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New Sacramento Philharmonic pact freezes musicians' wages, cuts schedule

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Managers of the Sacramento Philharmonic and musicians have agreed to a new contract for the next two seasons that includes a one-year wage freeze and a reduced number of performances for the 2009-10 season.

The ratified contract between the Philharmonic, the professional symphonic orchestra for the Sacramento region, and Musicians Union AFM Local 12 also calls for a return to a full season of performances for the 2010-2011 season, a statement released today shows.

Included in the new pact is a provision allowing the release of archived performances for broadcast on Capital Public Radio. The new agreement strengthens provisions allowing musicians to teach and perform at venues such as schools and hospitals.

"The reduced amount of work combined with the wage freeze has been a difficult reality for our musicians to accept," said the union's Larry Gardner. "The vote by our musicians to accept this agreement reflects their dedication to the health of the organization, the service it provides to the community, and the respect the orchestra members have for the loyalty of its donors and patrons."

He said that the union is optimistic that the Sacramento Philharmonic can work through the recession and be in a position to succeed and expand in the near future. Jennifer Basye Sander, orchestra board president, also looked forward to successful years to come and said she was pleased an agreement could be reached before the first concert of the season.

Marc Feldman, executive director of the orchestra, said that "given the economic climate, we want to recognize and thank the musicians of the negotiations committee and union officials for working hand-in-hand with management to find the difficult but necessary solutions for the future of the orchestra."

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