

# DSO support concert broadcast live via webcast

Shannon Jones  
25 January 2011

Musicians of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra (DSO), on strike since October 4, performed at another sold-out support concert Saturday in the Detroit suburb of Grosse Pointe Woods. The concert featured DSO Concertmaster Emmanuelle Boisvert performing two Beethoven romances for violin, No. 1 in G Major and No. 2 in F major. It concluded with Camille Saint-Saëns' Symphony No. 3 in C minor, the "Organ Symphony."

Kenneth Kiesler, director of orchestras at the University of Michigan, conducted. The concert was broadcast live from Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church via a webcast to audiences across the US and globally.

Before the concert DSO Principal Horn Karl Pituch, a member of the negotiating committee, gave a brief report on the status of talks that started January 20, the first since November. He said DSO musicians planned to continue with negotiations, despite management unilaterally breaking a mutually agreed news blackout.

Management recently modified its concession demands in line, it claims, with the compromise proposal of former Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm and US Senator Carl Levin, both Democrats. The musicians' union had earlier agreed to the general framework of this settlement, which entails massive cuts on the order of 25 percent, somewhat less than the more than 30 percent cut imposed by management. Still at issue are work rules, including pay for community concerts and education, tenure, a two-tier wage structure for new musicians, health care and pensions.

Judy Doyle, from the community group Save Our Symphony (SOS), reported that supporters of the DSO

musicians plan a mass lobby of a scheduled DSO executive board meeting Wednesday morning where a proposal by management to cancel the balance of the 2010–2011 season will be raised.

The capacity audience of some 700 gave repeated standing ovations to the musicians and guest artists. The concert opened with a performance of Johannes Brahms' well-known Academic Festival Overture written in 1879 on the occasion of the composer being awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Breslau in Poland.

Boisvert then performed the two Beethoven Romances for Violin. It is thought that Beethoven wrote these pieces in preparation for his famed Violin Concerto in D major. Boisvert, who in 1988 became the first woman to win the post of concertmaster in the United States, gave a flawless, evocative performance. At the conclusion the audience gave Boisvert a prolonged standing ovation.

The majestic "Organ Symphony," with organist Craig Rifel, comprised the second half of the concert. Saint-Saëns dedicated the work to Franz Liszt, who died just 10 weeks after its premiere in 1886 and never had a chance to hear it performed. The concert featured the Star of the Sea's pipe organ built by Quebec organ maker Karl Wilhelm.

DSO Musicians have announced five support concerts for February. The first will take place February 5 at Kirk in the Hills Presbyterian Church in Bloomfield Hills. Another concert is set for February 8 in Clinton Township featuring the L'Anse Creuse High School Choir. A February 16 concert in the Detroit

suburb of Birmingham will feature Groves High School student Margaret Starr as violin soloist. A February 20 concert in Bloomfield Hills will feature renowned pianist James Tocco. On February 26 the DSO ensembles Cut Time Players and Cut Time Symphonia will perform in Royal Oak.

Following the Saturday concert the WSWs spoke to representatives of Save Our Symphony. Judy Doyle said, “It seems they want to destroy the orchestra, it doesn’t matter about the money.

“This orchestra is owned by the people, we don’t want the season cancelled. There are about five people on the board who are behind this. We think the League of American Orchestras is on a mission to destroy the orchestra, and bust the union. This would be a weak community, or so they thought.

“We have about 4,000 members and we are growing daily. People from 23 countries are watching the live webcast tonight. People are watching in Chicago and other cities across the United States.

“Our group includes former DSO staff members, former board members, donors and subscribers.”

Philip Clampitt, a biology instructor at Oakland University and a member of SOS, added, “I have been a subscriber for 25 years. We love classical music and we love this orchestra. I have listened to the board and also to the musicians; what they say doesn’t jibe. What the musicians say seems to be more rational. They seem more reasonable to me.”



To contact the WSWs and the  
Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**