

Winter 2025

The Leading Tone

ROPA

Regional
Orchestra
Players'
Association

A conference of the American Federation of Musicians, AFL-CIO

Notes from the President

by Steve Wade, ROPA President



Pictured left: The AFM meets with the Coalition of Musicians for Ethical Change. (l-r) Allistair Elliott (AFM), Lisa Ford (CMEC), Tino Gagliardi (AFM), Rochelle Skolnick (AFM/SSD), Steve Wade (ROPA), Ida Rostrup (CMEC), and Ethan Balakrishnan (OCSM). Photos courtesy of Emma Larsson.

Winter 2025

Do you ever have days when everything seems to go weirdly wrong for no good reason?

Traveling can be like that. October 21, 2024 was a cold, breezy day when I set out from my home in Connecticut heading for Malmö, Sweden and the FIM International Orchestra Conference.

I started off with a series of trains to Logan Airport in Boston. The last leg is called the Silver Line, which takes you from South Station to the terminals. My departure was from Terminal E. I was peacefully waiting to hop off as we passed Terminals A, B, and C, when I realized we were headed back under Boston Harbor away from the airport. I'm here to warn you that there is no Terminal D. I went for an extra spin

around town, having missed my stop.

That should have been a warning to me to be on my toes, but no, that was just a prelude to leaving my laptop on the plane in Zurich. Don't do this - it's a terrifying mess! Fortunately, SwissAir located it almost immediately. I arranged to ship it home, thinking that I could get by with my phone, which would have been easy if I had bought the right E-Sim card. It let me email, thank heaven, but I couldn't call or text anyone.

The stars finally aligned for me when I got to the Conference Hotel, the Malmo Clarion Live. The hotel itself is the product of superb civic planning starting about 20 years ago (continued page 2)

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- "Know Your Bow"
- Rick's Tax Tips
- Important Tax Deadlines
- ROPA Roundup
- Conference DATES & LOCATION

(continued from page 1) The facility includes the Clarion, an ample conference center with excellent food service, and a world-class concert hall for the equally classy Malmö Symphony Orchestra. The staff was wonderful, helping me make international calls from the front desk phone with vast patience. Things were looking up.

Created in 2008 by the Fédération Internationale des Musiciens (FIM), the International Orchestra Conference (IOC) takes place every three years. Previous events were held in Berlin, Amsterdam, Oslo and Montreal. I was very proud to be part of the delegation from the AFM that included President Tino Gagliardi, Vice President from Canada Allistair Elliott, IEB Board Member Dusty Kelly, SSD Director Rochelle Skolnick, OCSM President Bob Fraser, OCSM 1st Vice President Ethan Balakrishnan, and ICSOM Chair Keith Carrick.

Much like our player conferences, the goal is to give symphony orchestra and opera musicians the opportunity to share experiences, concerns and initiatives on issues such as improving working conditions, consolidating employment, risk prevention where health and safety are concerned, developing audiences or public or private financial perpetuation. The Conference was ably led by FIM President John Smith, OBE, and General Secretary Benoît Machuel.

Governments across Europe have long played a crucial role in supporting the arts, recognizing their cultural, social, and economic value. Many countries allocate substantial public funds to support artists, institutions, and cultural projects. In addition, most European nations have a Ministry of Culture responsible for distributing funds and overseeing cultural policies. These ministries support national museums, galleries, libraries, and performance spaces, ensuring their continued operation regardless of market pressures.

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The ROPA Hospitality Suite is a great place to meet your fellow union members while winding down after long conference days!



New to ROPA? Here's some lingo help:

ROPA: Regional Orchestra Players' Association.

MAL: Member-At-Large (these are our board members)

IMA: Integrated Media Agreement

EMA: Employers' Electronic Media Association

CBA: Collective Bargaining Agreement

SSD: Symphonic Services Division

OCSM: Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians

ICSOM: International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians

**Ropa Delegates: Mark your calendars & purchase airfare NOW:
next ROPA conference dates are July 29-31, 2025.**

Negotiating workshop the day before, 7/28 in Philadelphia, PA



(continued from p. 3)

panelist viewed the idea of completely screened auditions. The blind audition has become our gold standard in DEI terms here; this panelist said that “yes, a screened audition is fine up to a point, but it’s important that we are able to see if a candidate will fit in.” A few of us at the back of the room looked at each other, thinking “but that’s exactly why screened auditions are necessary.” I asked a follow up question about whether there was pressure to change things, but I’m not certain the panel understood what I was getting at.

