members of the union. The democratic process cannot serve the members unless each member participates in the selection of the candidates as well as in the final vote.

Included in this issue is a petition for office, a list of terms which are expiring and those Board members who are returning.

Through the use of teleconferences, Board members across the nation now actively participate in the direction of the union. Board members are required to attend 6 Board meetings a year, but also are encouraged to actively serve on the Board's committees.

AGMA CREATES NEW POSITION IN CALIFORNIA

AGMA is currently developing a new full time representative position which will be based in San Francisco but serve both the Southern California and San Francisco areas.

Currently, Dorothy Kochiras is on temporary assignment in San Francisco while the position is being sourced.

The office remains at its current address but now has a direct telephone number which is **(415) 399-8849.**

BOARD OF GOVERNORS TERM INFORMATION

Those Board Members whose terms are expiring are listed as well as your remaining Board representatives. The notation below each category represents ***Entitlements/ Remaining Board Members/ Number of Open Positions.***

AREA 1 NEW YORK AREA

New York Area Solo Singers

Expiring: Margaret Goodman, Diane Kesling, Elinor Ross, Eileen Schauler, Anita Terzian

Remaining: Andrea Bradford, Gabor Carelli, Russell L. Christopher, William Fleck, Aaron James, Eileen Koyl, Leonore A. Lanzillotti, William G. Ledbetter, Chester Ludgin, Erie Mills, John Russell, Joseph Sopher, Charles Robert Stephens, Luigi Vellucci, Stephen West, Joseph Wolverton, Don Yule

28/17/**11**

New York Area Choristers

Expiring: Marilyn Tecla-Armstrong, Kenneth Bonjukian, Harris Davis, Kenneth Dovel, Karin Grant, Harriet Greene, Nancy Kendall, Marilyn Pelletier

Remaining: Lee Bellaver, Suzanne Der Derian, Beno Foster, Jonathan Guss, Elinor Harper, Lorraine Keane, Robert Kuehn, Robert Manno, Linda Mays, Mary Meyers, Joan F. Peterson, Deborah Saverance, Carole Wright, Kenneth Young

23/14/**9**

New York Area Dancers

Expiring: Vince Collins

Remaining: Ricardo Costa, Christine Dakin, Frank M. Dellapolla, Ralph Di Rienzo, Stephanie Godino, Candace Itow, Stanislav Kmiec, Terry Lacy, Lawrence Leritz, Paul R. Sackett, Brandon Skolnik, Christian Zimmermann

14/12/**2**

New York Area Stage Directors and Stage Managers

Expiring: David Pfeiffer

Remaining: Laura Alley, Bruce Donnell, Mike Phillips

*4/3/**1***

AREA 2 SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AREA

Southern California Area Solo Singers

Expiring: Helen McComas, Beverly Robinson

Remaining: Ann Marie Biggs, Paul Hinshaw

4/2/**2**

Southern California Area Choristers

Expiring: Jonathan Curtsinger

Remaining: Natalie Beck, Andrew Black, Scott Blois, Sally Etcheto, Janet Goggins, John Golitzin, Kenneth Knight, Roger H. Lindbeck, David Schnell, Burman Timberlake

12/10/**2**

Southern California Area Dancers

Expiring: Lola Montes

Remaining: None

1/0/**1**

Southern California Area Stage Directors and Stage Managers

Expiring: None

Remaining: None

*1/0/**1***

AREA 3 CHICAGO AREA

Chicago Area Solo Singers

Expiring: William Diana

Remaining: James Odom, Thomas Sillitti, Arnold M. Voketaitis

4/3/**1**

Chicago Area Choristers

Expiring:Carolyn Berghoff, Martha Edwards, Scott Holmes, Bette McGee, Robert Prindle, Lorene Richardson, Roberta Saper, Catherine A. Weingart-Ryan

Remaining: Michael J. Cook, Richard Livingston, Bryan Miller, Catherine Vartanian-Duke

