

*Harmony*TM

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Field Activities and Research



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Field Activities

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Over the last three years, the Institute has consulted extensively with the Philadelphia Orchestra (PO). The work emerged through the recommendation of a public task force formed at the behest of the mayor of Philadelphia following the orchestra's work stoppage in 1996. The Institute's involvement with the PO was initiated by forming a group of musician, board, staff, and volunteer leaders. This group worked on relationship building and finding ways for the constituencies to engage each other effectively.

As an outgrowth of that work, the group addressed leadership and governance topics. In a parallel activity, efforts were initiated to streamline staff workflow processes in the areas of development and finance. Further activity was commenced to create more integrated activities across the areas of public relations, development, marketing, and artistic programming.

In late 1999, the constituencies agreed to begin a "strategic planning process." This process was finally fully activated in late 2000, with the formation of four strategy groups: Vision and Mission; Marketing; Venue; and Governance, Leadership, and Development. The strategy groups had three members each from the board, staff, musicians, and volunteers. Four representatives of each constituency (sixteen in total) met as liaison to ensure that the efforts and thinking of all strategy groups were aligned and consistent.

Today, the groups' recommendations are in the early stages of constituent review, with a final set of recommendations slated for approval in late 2001. Governance recommendations are in the early stages of implementation, and the Institute plans to report the work of the governance strategy group in the next issue of *Harmony*.

Toronto Symphony Orchestra

In mid-2000, Toronto Symphony Orchestra (TSO) board members, staff, musicians, and volunteer leaders asked for the Institute's assistance as they addressed the aftermath of a work stoppage and began, in a unified way, to

grapple with difficult financial issues. Through the balance of 2000, the Institute worked with all constituency groups to address short- and longer-term social, organizational, and community challenges. Institute representatives spent one to one and one-half days each month with as many as 100 members of the TSO community, as well as with representatives of government, to address the future of the organization and to mend wounds. Throughout this period, the financial condition of the symphony was difficult, but through the efforts of many members of the TSO community, the orchestra was able to complete its season with excellence.

Following a change in executive management in late 2000, the large-group work was ended in January 2001. A small, multiconstituent task group was then formed with the goal of launching a major fundraising campaign. This group augmented a board-chaired campaign committee and focused on creating constituency support, understanding, and involvement in the campaign.

In May 2001, the Institute and constituency leaders determined that our joint effort should be suspended pending an ongoing reevaluation.

Musician Leaders' Conference

Over the past several years, through field activities and visits with many orchestras, Institute representatives have had conversations with individual musicians about the challenges and rewards of being part of a symphony organization. Several themes emerged from these conversations, and we became persuaded that there were leaders who were prepared to engage with colleagues from other orchestras in a facilitated discussion of shared experiences and common issues.

In April 2001, the Institute hosted a one-day conference of 18 musicians from 5 U.S. symphony organizations. The five orchestras represented a sample of symphony organizations that are developing new ways to address the challenges they face. The meeting was designed to identify and develop strategies and practices by which musician leaders can increase musician participation in and contribute more effectively to the development of outstanding orchestra organizations. We were also interested to learn if there were common themes among those leaders as they considered musicians' roles in a hypothetical "outstanding organization." Three areas of common interest emerged from the extended discourse:

- ◆ The musicians' role in artistic deliberation and decision making in the organization.
- ◆ The musicians' role in governance.
- ◆ The musicians' role in determining organizational policies that affect personal growth and development.

The participants and the Institute are committed to continue this dialogue and ultimately to include leadership representation of other constituencies.

American Federation of Musicians

In early and mid-2001, Institute representatives met with U.S. and Canadian staff members of the Symphonic Services Division (SSD) of the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) to explore industry issues and trends, especially as they relate to orchestral musicians. A further purpose of the meetings was to become better informed as to AFM/SSD thinking and field activities and to communicate more directly the goals, beliefs, principles, and practices of the Institute. The first meeting also included the chairman of the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians (ICSOM) and the presidents of the Regional Orchestra Players Association (ROPA) and the Organization of Canadian Symphony Musicians (OCSM/OMOSC).

Research

Over recent months, the Institute has made further advance in the Conductor Evaluation Data Analysis Project (CEDAP) and has a plan to complete this research in the coming months. The project has involved the analysis of thousands of conductor evaluation reports collected from a large number of orchestra players in many ICSOM orchestras for the 10-year period from 1988 to 1997. Preliminary findings of an overall analysis were published in *Harmony* #7 (October 1998).

Since that time, we have collected data on a subuniverse of orchestras and conductors and are in the process of evaluating whether there are significant correlations in the data from the evaluation reports, on the basis of orchestral and conductoral factors. The work on orchestral factors is complete and the work on conductoral factors is under way. A description of the methodology of this second phase of the project and findings are now expected to be published in 2002, probably on the Institute's Web site.