FIM was officially over at that point, but our AFM team was not done. We met with Lisa Ford, Principal Hornist of the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra and one of the founders of the Coalition of Musicians for Ethical Change. Organized in 2024, CMEC is a community of musicians that supports the establishment of positive and safe work and school environments where musicians of all ages, genders, and races can thrive musically and professionally. Since its founding, members have held 8 meetings, gathered information and resources, held trainings the use of power an on trauma with RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network), and held dialogues at festivals, workshops and schools.



As I mentioned above, I was very proud of our team in Malmö, and equally gratified to see the energy and dedication of all the participants. We made a lot of good friends. President Smith and his staff are to be congratulated on creating a truly inspiring and powerful forum, and I’m sure that FIM and the IOC will will continue to grow the collaborative spirit of solidarity for musicians all around the world for years to come.



The Coalition of Musicians for Ethical Change, CMEC, strives to support musicians by giving them tools to create workplaces and learning spaces that are professional, safe, equitable and inclusive - through education, advocacy, and community support networks. ♦



Right: Jessica Frossard, Switzerland, Steve Wade, ROPA President, and Rochelle Skolnick, AFM/SSD Director
Left: Jenny Wafula of the Nairobi Symphony and John Smith, OBE, FIM President. Photos courtesy of Emma Larsson.

(continued from p. 2)

Many countries also have independent arts councils that distribute government funds based on artistic merit and public interest. In the UK, for example, the National Lottery provides a significant source of arts funding, supplementing government contributions. European governments encourage private support for the arts through tax breaks for patrons, sponsorships, and corporate donations, and the European Union funds cultural projects through initiatives like Creative Europe, which supports cross-border artistic collaborations, film productions, and cultural heritage preservation. Government support can be a two-edged sword, however. Economic downturns often lead to budget cuts, forcing institutions to seek private funding, and some critics argue that government funding can lead to political influence over artistic expression.

All that being said, the discussions at FIM were fascinating. There were 137 participants present from 31 different countries in Europe, North, Central and South America, Africa, Australia, China and Japan. It was really fun to meet French hornist Jessica Frossard from Zurich, who plays in a hugely popular quartet of Alphorns - this instrument was the inspiration for the iconic introduction in the last movement of Brahms' First Symphony. It was equally interesting to talk with Jenny Wafula, tubist with the Nairobi Orchestra, who told me that Nairobi is a city of 4 million people now, with four orchestras and a youth orchestra! I also had a chance to talk to Linton Stephens from the U.K. about Black Lives in Music and its co-founder, Roger Wilson. BLIM has a lot of important backers in Britain, as well as a terrific website at blim.org.uk.

By the end of the Conference, Tino, Keith, Bob and I were able to support Konrad Krattenthaler, the delegate from Vienna, in a resolution about better equity in pay scales in Vienna.

Day 1 was for both musicians and managers. There were panels on modernizing the orchestra; auditioning and recruitment; environmental and climate issues; and bullying and harassment. There was also a terrific video presentation by Hee Chiat Chew, Assistant Artistic Director of the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, which is a large, full sized group made up of indigenous instruments playing authentic Chinese repertory of many eras. That evening we attended a concert by the Malmö Symphony Orchestra led by Håken Hardenberger. The orchestra was terrific throughout their program of Stravinsky, Honneger, and Dukas. Gustav Merlander was the trumpet soloist in *Fisher King*, a new concerto by Nordic composer Rolf Wallin.

Day 2 and Day 3 of the conference was for musicians only. There were discussions on protecting the musician's mind and body; work/life balance; intellectual property protections; and building solidarity internationally, strategy for trade unions. President Gagliardi did a great job as part of this last panel. SSD Director Skolnick was equally skilled as the moderator of a panel called "Orchestra musician: a new job?", which examined the question of how repertoire and audiences affect the nature of a musician's job from place to place. The FIM participants and panelists were all interesting and well spoken, even despite language issues and the occasional startling difference in point of view. For instance, it was intriguing to see how a German

(continued on p. 4)

Tax Tips from Rick

by Rick Basehore, ROPA Treasurer



October 15 was the final deadline to file your 2024 taxes, and only if you filed for an extension earlier in the year; otherwise, the deadline was April 15. If you still need to file your taxes, but will be getting a refund, the IRS thanks you for loaning the Federal government some extra cash! If you still need to file and will **owe \$\$** to the Feds this year, file ASAP, as the penalties increase significantly, especially if you did not file the extension.