14/4/**10**

Chicago Area Dancers

Expiring: None

Remaining: Mario De La Nuez, Kathryn Harmon, Richard Knapp, Sara Stewart

4/4/**0**

Chicago Area Stage Directors and Stage Managers

Expiring: Eric Millner

Remaining: None

*1/0/**1***

AREA 4 SAN FRANCISCO AREA

San Francisco Area Solo Singers

Expiring: Ruth Ann Swenson

Remaining: Claudia Waite

*2/1/**1***

San Francisco Area Choristers

Expiring: Katherine McKee

Remaining: John Beauchamp, Kenneth Rafanan, Colby Roberts, Claudia Siefer, Donna Maria Turchi

*6/5/**1***

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Board(Continued from page 6)

San Francisco Area Dancers
Expiring: Danny Furlong, Richard McLeod
Remaining: Evelyn Cisneros
3/1/**2**

San Francisco Area Stage Directors and Stage Managers
Expiring: Sandra Sachwitz-Bernhard
Remaining: None
*1/0/**1***

AREA 5 NEW ORLEANS AREA

New Orleans Area Soloists
Expiring: Mary Bertucci
Remaining: None
*1/0/**1***

New Orleans Area Choristers
Expiring: Sally Fischer, Karen Kalin
Remaining: None
*1/0/**1***

New Orleans Area Dancers
Expiring: None
Remaining: None
*0/0/**0***

New Orleans Area Stage Directors and Stage Managers
Expiring: None
Remaining: None
*0/0/**0***

AREA 6 PHILADELPHIA AREA

Philadelphia Area Solo Singers
Expiring: Kenneth Garner
Remaining: Michael W. Magiera
2/1/**1**

Philadelphia Area Choristers
Expiring: Shellie W. Camp, Jan Taylor, Elizabeth Walker
Remaining: M. Judith Russo
4/1/**3**

Philadelphia Area Dancers
Expiring: Michael Sheridan
Remaining: None
1/0/**1**

Philadelphia Area Stage Directors and Stage Managers
Expiring: None
Remaining: None
*0/0/**0***

AREA 7 WASHINGTON - BALTIMORE AREA

Washington/Baltimore Area Soloists
Expiring: Joan Morton
Remaining: Michael Consoli, Amy Philadelphia, Stephen Stokes
5/3/**2**

Washington/Baltimore Area Choristers
Expiring: James A. Hampton, Pamela James
Remaining: Thomas Cowan, Nancy Kelso, Charlene Marchant, Wilson Nichols, Jr., James F. Pierce, Teresa Reid
8/6/**2**

Washington/Baltimore Area Dancers
Expiring: None
Remaining: Barbara Stuckey
*1/1/**0***

Washington/Baltimore Area Stage Directors and Stage Managers
Expiring: None
Remaining: None
*0/0/**0***

AREA 8 PITTSBURGH AREA

Pittsburgh Area Soloists
Expiring: None
Remaining: None
*0/0/**0***

Pittsburgh Area Choristers
Expiring: Erma Thurston
Remaining: Carol Wolfe
2/1/**1**

Pittsburgh Area Dancers
Remaining: Brian Bloomquist
Remaining: None
*1/1/**0***

Pittsburgh Area Stage Directors and Managers
Expiring: None
Remaining: None
*0/0/**0***

AREA 9 NEW ENGLAND AREA

New England Area Soloists
Expiring: Angeline Lakis
Remaining: S. Mark Aliapoulios
2/1/**1**

New England Area Choristers
Expiring: Geraldine Barretto
Remaining: Timothy Lanagan
2/1/**1**

New England Area Dancers
Expiring: None
Remaining: Roger Cunningham, David Porter
2/2/**0**

New England Area Stage Directors and Managers
Expiring: None
Remaining: None

AREA 10 TEXAS AREA

*0/0/**0***

Texas Area Soloists
Expiring: None
Remaining: Audrey Vallance
1/1/**0**

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SEARCH FOR '51 *Aida* CHORUS

