

All For One!

by David Geffner

Those who can remember back to their high school lit classes will recount fondly Alexandre Dumas's swashbuckling tale of three friends - Athos, Porthos, and Aramis - who lived by the motto "one for all and all for one." Recall how the book's idealistic young hero, d'Artagnan, ventures to Paris to become a member of the famed Musketeers of the Guard.

But when he meets up with the real deal, he's promptly challenged to a duel. Moments later, when guards sweep in to arrest all four of the men (owing to that duels were forbidden by royal decree), the three Musketeers join forces with the upstart to turn on and defeat the reigning power. As the novel unfolds, d'Artagnan's courage and loyalty earns the trio's undying respect, ultimately conferring on him a place alongside his friends as the "fourth Musketeer."

Dumas's book is more than a great read; its theme of "All for One" is a vital and instructive metaphor for today's working men and women given that a handful of international corporations have come to dominate the entertainment industry. And while this Alliance is vast and powerful, its core strength really comes from its Musketeer-like unity amongst its many Locals, working together for mutual betterment in the areas of organizing, contracts, and training.

For this pre-Convention issue of the Bulletin, we've chosen to highlight some of those "All For One" stories, great and small, from across the Alliance, that are, in their own way, as inspiring as any tale of classic litera-

ture. After all, the words from Dumas' 19th Century novel still feel every bit as relevant in these challenging modern times: "this world is an uncertain realm, filled with danger; honor under-minded by the pursuit of power; freedom sacrificed when the weak are oppressed by the strong. But there are those who oppose these powerful forces, who dedicate their lives to [unity]...known as Musketeers. Rise d'Artagnan and join them."

MOTION PICTURE & TELEVISION PRODUCTION

If there is a model for joint cooperation amongst the Alliance's many Locals, it may well have been set more than forty years ago, during the administration of Mayor John Lindsay, in New York City. It was 1966, and to help stimulate the Big Apple's reputation as the world's entertainment capital, Lindsay established the New York City Mayor's Office of Film, Theater & Broadcasting. That same year the IA General Office, working in conjunction with the major film and television production locals in the Tri-State region, created what International Vice President and Local 52 Studio Mechanics President John Ford calls

"a means for New York City's local and visiting producers to have one-stop shopping."

The result was revolutionary for its time: an East Coast Council of locals, chartered by the International with its own constitution and by-laws, that pooled information and contractual details amongst each other to not only make production in the Tri-State region hassle-free, but to strengthen overall bargaining positions by refusing to accept deals that were not beneficial to all of the city's production locals.

Dan Mahoney, the New York-based Assistant Director of the IA's Motion Picture & Television Production Division and current chair of the East Coast Council, notes that many years after its formation, the Council underwent a transformation that reflected a dramatic change in New York area film and TV production. "In November 1990 the five major studios of that time," Mahoney begins, "Columbia, Paramount, Twentieth Century Fox, Warner Bros. and MGM/UA, all boycotted New York as a production base. They had been pressuring several of our unions to work more flexible hours and less

overtime. The boycott lasted until May of 1991, but production lagged for a considerable time thereafter; that was when the East Coast Council was reconstituted as a vehicle to help stimulate low-budget production in the region, which is essentially its mission to this day."

In fact a New York Times article, dated May 28, 1992, details how the East Coast Council, in response to the boycott, had started negotiating contracts for low-budget feature films. "So far," the article states, "20 films have been made in New York under this arrangement, one for as little as \$350,000." With only a single television show [Law & Order] shooting in New York City in that year, the outlook was grim. Yet through the efforts of the East Coast Council, a reversal of the region as a "tough place to shoot" began to evolve into New York's current role as one of the busiest, most film-friendly cities in the nation.

Today's East Coast Council, which targets those low-budget feature producers not affiliated with any major studio or existing IA Term Agreement,

is comprised of Locals 52 [Studio Mechanics], 161 [Script Supervisors, Production Coordinators, Continuity Coordinators and Production Accountants], 600 [International Cinematographers Guild], 700 [Motion Picture Editors Guild], 764 [Theatrical Wardrobe Union], 798 [Make-Up Artists & Hair Stylists], and USA829 [United Scenic Artists]. And because of constant pooling of information and resources, as well as close coordination with the International, the East Coast Council has been able to prevent employers from targeting any one local with unreasonable concessions.