Have you ever thought to yourself, *"I wonder how much I'll be penalized if I wait to pay my taxes??"*

Well, here's how those penalties can add up:

First, there is a Failure to File penalty. For each month (or part thereof) after the due date, you are assessed a penalty of 5% of the tax due on your return, up to 25%. This may not sound so bad if you only owe, say, \$100. But there is a second part to the rules about the Failure to File penalty, which states that if you file more than 60 days after the due date, your Failure to File penalty is automatically 100% of the tax due or \$485, whichever is less. Does that seem confusing? Yes it does. Best way to avoid the confusion and the penalty? File on time, no matter how much you owe.

Second, there is a Failure to Pay penalty, which is assessed at .5% for each month (or part thereof) after the tax due date, which is April 15 for most filers. This also maxes out at 25%, so technically it could take a while (4+ years) to max out the Failure to Pay penalty. But wait! there's more... Once the IRS sends you a notice stating that you owe the money, that monthly rate doubles to 1%.

Third, there is an Underpayment of Estimate Tax penalty for not paying your quarterly estimated tax payments on time. This is important for those who earn a significant amount of self-employed income or have other sources of income from which no

taxes are withheld. It's a process to calculate this penalty and there is an entire IRS form (2210) devoted to doing so. I won't get into the "how" here, but just make sure you pay your quarterly estimated taxes on time to avoid this penalty.

Lastly, there is interest. Right now, that rate is 8%. Eight percent of what, exactly? Good question.

Definitely the **amount of tax due**, and starting from the original (not extended) due date, which is 3.5 months from the end of the tax year (April 15th for most individuals). Also, if you **calculate your tax due incorrectly and underpay** (whether intentionally or not), interest accrues beginning on the original due date. In addition, penalties accrue interest. **Failure to File penalties** begin accruing interest as of the original or extended due date; Failure to Pay penalties begin to accrue interest on the date notices are sent; and **Underpayment of Estimated Tax penalties** begin to accrue interest after the end of the quarter to which the underpayment applies.

So, how much will it cost you to wait?? Too much! Just pay what you owe on time and never worry about it. Barring that, pay them as soon as possible, because the penalty increases every day that passes.

Speaking of "on time," contact your tax professional **now** to schedule your appointment for sometime in late February or early March. You don't want to wait until your tax professional's crunch time (mid-March onwards). Musician taxes are often complicated and you want to make sure you have time to dig up (create?) forms, records, or other documentation about which you might have forgotten before the first meeting. And when in doubt – bring it all! When it comes to documentation, it's better to have too much than too little.

"Wishing you all a successful and well compensated season." ♦



Important TAX DATES



From ROPA Treasurer Rick Basehore

JANUARY 15

Deadline to pay your Q4 2024 IRS estimated tax payment (and most states – but check yours to be sure!)

APRIL 15

Deadline to pay your Q1 2025 IRS estimated tax payment (and most states – but check yours to be sure!)

JANUARY 31

If your business (this includes self-employed musicians!) paid a non-corporate entity (e.g., an individual or an LLC that is not an S-Corp.) more than \$600 within calendar-year 2023 for providing any type of service, you must give that entity (and the IRS) a 1099-NEC. This does not apply to paying someone for goods (“stuff”), just their services. You have until February 28 to file that 1099-NEC with the IRS. *I’m looking at you* – folks who hire their friends to play wedding gigs...

APRIL 15

2024 Filing deadline for most individuals. You may request an extension, but remember: any tax due for tax-year 2024 not paid by April 15, 2025 will still accrue interest. The extension is for filing, not paying any tax due! Be sure to file form 4868 or use the IRS website by April 15 to file for the extension. ast.

MARCH 15

2024 Filing deadline for Partnerships and S-Corps (forms 1065 and 1120-S, respectively)

OCTOBER 15

2024 Filing deadline for those individuals who filed for an extension.

Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra

submitted by Trace Johnson, Cello



Performing arts organizations can foster greater relevance and build meaningful relationships with the communities they serve by investing in arts education initiatives. One example of this is the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra's SuperStrings program, which partners with Big Brothers Big Sisters Wisconsin to provide music lessons for students from underserved communities who have limited access to arts education.