The search is on for artists from the Metropolitan Opera's 1951 *Aida* production. Rhea Jackson writes "On November 13, 1951, thirteen singers in the Slaves' Chorus of the opening night *Aida* broke a racial barrier by performing on-stage at the Metropolitan Opera". She requests that any information on their whereabouts be sent to:

Rhea Jackson
P.O. Box 814,
New Paltz, NY 12561,

or

Rhea Jackson
Cosimastr.214
81927 Munchen
Germany

Artists include:
Eugene Brice, Baritone; Dorothy Candee, Soprano; Helen Colbert, Soprano; Priscilla Dickson, Soprano; Anna Hunter, Contralto; Rhea Jackson, Soprano; Ida Johnson, Contralto; Richard Kirby, Baritone; Rosa Lee Maxwell, Soprano; William McDaniels, Tenor; John Nielson, Bass; Virginia Paris, Soprano; John Priester, Baritone.

Gilmore (Continued from page 2)

unprecedented simultaneous challenges to the survival of both arts and unionism in America. The anti-union press has targeted us at every opportunity with misinformation or omissions of positive news. We have had obstacles to overcome when some of the most celebrated AGMA companies were buffeted by economic factors. Many politicians suggest by example that we grab everything for ourselves without regard to long term consequences. We must continue to examine our goals and directions to avoid being drawn into the vortex created by short-sighted actions.

Over the past year, AGMA and the arts community have fought for the preservation of the National Endowment for the Arts against aggressive political forces. This is not really a conflict about dollars but a battle about the survival of our American cultural heritage and our freedom of expression.

I believe this is an era of elemental change and I believe that AGMA must continue to renew itself to meet the needs of its members. Many of us have visions of a better, stronger union, but have dissimilar perspectives. Lack of agreement on goals, the means of reaching them, and methods of attaining them will create discord. We must engage in national organizational re-assessment as soon as possible.

We must open the channels of communication and exchange not only among Board members or delegates, but our membership at large. Your elected representatives have the opportunity to advance the institutional changes that have begun. Let them know your needs and ideas and hold them accountable for cooperatively producing ongoing improvement.

With understanding and tolerance we must continue to recreate our union. With strength and solidarity we must combat the myriad external challenges. In unity and harmony we must lead the battle and win the war for members' employment opportunities, for work place justice, and for the respect, preservation, and resurgence of the arts and the artists of America!

Board (Continued from page 7)

Texas Area Choristers
Expiring: None
Remaining: George Eison, Robert Sheets
2/2/**0**

Texas Area Dancers
Expiring: Barbara Bears
Remaining: James D. Nelson
2/1/**1**

Texas Area Stage Directors and Stage Managers
Expiring: None
Remaining: None
*0/0/**0***

AREA 11
NORTHWEST AREA

Northwest Area Soloists
Expiring: Shirley Harned
Remaining: None
1/0/**1**

Northwest Area Choristers
Expiring: Susan Dorn, Monte Jacobson
Remaining: Raoul Bellis-Squires
4/1/**3**

Northwest Area Dancers
Expiring:Theresa Goetz
Remaining: None
2/0/2

Northwest Area Stage Directors and Stage Managers
Expiring: None
Remaining: None
*0/0/**0***

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.

	Print Name	*Signature*
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 MARCH 1, 1996

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.

Dance

DANCE AT A GLANCE

Alex Dubé & Dorothy Kochiras

We are pleased to announce that collective bargaining agreements have been reached with all four (4) of AGMA's new dance companies; Atlanta, Tulsa Ballet Theatre, Ballet Hispanico of New York and BalletMet. Each of these contracts was difficult to achieve for a variety of reasons, yet each local dancers' shop was consistent in its reasons to organize and elect AGMA as its bargaining representative.

> ***"The union makes my work easy; it tells us what we must do, what we must pay...it makes us partners with our dancers, not enemy to them..."***
>
> **George Balanchine**

The process was long and arduous, yet when a settlement was reached, both sides realized that a working agreement was in place to be used as a guide in the workplace. Remember, it was George Balanchine who said, "The union makes my work easy; it tells us what we must do, what we must pay, takes care that dancers know what they should have. This saves us time; it saves us money; it makes us partners with our dancers, not enemy to them -- and teaches dancers to take care of themselves." Mr. B. further added, "My muse must come to me on union time."