As Chaim Kantor, Eastern Director for Local 600 and Co-Chair of the East Coast Council observes, "as a result of our coordinated bargaining strength, all of the area's local unions achieve the best possible agreements, including a wage deferment that is triggered if a theatrical production achieves financial success when distributed." Kantor also notes that shows shot under an East Coast Council agreement often provide the opportunity for IA crewmembers to gain "valuable

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experience by working in a higher classification or on a feature motion picture for the first time. I myself worked on eight such productions over a seven-year period," Kantor notes, "as a First Assistant Camera and then Camera Operator."

East Coast Council co-chair and International Vice President John Ford says the rise of reality television has posed particular challenges in the area of post-production. "That's such a transient part of the business," Ford explains, "and we really bring the full weight and power of the East Coast Council down upon producers who try to subcontract out that portion of the business." Ford says the New York locals have been able to extend the East Coast Council model to other types of emerging productions, like Basic Cable, Game Shows, Talk Shows and Reality Television programming. "We've crafted low budget agreements for shows not signed to overall term agreements," he adds, "like Flight of the Conchords and Naked Brothers Band, as well as a special agreement for a public service television series produced by the City University of New York. Generally one or two representatives from each local are present during negotiations, which cover budgets below \$8 million."

Locals 52 and 600 have also been able to organize and negotiate joint single production and term contracts covering EPK and Behind-the-Scenes shoots on the sets of motion pictures produced under an IA Agreement. "By extending the East Coast Council model of mutual cooperation beyond the jurisdiction of the New York Production Locals," Kantor explains, "joint agreements covering these types of productions have also been negotiated that include Locals 600, 481, 487, 491 and 494. All such activity was coordinated by the International."

One such example, far afield from New York City, was the Reality TV show, *The Farmer Wants A Wife*,

shooting two years ago in a small town outside St. Louis, Missouri. International Vice President and Local 6 [Stagehands] business agent Jack Beckman assisted in an organizing effort that included Dan Mahoney, along with the cooperation of Local 600 [International Cinematographers Guild] and Local 493 [Studio Mechanics] based out of St. Louis. The crew from the project was from IA locals around the U.S., with Mahoney noting that, "all the local area hires were 493 studio mechanics, out of St. Louis."

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Cooperation among the West Coast studio and backlot locals has been a way of life since the IA first entered Hollywood more than half-century ago. But according to Los Angeles based Michael Miller, International Vice President and Director of the Motion Picture and Television Production Division, it's only been in the last few years that a more non-traditional form of "All for One" partnerships has come about, resulting in one of the most promising models for cross-industry bargaining strength throughout the Alliance.

"We have an organizing committee, designed to organize all the set, scenery shops, and non-union facilities in Los Angeles," Miller notes. "That committee is not just comprised

of all the West Coast studio and backlot locals - 44 [Affiliated Property Craftspersons], 80 [Motion Picture Studio Grips/Craft Services], 683 [Laboratory Film/Video Technicians/Cinetechnicians], 705 [Motion Picture Costumers], 728 [Motion Picture Studio Electrical Lighting Technicians] and 729 [Set Painters and Sign Writers] - but also stagecraft locals 33 [Stagehands] and 800 [Art Directors Guild & Scenic, Title, Graphic Artists]."

International Representative Gavin Koon notes that in 2005, the L.A. Facility Committee's first year, six companies were organized, including Set Masters, Lennie Marvin, OI Graphics, Plan B, Industry Glass, Inc. and Motion Picture Glass. "These ranged from prop rental to set construction to a graphics house," explains Koon. "So it's across a wide range of facilities and aspects of both stage and screen work in Los Angeles County." The following year, the committee successfully organized Studio 3Team Divers and Alternative Metal Supply, the latter having fabricated sets and scene-work for the big-budget special effects epic *Spiderman III*, and the following year, the multi-local group organized Icuris Rigging. Koon says the support and commitment shown by the participating Locals has demonstrated that, "success can clearly come from cooperation and a willingness to accept partnerships. Their emphasis on being flexible and has shown much merit, and [the group] intends to continue its work for many years to come."