This past fall, I worked with a gifted seven-year-old student, whom I'll call Ben for the sake of anonymity. Through the WCO SuperStrings program, Ben began his musical education. Ben was new to the cello when he came to me and displayed remarkable natural ability. Over ten weeks, he progressed quickly, performing rhythmic dictations, sight-singing exercises, and learning a few Pre-Twinkle songs on the cello using both hands to play.

Of course, there were times when Ben struggled to maintain consistency which was understandable given his age. Despite Ben's sporadic preparation for lessons, Ben got started on reading music, learned about different rhythms, memorized music, performed in a studio recital, and experienced the creative potential of music. Music lessons not only develop instrumental skill, but also develop skills in critical listening, focus, consistency, and self-

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discipline. These early experiences with the cello gave Ben the fundamental musical tools which could inspire him to love classical music as I do one day; I am certain that these early experiences have enriched his appreciation for the arts.

Through SuperStrings, WCO has been able to serve a broader community while also ensuring access to the arts for students who want to study music and might not have the opportunity to otherwise. Outreach programs like SuperStrings create bonds that extend beyond the concert hall and into the lives of individuals; they demonstrate the importance and impact orchestras can have on the communities they serve. These connections are resilient and have lasting impacts, even if the immediate outcomes aren't always apparent. ♦

The ROPA Roundup: News Nuggets

The Toledo Symphony

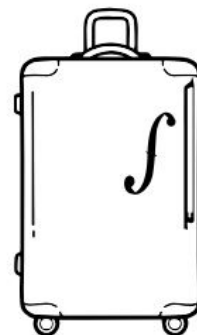
Laura Longman, ROPA Delegate

The Toledo Symphony's musicians ratified a five-year agreement in September 2024, with historic wage increases of nearly 40% over the five years. The Symphony's umbrella organization, Toledo Alliance for the Performing Arts, began a phased opening of their newly purchased and renovated building. The building's main impacts on the Symphony will be improved facilities for administration and the music library, as well as a new, smaller venue that will host the Symphony's Chamber series concerts. ♦



Know Your Bow

CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) is an international agreement between governments. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten the survival of the species. There is a policy meeting coming up in February 2025, and the next negotiations on it are in November in Uzbekistan. New rules will take effect in early 2026. Musicians need to know what materials they have in their bows and instruments. Now is the time to document what you have! The rules in question come from the international agreement called CITES. Permits are available but not durable, which means they need to be renewed. Check out the League of American Orchestras' "Know Your Bow" initiative at the link below. This site is the most thorough on the subject at the moment.



<https://americanorchestras.org/know-your-bow-tips-for-owners-and-users-of-pernambuco-bows>.

See the upcoming issues of the *International Musician* for further developments. ♦



Pictured Above: Marjorie Goldberg, viola ROPA MAL (and delegate for Harrisburg Symphony) and ROPA Treasurer Rick Basehore, oboe and English horn

Bob Fraser, OCSM President. Photos courtesy of Emma Larsson.



ROPA Roundup: News Nuggets



Ballet West Orchestra

By Erin Voellinger, ROPA Delegate

The Ballet West Orchestra performed two shows in the fall with limited instrumentation. The orchestra did not come together fully until we began our Nutcracker run at the end of November. We have successfully ratified a new contract with management over the summer and it has already been put to the test and upheld. In November management forgot to notify the orchestra of a performance change within the time laid out by our new CBA. The CBA was honored by management and all the musicians were paid appropriately for the changed service. We added an additional horn player to our core orchestra this year so now we have 4 horns. We are glad to be using almost the full, original Nutcracker orchestration for all of our Salt Lake Nutcracker performances (minus only 2 wind parts-an oboe and a trombone). I've included some pictures from our Christmas Eve Nutcracker Performance. Spirits are always high on Christmas Eve and everyone loves to bring their Christmas bling for this special performance. ♦

Pictured Right: Chicago Sinfonietta, photo courtesy of Kyle Flubacker.

Pictured Below: Ballet West Orchestra in the Holiday Spirit!