Congratulations to everyone who participated at the bargaining table and to all Artists who showed up each day to listen to the deliberations first hand. In an attempt to bring closure to the collective bargaining process, several of our shops adopted resolutions incorporating a deadline to complete negotiations and have the contract ratified, and two of our shops were authorized by AGMA's Board of Governors to take strike votes.

One such shop which took a strike vote was the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, which would have affected the opening night of NUTCRACKER and subsequent performances. We are pleased to announce that a historic 4-year agreement was reached, averting a job action, and several of the newly negotiated provisions include a 12% increase in wages over the life of the contract, uncapped seniority, increases in pension contributions, increased weeks in supplemental disability as well as improvements in overtime, penalty, meal money, extra risk, and speaking parts. The 32 Artists unanimously ratified this 4-year agreement.

BalletMet also had a strong negotiating team which resulted in additional guaranteed work weeks. They too were prepared to "go the distance" for improvements in their contract.

On another note, it is important to remember that no Artist may take part in any performance or rehearsals or do any work without first signing a Standard Artist's Contract for Employment. There is no such thing as "free rehearsal" or partaking in rehearsals as some sort of audition process. Should you see a new face hanging around the rehearsal studios following company class, walk up to the person and ask if they have been issued an AGMA contract,

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DANCERS ON DANCING - SURVEY RESULTS

Careers, Injuries, Transition, Retirement

Michael Byars

The following is a list of AGMA dancer statistics from the Dancer Survey and the Work Rules & Contracts Committee's February, 1995 survey of dancers' health care specialists:

Studying away from home: Of the 63% who left home to study dance at an average age of 16.1, 90% received some scholarship assistance, 76% were supported partially by family, and 26% held part-time jobs.

High school education: Over 94% of AGMA dancers have their high school diplomas; 37% had to finish their high school education away from home.

College status: Interest in college is strong and appears to be higher among younger dancers; 43.5% of respondents at or above the median age of 25 had earned college credits averaging about 1 1/2 years' full-time equivalent; 51.1% of those 24 and younger had about 1 1/2 semesters' worth.

Professional relocation: 74% of all respondents had to relocate at least once to get a job; the average number of moves was slightly more than 2.

Retirement/career transition: The average predicted retirement age is 33.3 years old. Younger dancers anticipate a shorter tenure -- respondents aged 24 and under predicted retiring about a year earlier; those 25 and over, a year later. Although the actual average retirement age could not be requested, for the present age distribution to remain stable, each new hire would be accompanied by the retirement of one dancer over the median age of 25. The average age of dancers over 25 is 28.2 -- coinciding with Ellen Wallasch's retirement age finding of 28 (reported in the February 1988 dance/USA Journal). It would appear that as a group we expect to dance longer than reality allows.

New York City Ballet's production of *West Side Story Suite*. Guest artist Nancy Ticotin as "Anita" and James Fayette as "Bernardo" with (L to R) Rebecca Metzger, Amanda Edge, Sant'gria Bello, Kristina Fernandez, Andrew Robertson, Andrea Long, Arch Higgins, and Riolama Lorenzo.

Photo by Paul Kolnik

Transition preparation: While it is encouraging to note the improvements in educational attainment of so many dancers, nearly 30% left blank or answered "none" to the request for post-performing plans. In a follow-up question, over 50% did not indicate engaging in any concrete activities towards the acquisition of skills need for a specific future career.

Children: Although over 54 % of respondents said that "marriage and family" was part of their post-performing plans, only 5.7% have children.

Injuries: Our health care providers identified chronic injuries as our more common injury type, and it's easy to see why. An overwhelming majority of dancers reported that they regularly work through minor injuries. Where supplemental physical conditioning or physical therapy is made available by the employer, it is generally well-used. Many dancers pay out-of-pocket for their own supplemental physical conditioning.