"All for One" stories on the West Coast have also become common on videotape-style awards shows and specials. Go backstage at the Academy Awards, which may be the single largest and most complex televised awards show in the world, and you'll find theatrical stagehands from Local 33 working side-by-side with members of the Hollywood studio locals. Wardrobe duties at the Oscars are split between Local 705 [Motion Picture Costumers] and Local 768 [Theatrical



Wardrobe Union], proving that in the area of live televised events, craft members working cooperatively has been a stabilizing factor for employers.

Miller says that the changing political landscape in Los Angeles County has also provided an opportunity for IA locals to work together. "Longtime Local 80 business agent and International Vice President Thom Davis currently serves as a vice-president of the L.A. County Federation of Labor, as does Peter Marley, who is the former TV business agent for Local 33, and is now a representative for the International," Miller explains. "The locals here have worked side-by-side to help elect pro-labor candidates like Mayor Antonio Villaragosa and Wendy Greuel [L.A. City Controller-elect and President Pro Tempore of the L.A. City Council, who has been a strong advocate for the entertainment industry in Los Angeles]," Miller adds.

Given the increasing blurring of lines by major entertainment employers like The Walt Disney Company, which owns theme parks, produces movies and television, owns broadcast networks and legitimate theaters on Broadway and in Los Angeles, cooperation is more a necessity than luxury. "A company like Disney has their fingerprints on almost every aspect of the IA's traditional jurisdiction," says Miller. "They hold multiple contracts with multiple IA jurisdictions covering a large variety of crafts, as well as contracts with other unions at the networks they own, so for the IA to continue to flourish there must be a banding together amongst our tradi-

tional crafts to achieve strength in numbers."

Numerical power for the motion picture production locals was first exemplified by the landmark Area Standards Agreement, which began in the late 1990's covering 13 Southeastern states (including future production hotbeds like Louisiana, Georgia and North Carolina) and now has grown to include the rest of the U.S. [outside the production centers of New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and San Francisco], Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The driving force behind the Area Standards was simple: before the International had the bargaining authority in motion picture production, employers would cherry-pick jurisdictions around the country and play each local union against each other in a "race to the bottom," an effort to get each local to negotiate down their own wage scales in order to bring in work. By virtue of not having to negotiate contracts one jurisdiction at a time, the Area Standards Agreement allowed the studio mechanics locals to pool their combined strength.

As it has evolved, the Area Standards Agreement has allowed for the establishment of defined benefit pension plans that provide regular payments to Alliance workers throughout their retirement years, as well as health and annuity plans. With the rise of state-based tax incentives sending production to ever more regional locations, like New Mexico, Michigan or Louisiana, the Area Standards Agreement has ensured unified terms to producers coming into those areas. Miller

notes that, "employers can no longer use the contract to pit IA locals in Louisiana against those in Georgia or Florida or the Carolinas, for example."

STAGECRAFT

Cooperative examples in the stagecrafts stretch from Phoenix to Philadelphia, inspired by an industry that has undergone a dramatic transformation in the last two decades. No longer a business of small local theater owners who hold long-standing relationships with the local unions, today's venues, big and small, are run by a cluster of large corporations who enter collective bargaining sessions with lawyers and HR professionals, and maintain stage agreements all over the U.S. and Canada. The only way local trade unions can remain on equal footing is by pooling their resources to present a united front. This axiom is true whether the stage work is a touring road show stopping in a 1,200-seat legit house or a one-time rock and roll concert in an 80,000-seat outdoor stadium.

Nowhere has this cooperative approach been more effective than the national agreement struck with Global Spectrum, ratified by the IA's International Executive Board in March 2004 after two years of intense bargaining and many more years of relationship building on the part of numerous IA locals and the International. The unqualified success story that is the Global Spectrum Agreement, a contract that is currently being administered in thirty buildings by over twenty-five dif-



ferent IA Locals, actually begins more than a decade ago in Philadelphia, with Global Spectrum's predecessor, Spectrum Limited Management Partnership, the entity formed when Ed Snyder, then owner of the Philadelphia Flyers sold the team to Comcast.