Chicago Sinfonietta

By Ben Roidl-Ward, ROPA Delegate

On January 19th and 20th, the Chicago Sinfonietta performed *Black Being* by Flutronicx (Nathalie Joachim and Allison Loggins-Hull) for our annual Martin Luther King Day celebration. This 50-minute immersive work is scored for small orchestra with two soloists on flute, voice, and electronics. We had fantastic collaborators in Aphorism Studios, who ran the live sound for our performances and also created beautiful sequences of lighting to accompany the music. Both our Naperville (Sunday) and Chicago (Monday) performances were very well-attended, boasting some of our strongest audiences in the last several years. After our performances, we spent two days recording the work for release on Chicago-based Cedille Records. ♦



ROPA Roundup: News Nuggets

Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra

Scott Woolweaver, ROPA Delegate

The Ann Arbor Symphony is halfway through the first year of a two-year Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) brokered by the A2SO Orchestra Committee, Administration, and Todd Jelen, a professional Negotiator/Organizer/Educator from the Symphonic Services Division of the American Federation of Musicians. Time was of the essence and negotiations got a bit difficult. All sides agreed that this stop-gap measure, with necessary changes to the CBA language and modest increases in pay for the players, would be the best route. Negotiations for a four-year contract will be under way soon.

Earl Lee was appointed Music Director of the A2SO in 2022 and this season marks his third at the podium. As the Orchestra's 14th Director since its founding in 1928, Maestro Lee has opened a new era of visionary leadership in the arts, culture and community in Southeast Michigan. The Ann Arbor Symphony continues its collaboration with the Sphinx Organization, which identifies, empowers, and supports talented young artists and prepares them for professional careers in Classical music. The A2SO and Sphinx share a rich and illustrious partnership dating back to 1997 when the orchestra performed as part of Sphinx's first-ever competition, hosted at the University of Michigan's Hill Auditorium in Ann Arbor. In 1998, the National Symphony Orchestra and Ann Arbor Symphony become the first two orchestras to offer solo performance opportunities to the Sphinx

Competition winners, marking the start of the Sphinx Soloist Initiatives. This season, the A2SO presented Sterling Elliot, cello, a National Sphinx Competition winner, and Demarre McGill, flute, a Sphinx Medal of Excellence recipient, on Mainstage performances in September and January. Music of two Sphinx composers, Jessie Montgomery and Andrea Cassarubios were also on the programs. The Ann Arbor Symphony looks forward to continuing this 35+ year collaboration. ♦

Sandy D'Amato, ROPA Delegate

The Memphis Symphony Orchestra is preparing for our next CBA negotiations; our activist OC and NC are hard at work; our personnel manager just resigned after ten years, and management is just now realizing what an excellent job she was doing (orchestra members, of course, already knew); Local 71's new slate of officers are starting the (continued next page)



Pictured Below: Musicians from the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra



ROPA Roundup: News Nuggets

(continued from p. 8) year with a an office tech overhaul- as well as welcoming the former personnel manager as a new member- and everyone dealt with snow, freezing temperatures, leading to abrupt and frequent scheduling changes and much studying of the applicable language in the CBA. We had a power outage during a Young People's Concert- went out as the kids were being seated; went on as the Harry Potter woodwind demo began. (Coincidence, or magic? You decide.) Sounds like a lot, but for us, just another January... ♦

South Bend Symphony

Matthew Barwegen, ROPA Delegate

South Bend Symphony's Executive Director, Justus Zimmerman, has joined the Austin Symphony as their new Executive Director. A search committee of board members, staff, and musicians is now recruiting candidates for the newly open position.

Zimmerman, an innovator who set record ticket sales, is a gifted communicator. He improved donor relationships and increased community engagement. He helped raise the visibility of BIPOC composers through innovative programming and expanded community inclusion through collaborations with local dance, theater, and opera groups. Zimmerman has been touted as a relationship builder who promoted healthier staff and musician communications during his tenure. The South Bend Symphony hopes to fill the position before the start of the 2025-'26 season in September. ♦



ROPA Roundup (continued)

Scott Cranston, ROPA Delegate

The **New Haven Symphony Orchestra**, the fourth oldest in the U.S. and entering its 131st season, began the 2024-2025 season with a newly ratified contract extending through June, 2028 and welcoming its newly appointed Music Director, Perry So. The NHSO continues to fulfill its mission to increase the impact and value of orchestral music for our audiences through high quality, affordable performances and educational programming. A season highlight will be the performance of Robert Nathaniel Dett's, *The Ordering of Moses*, on February 9. The NHSO will be performing with hundreds of combined voices from the New Haven Chorale, Heritage Chorale of New Haven, and the Fairfield County Chorale in Woolsey Hall at Yale University. Maestro Perry So remarked, "What remarkable sound worlds are contained in the piece: lush late-Romanticism with echoes of Wagner and Elgar, but as a context for the immediacy of the African-American Spiritual that sounds stark and timeless. The sound of actual chains being pulled emanate from the orchestra against harmonies that dissolve into suggestions of near-Eastern scales. All in the service of the story and the emotion contained at the core of the work – a young Moses discovering his calling to lead his people out of slavery, perhaps the most eloquent musical cry against oppression in the American tradition."