Information about our careers, such as the apparent continuing discrepancy over retirement age

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Opera

YEAR OF NEGOTIATIONS

Dianne James

This year marks one of the heavy years of negotiations, with contracts of multiple companies being prepared to address the needs of employees and employers.

It is the early stage of the contract process where members identify the problems and challenges that have plagued them over the past years. While it is crucial to have all members' support during a negotiation process, it is at the pre-negotiating stage that the members have the best opportunity to clarify issues and take the "pulse" of their own group.

Choristers may find it easier to come together to develop their proposals. Depending on the opera company, Solo Singers may have their own section locally or be covered under the National Basic. Never before have we had such an interest in the Solo Singers to make a change, to be part of the process. Soloists should contact the Action Committee for Solo Singers to find out how and where they can participate. Whether it is rehearsal breaks, minimum calls, or other terms and conditions, it is with the contributions of these artists that maximum improvements can be effected.

Whether you are a chorister, soloist, director, stage manager, or dancer, stay close to the process. If given a questionnaire by your negotiating committee, take the time and complete it. Attend the contract meetings and stay informed.

Prior to meetings at the bargaining table, your representatives must know what you want and how far you will go to support those initiatives. The negotiators must know they have the backing of their colleagues.

Remember, the contract applies not only to the employer, but also to the artist. It is the document that outlines your responsibilities to your employer.

Now is the time to chart your course for your future.

Get active!

AGMA members show their unity and support as soloists, officers, staging staff, attorney, and executive record the moment after a forum in Chicago. *Photo by Allan Gilmore*

AGMA Hotline
(212) 247-0247

Call the hotline for news , 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, it is available seven days a week, 24 hours a day, and is updated regularly.

MET CHORUS HAS RELIEF BENEFIT

The Metropolitan Opera Chorus Holiday Craft and Collectible Fair has benefited the AGMA Relief Fund $10,600. Success was due to the cooperation of Joseph Volpe, General Manager, and Pamela Rasp, Labor Operations Manager, Met Management and staff from all segments of the Opera House, as well as the men and women of the chorus.

Take me to the fair! (L to R) Carole Wright, Floran Yagoda, Mary Meyers, Diana Soviero, Katherine Leonard, and Linda Mays assist in another successful benefit.

Photo by Mary Fercana

Better Moves® PROGRAM NOW AVAILABLE

AGMA members may now participate in an exciting home real estate program called *Better Moves*®. *Better Moves*® is affiliated nationally with Better Homes and Gardens. Its purpose is to provide the highest quality of real estate service at a lower cost and to share those savings through a unique "cash-back to members" program. Their goal is to provide customers with a full range of comprehensive services to facilitate their move, whether locally or nationally. Members may also select from the following range of discounted services:

* **The Cash-Back Program**
* **Homesale Assistance**
* **Homefinding Assistance**
* **Mortgage Assistance**
* **Banking Assistance**
* **Van Line Moving Assistance**
* **Home Inspection**
* **Home Warranty**
* **Closing Assistance**

(In states where permitted by law; all services not available in all areas)

Contact *Better Moves*® at 1-800-213-9130 or locally at 919-510-4014 *before* choosing a Realtor or when buying or selling a home.

If you wish to specify a Realtor, a *Better Moves*® representative must notify them first that you are eligible for this program to ensure receipt of the Cash Back benefit.

If you are selling a house, the *Better Moves*® program is available only if there is no listing contract currently in force.

If you are buying a house, *Better Moves*®program is not available if you have previously seen the house you intend to purchase with an agent not assigned to the *Better Moves*® program.

AGMA members should contact *Better Moves*® directly at their local number, 919-510-4014, or toll free at 1-800-213-9130, for more information and eligibility.

