

# *Harmony*<sup>TM</sup>

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## Publisher's Notes

by

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With the highly diverse, always changing, seasonal nature of their core activities, orchestra organizations are very dynamic. This dynamism is heightened by the constant flux in participants and roles within these human networks. Board and board committee membership and leadership rotate regularly. There is a steady turnover in executive and staff employees. The composition and leadership of volunteer groups shift often. Music directors and conducting staff come and go. And, although the membership of the orchestra itself changes to a lesser degree, orchestra committee participation and leadership quite often change annually.

Despite this flux, the organizational support of the Institute is steadily broadening, and with the cooperation and assistance of all supporting organizations, the mailing list for *Harmony* is steadily being updated and expanded.

For these reasons, we estimate that at least one out of twelve readers of this sentence will be perusing his or her first issue of *Harmony*. Welcome! We hope our insights and ideas will heighten your awareness of the organizational issues and potentials within your own symphony organization, and will motivate you to do all you can to improve the health and effectiveness of your organization.

Other readers who are “old hands” to *Harmony*, may remember our report on the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra (NJSO) organization which appeared in *Harmony* #4 (April 1997). At that time, the NJSO organization was well along in a program of organization change, but acknowledged some major challenges and risks ahead. In our update, readers will discover how the NJSO leaped over those hurdles and what new challenges it has identified. Special thanks for discussing this story go to roundtable participants **Victor Bauer, Karl Herman, Victor Parsonnet, Jonathan Spitz, Susan Stucker, Karen Swanson, Lawrence Tamburri, Christine Terhune, and Bob Wagner.**

Many industry participants realized by early 1999, that a significant change in interpersonal and intraorganizational relationships had taken place within the San Francisco Symphony organization. This change came about in connection with the 1998 negotiation of a longer-term collective bargaining agreement between the orchestra and its employer. Professor **Robert H. Mnookin** and two colleagues were instrumental in the processes which were involved and have chronicled this story starting on page 13. I have preceded his report with a special publisher's note.

The London Symphony Orchestra (LSO) is one of the world's leading examples of a self-governed orchestra, a configuration which dates back to 1904. Through

the application of long-standing self-governance processes, a set of carefully designed, member-guided, nontraditional work practices were put in place over recent years and have successfully met the test of time. With the cooperation of the LSO's leadership, **Frederick Zenone** has studied these achievements, and reports on them within the context of the historical development of this unique and renowned orchestra.

Our series on Organization Change, which is authored principally by **Laura Leigh Roelofs** and posted regularly on our Web site, has been the central focus of our periodic e-mail bulletin, **Key Notes from SOI**. We introduced this Web-site series in February and summarized the content of the early installments in the April 2001 issue of *Harmony*. As of September, we had posted three additional installments, the latter two dealing with open systems concepts and their application to symphony organizations. The series to date is summarized beginning on page 43. Reading and links related to the topics are provided on our Web site following the text. By the distribution date of this issue of *Harmony*, we anticipate the posting of a new installment. To ensure that you will regularly receive **Key Notes from SOI**, please refer to the inside back cover.

We are also posting on our Web site—and drawing attention to these postings via **Key Notes**—insights into research, ideas, and organizational behavior practices which will help symphony organization participants contribute to more satisfying and effective workplaces. Extractions from this posted material appear on pages 53 through 58.

A brief update on the Institute's Field Activities and Research follows, beginning on page 59.

Of all of the symphony orchestra institutions in North America, a clear majority have annual expense budgets under \$2 million. For some time, we have been thinking about the particular organizational challenges and issues these institutions face, and how these settings compare with those of larger organizations. On pages 62 through 75, we put forth an analysis and some preliminary conclusions, punctuated by the comments of participants in the **Jackson (Michigan)** and **South Bend (Indiana)** orchestra organizations. We invite critique of these insights from those who work and volunteer in smaller organizations. In a companion piece, we interview **Peter Smith**, a well-known, retired executive director who has long experience and leadership in medium-sized and smaller organizations.

You, the knowledgeable student of symphonic music, may already have identified the historic composition and its composer which are represented by the score fragment on the cover of this issue of *Harmony*. Has the personality most closely associated with this music also crossed your mind? Even if you know these answers, it is unlikely that you know all the other interesting tidbits in this special story prepared by **Phillip Huscher**. So, first come up with your answers, then verify your knowledge (or uncertainty) on page 80.

In the pages which immediately follow these Notes, we report:

- ◆ The announcement of a leadership transition within the Institute.
- ◆ A continued growth in Advocates of Change—a commitment by individuals from all over North America to foster better and more sustainable orchestral institutions. We encourage you to join now!
- ◆ The steady support and encouragement of the Institute by some 150 symphony orchestra organizations.
- ◆ The financial status of the Institute for its most recent fiscal year.

Since the activation of the Institute in 1995, at least 1,000 people have had some form of relatively direct and personal contact with this organization and have encouraged its development. Behind that group stand thousands of others who have read and gained some benefit from *Harmony*, our Web site, our research, our field work, and other Institute efforts. Since this will be my last message as Publisher of *Harmony*, let me genuinely thank each of you for your interest in and support of the Institute and its effort to foster positive change in symphony orchestra organizations. I know you will provide your continued support of and encouragement to the Institute's new leadership.