<https://newhavensymphony.org/event/moses/> ♦

Las Vegas Philharmonic

By Tyler Vahldick, ROPA Delegate

Las Vegas Philharmonic is halfway through its first season with Leonard Slatkin as Artistic Advisor. We are close to ratifying a 3-year CBA that introduces an Assistant Concertmaster (3rd Chair) position, strengthens language on bowing pay, implements two-year limits for open positions, and enhances the work environment for education and community outreach performances. This also includes a 15% aggregate pay raise over the three years and ensures that ROPA dues will be deducted from everybody's first paycheck of the season. This fall, we're welcoming another exciting roster of guest conductors as part of our ongoing Music Director search, which is expected to conclude by the end of the 2025-26 season. ♦

Omaha Symphony

By Becky Kia, ROPA Delegate

The Omaha Symphony is super excited to announce that we have appointed JoAnn Falletta as Principal Guest Conductor and Artistic Advisor beginning in the 2025/26 season. Maestra Falletta will be serving in that role while we pursue finding a new permanent music director. Ankush Bahl, the current Omaha Symphony Music Director, is stepping down at the end of this season. He had a 7-year contract and this was his 4th year. We wish him all the best while we welcome our new Maestra! This season is the last of our 6-year contract. Our negotiating team is busy investigating the priorities of the musicians! Omaha has a strong economy, and we are looking forward to building our core size as well as our salaries. ♦

Flint Symphony Orchestra

By Brandon LePage, ROPA MAL

The Flint Symphony Orchestra musicians continue to have our negotiations drag on through mediation with an uncertain end in spite of record ticket sales. There are actions planned for coming concerts, and a renewed effort to engage membership to turn up the heat and get this contract settled. Well wishes would be appreciated! Contact FSO Ropa Delegate Brandon LePage (lepagebrandon@gmail.com) if you'd like a message passed along to the musicians. ♦

Submissions for ROPA Roundup can be emailed to ropanewslettereditor@gmail.com

ROPA President Steve Wade caught on camera in Malmö, Sweden at the FIM International Orchestra Conference.



ROPA Conductor Database FAQ:



Are musicians allowed to see the results?

Not directly from ROPA. Management is the sole recipient of the results because management signs a release agreeing to accept all liability for any negative comments made about a particular conductor. **If management chooses to share the results with the musicians, or anyone else, they may do so, but only because they accept liability for any resulting misuse of the information.** Most managements will limit the sharing of the information for that reason. OCSM and ICSOM follow the same policy.

Can the amount of time for responses be extended beyond one week?

Yes, upon requesting permission from the bank administrator.

I have a musician who forgot to fill it out. Can they access it after the survey's been closed?

Yes. The administrator will send a link for the survey to the delegate.

Can a musician ask to do the evaluation over or retract what they submitted?

Yes. Have that musician ask the ROPA delegate to contact the administrator. The ROPA delegate will provide the email of that musician, the administrator will delete the comments and the musician can access the link from the original email to re-do the survey.

What if one of the musicians hasn't received the email?

If you know someone who has not received this email your ROPA delegate will provide you with a web link to the survey. Ask those musicians to check their spam and junk mail folders first. It's a good idea for delegates to send the musicians a heads-up email letting them know a survey is coming.

Is there a possibility of a musician submitting multiple reviews?

No, a musician can not take the survey more than once from the same device. The surveys are also reviewed to make sure only one response is received by each musician.

If an orchestra does their own evaluation in-house, can that be submitted to ROPA? No, The only evaluations ROPA keeps in the bank are its own.

If you have any further questions about the evaluation bank, please don't hesitate to contact me at ropaceba1@gmail.com.