IN MEMORIA

Danny Abreu*
Salvatore Aiello*
Michael Alhonte
Anna Maria Bessel
Eugene Birlenbach
Ernest Cote
Judy Dearing*
Fred Fehl*
Dario Fraticelli
Richard E. Greeley
Ralph Herbert
Martha Hill*
Timothy Jenkins
Christopher Keene*
Lincoln Kirstein*
Leon Lishner
Andrew McKinley
Christopher McMillen
Grace Miceli*
Kent Foster Minthorn
May Murakami
Robert Patterson
Ross A. Perry
Edward E. Pounds
James Sample*
Joseph W. Schlanger
Philip Semark*
Irvin Shuman
Lucille Sullam
James F. Truitte
Richard Versalle
Ramón Vinay
Robert Wallace*

*Distinguished individual in related profession

AGMA MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT:
Keep In Touch

Carol Caldwell, AGMA Membership Supervisor

There always seems to be something we've forgotten. We may put it off, or just not realize there was something else to do. One thing we have found is that several major names performing in Opera Companies across the nation as well as worldwide have the wrong category code. The most common error is where a soloist started as an AGMA chorister and failed to formally change the category as their solo career developed.

Why is it important? They could be receiving the wrong audition notices, or not receiving soloist forum announcements. The same is true as performers finish their time in front of the footlights and perhaps take on directing.

How do you know you are correctly listed? One way is to check the top of your address label on the information you receive from AGMA. You should find SOL for Solo Singer, CHO for chorister, DAN for dancer, DIR for director, MAN for stage manager, and CRG for Choreographer. Contact us at AGMA to make sure we have your most up-to-date information.

Of course, don't forget us when you move. Over the past year we have changed over 500 addresses which had not been reported. Help us to serve you better.

In the next few months, we will continue to increase our level of support as we start moving over to a new membership software program.

Dance (Continued from page 10)

and, if not, then please contact your delegates at once or the AGMA office and we will act on it immediately. Is this clear to everyone? If not, then please let us hear from you.

We are currently in negotiations with many employers. Find out from your delegate when your company is scheduled and prepare to take an active role in shaping your future. Delegates and dance committees should be locking up negotiation dates as soon as possible.

Survey (Continued from page 11)

expectation and realities, should give us more reason to stick together to identify solutions. Further, more detailed investigations should be undertaken through the AGMA network. If you are interested in helping us find out more about the lives of professional dancers, please contact me through the National Office.

Dancers who requested more information on Career Transition programs, call Career Transition For Dancers at (212) 581-7043 for New York or the Los Angeles office at (213)549-6660.

Editor's note: Michael Byars is a solo dancer with the New York City Ballet. He also is First Vice-president of AGMA and Chairman of the Work Rules and Contracts Committee.

UNION PRIVILEGE

* MORTGAGE AND REAL ESTATE PROGRAM - SPECIAL HELP FOR FIRST TIME BUYERS, DISCOUNT ON REAL ESTATE SALES COMMISSIONS

* LOAN PROGRAM - PERSONAL LOANS UP TO $15,000 WITH REPAYMENT TERMS OF UP TO SEVEN YEARS, LOW RATES & LONG TERMS, SKIP-PAYMENT OPTION AVAILABLE WHEN NEEDED

* UNION MEMBER DISCOUNTS - 20% OFF DAILY MEMBER BENEFIT RATE, PLUS OTHER DISCOUNTS ON HERTZ CAR RENTALS.

* DISCOUNTS ON INTERSTATE MOVES WITH NORTH AMERICAN VAN LINES

* LEGAL SERVICE - NO ENROLLMENT FEE, FREE 30 MINUTE CONSULTATION (IN PERSON OR ON PHONE), 30% DISCOUNTS ON ADDITIONAL SERVICES, FREE FOLLOW-UP LETTER OR PHONE CALL

* DENTAL DISCOUNT PROGRAM

* LIFE INSURANCE - LOW, COMPETITIVE RATES SKIP PAYMENT PROVISION IN EVENT OF A LAY-OFF, DISABILITY OR PROLONGED STRIKE, SPECIAL PLANS AVAILABLE FOR CHILDREN, SENIORS AND MEMBERS WITH HEALTH PROBLEMS