The Leading Tone

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ROPA

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- This newsletter will be posted online at: <http://www.ropaweb.org>
- To subscribe to the ROPA Internet Mailing List, visit <http://groups.google.com/group/ropa-discussion>.
- The list is open to musicians in ROPA member orchestras, and AFM Local officers

Wichita Symphony Ambassadors helping musicians

By Judy Naillon, ROPA Delegate

We have an abundance of “Midwest Nice” here in Wichita, Kansas and our *Wichita Symphony Ambassadors* are no exception. The Ambassadors more than just a fundraising group for our Symphony; they’re a vital link between the orchestra and the community. They are passionate advocates for the power of music and dedicated to fostering a thriving arts scene in Wichita. Their purpose is multifaceted, encompassing everything from fundraising for Young People’s Concerts (and busing to those concerts) and outreach to community engagement and audience development. Essentially, they act as the orchestra’s strongest champions, ensuring its sustainability and expanding its reach.

Our Ambassadors provide us excellent meals and snacks when we have two performances back to back, a holiday goodie bag with candy and homemade treats and even include musicians and management on their board and in meetings to really know the pulse of our orchestra. One musician in college was down to the dust in a cake of rosin and Ambassadors and a local luthier teamed up to make a small, yet very meaningful

gift to this hard-working musician. The Ambassadors include a diverse group of ages and backgrounds but everyone has a shared passion for keeping our Symphony strong.

Does your organization have a “booster club” or group of supporters and promoters? If so we’d love to hear about them for a special section in the next *Leading Tone*. We’d love to hear how you connect your supporters/audience/friends of your org. with musicians. After all, solidarity doesn’t always just magically happen! Send a line or two to ropanewslettereditor@gmail.com and thank you for your excellent submissions this issue! ♦

What are the Values of ROPA?

Unity

Fairness

Democracy in workplace

Education

Shared Sacrifice

We are one with all labor

What impacts one, impacts all

Collective action to find solutions

Identify problems-
Identify Successes

Why does ROPA exist?

To give knowledge and tools to union orchestras' musicians and to assist in establishing fair working conditions;

To educate the membership about industry standards, labor law, procedures and practices;

To empower and enable our colleagues to better their lives in their workplace;

To communicate during a time when labor is being dismantled in our country.

Pictured Below: Mozart Quartet Malmo.

Musicians were from the Malmo Symphony Orchestra.

Program: Mozart Quartet in D Major, K. 285.

Musicians: Malin Nordlöf, flute, Marika Fältskog, violin

Lukasz Lisowski, viola and Samuli Örnströmer, 'cello.

Photos courtesy of Emma Larsson.



Do you have news about your orchestra? An article to submit? A letter to the editor? We'd love to have you contribute to *The Leading Tone*! Submit articles to Judy Naillon at ropanewslettereditor@gmail.com

The Leading Tone is the official voice of ROPA and reflects ROPA policy. However, we do appreciate and encourage the contributions of articles and letters by others. These submissions may cover topics on which ROPA has no official position; the opinions expressed therein are solely those of the author(s) and not necessarily of ROPA, it's officers or members.

Did you attend the ROPA 2024 conference last summer? Tag conference photos you upload to social media with [#ROPAConference2024](https://twitter.com/ROPAConference2024) and send your best shots to ropanewslettereditor@gmail.com

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Meet Your ROPA 2024 Members- At -Large



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*MAL, Conductor Evaluation Bank
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Alana Wiesing
Delegate-At-Large to the AFM Convention,
Tucson Symphony Orchestra



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Hee Chiat CHEW

The FIM International Orchestra Conference is the only global event for orchestra musicians. It included 40+ countries, 200+ delegates over 2 1/2 days.

Above: Hee Chiat Chew, Assistant Artistic Director, Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra.

Below: Linton Stephens, Delegate from the United Kingdom.

The IOC or International Orchestra Conference takes place every three years.





Let's GO!

2025 Conference Dates:

July 29-31, 2025. Negotiating workshop the day before, 7/28

Location:

The Sonesta Philadelphia

Rittenhouse Square

1800 Market Street

Philadelphia PA 19103

Purchase tickets for travel sooner than later to keep expenses down.



DELEGATES:

Don't forget to share this newsletter with your orchestra members.

Thank You!



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Make sure you can log into

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and share this valuable resource with your members!

ROPA Member Orchestras

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Atlanta Ballet Orchestra
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Austin Symphony Orchestra
Ballet West Orchestra
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Boise Philharmonic
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Detroit Opera Orchestra
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Flint Symphony Orchestra
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Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra
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Tulsa Opera



A conference of the American Federation of Musicians, AFL-CIO

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