* ACCIDENT INSURANCE - UP TO $200,000 COVERAGE WITH OPTIONAL FAMILY COVERAGE, ADDITIONAL $50,000 PAID FOR AN ACCIDENTAL DEATH AT WORK

* DISCOUNT MAIL-SERVICE PHARMACY - NO COST TO USE SERVICE, LICENSED PHARMACISTS CHECK ALL PRESCRIPTIONS, FREE MAIL-SERVICE DELIVERY WITHIN 10 TO 14 DAYS, INCLUDES ALL FAMILY MEMBERS, EVEN THOSE NOT LIVING WITH YOU

* UNION DRIVER & TRAVELER - SPECIAL MOTOR-CLUB, CAR REPAIR DISCOUNTS, AND TRAVEL CLUB BENEFIT

Call 1 800 452-9425 to obtain more information.

The Lighter Side of Performing

In a production of *Magic Flute*, directed by Frank Corsaro, the staging for the three slaves called for them to move a bed up two platforms as the curtain dropped for another scene. All went well until a Sunday matinee when one slave lost his place on the stage. Having made it to the first platform, he refused to budge, being certain the other two slaves were wrong.

Suddenly, from the heavens descended the large curtain, leaving half the bed and that slave trapped before the onlooking audience. Finally one pair of hands raised the curtain, while another pair grabbed the confused slave and forced both him and the bed to their intended destination.

In every opera chorus there will always be a legend. One such at Houston Grand Opera was Van, a tall tenor with years of experience at HGO. Van was infamous for his stories, quick wit, and humor. Due to "other employment", student matinees were not mandatory for the chorus and sometimes there would less than a "full stage."

So it happened that during an opera scene where a huge battle was supposed to take place, Van discovered that his attackers were nowhere to be found. Quickly he repositioned himself to the edge of the proscenium where, by wrapping his arms around himself, he made it appear that an attacker was just off stage.

It was only when he died a hero's death and proceeded to pull himself off stage that everyone knew they were in the presence of a "master."

Arbitration (Continued from page 1)

Alex Dubé, AGMA's Administrator for Dance, says he petitioned the Ballet's management about the problem several times to no avail. Since their agreement has a "no strike/no lock-out" clause, he states the contract allows neither side any recourse other than arbitration.

"There is a reason why the minimum of 90 dancers is very important," said Dubé. "It is based on the extensive repertoire of the New York City Ballet and also the demands of choreography. This season they are mounting 42 ballets. That is extraordinary. When you look at American Ballet Theatre, they have 19, maybe 20 ballets in the course of the season. That is why the minimum number of dancers is paramount, because of the injury rate. As the ranks are reduced, someone's got to pick up the slack. It's a health issue and an artistic issue."

AGMA is also filing demands for arbitration with the Joffrey Ballet of Chicago and Feld Ballets/NY. The particulars of these arbitration demands were not available at press time.

AREA NEWS

Pittsburgh

Artistic Director Patricia Wilde of Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre has announced her retirement at the conclusion of her current contract in August, 1997. Wilde and the company are finalizing the details of a long-term advisory relationship which will assure her active involvement in PBT's future growth. A national and international search for Wilde's successor will commence immediately, chaired by PBT's Board President Thomas Danielson.

Chicago

Members of the Chicago Area are holding their fourth consecutive Relief Fund Raffle. Only 500 tickets are available with the first prize a pair of season tickets to Lyric Opera of Chicago. For more information, call (708) 771-2997. All monies raised will go directly to the AGMA Relief Fund.

Houston

"Un Bel Coro II", a concert of operatic choral masterpieces will be presented Saturday, March 2, 1996 to benefit the AGMA Relief Fund. For more information, call (713) 227-ARTS.

Also joining the online World Wide Web providers is Houston Grand Opera. Their address is http://www.neosoft.com/dorsak/hgohome.htm. Facts about HGO, its current season's details, and a multitude of other information can be accessed.

Washington

Washington Opera goes online with its own World Wide Web page. You may access it at http://www.dc-opera.org. The page includes information on productions and artists, company history, opera merchandise, set and costume rental for other companies and more.