Explains International Vice President and Local 8 [Stagehands] business agent Mike Barnes, "Local 8 Stagehands, Local 752 Treasurers and Ticket Sellers and Local 799 Theatrical Wardrobe all worked in the SALP managed Spectrum arena under contracts dating back to 1967. SALP built a new 20,000-seat arena in Philadelphia in 1995, which provided revenue generating sports and entertainment content for use on Comcast's cable network. In 1998, Comcast announced the formation of Comcast-Spectator a subsidiary of the parent company. This formed the link between the cable giant and facility management, and a deal was later struck with Spectrum Management Group allowing Comcast to acquire buildings and professional sports teams in Philadelphia under the newly formed Comcast-Spectator. The agreement also included a three year no compete clause, and at the conclusion of the three years in 2001, Comcast-Spectator bought Global Facility Services and formed what we now know as Global Spectrum."

Barnes says the tipping point came in 2002, when Global Spectrum opened the John Labatt Arena in London Ontario. Canadian Local 105 [Stagehands] contacted IATSE Local 8 requesting information on the employer. Through the cooperation of the two Locals and the assistance of General Secretary-Treasurer James Wood, a deal was hammered out for Local 105 that included the upper management of Global Spectrum. The cooperation between Locals 8 and 105, with the guidance of the International, became the template to initiate dialog for a National Agreement with Global Spectrum, which covered all buildings where there was no existing contract, and new buildings acquired or built by the Employer. Jurisdiction was modeled after the agreements in Philadelphia and London and included coverage of the Wardrobe Department.

"The amount of buildings managed by Global Spectrum grew 300 percent the first cycle of that contract," Barnes continues. "In some cases, the National Agreement was the first real contract Locals worked under in a facility; in other cases, new Locals needed to be chartered. As more buildings were added and more Locals started working under the agreement, more Local to Local communication was established."

In January 2007, a number of the Locals covered under the Global Spec-

trum contract met in Philadelphia to renegotiate the deal. Proposals from eighteen Locals covered by the agreement were put into a comprehensive proposal and presented to the Employer. The combined effort of the different Locals all working together to achieve a better contract was a grand slam for the workers. "Significant gains were made for all Locals especially the Wardrobe Department," notes Barnes, "who by participating with the group successfully negotiated new language to cover Hair and Make-up and address numerous compensation issues that were problematic in the first cycle of the negotiations."

The cooperation between the Locals covered under The Global Spectrum agreement continues to reap benefits in areas not directly related to the contract. For example in Massachusetts, Locals 53 [Stagehands] and 232 [Mixed] are exchanging workforces to fill calls at the Global Spectrum managed facilities. And when Local 347 [Mixed] was offered work at the University of South Carolina Football Stadium, two years ago, for a large outdoor show under the Global Spectrum contract, the needed manpower far exceeded the Local's membership; with the assistance of the International, Local 347 was able to coordinate with the surrounding Locals to fill the call and was successful in negotiating a higher rate for rigging on the show. Likewise in October 2008, when Global Spectrum replaced Spectrum Management Group as the management company for the Miami Beach Convention Center. "With the assistance from the International," Barnes adds, "an agreement was reached in January 2009 in which Local 500 [Mixed] and 600 would work under the National Agreement. By working together, the union was successful in protecting the different Locals' jurisdictions and benefits."

Barnes' own stage local in Philadelphia has had a history of

assisting other IA unions. He recalls that when Comcast Spectator acquired Global Facility Services in 2001, there were no existing IA contracts with the exception of the Local 8 Stagehands contracts in Philadelphia and Trenton. "From 1998 until 2004, Local 799 Philadelphia Wardrobe worked in the Global Facility Services buildings under the deal struck by Local 8 stagehands," Barnes says. "The arrangement included Local 799 receiving all working assessments for wardrobe employees and for the first time contributions on their behalf to the National Benefit Funds. Between 2001 and 2004, with assistance from the International and support of the stagehands, Local 799 negotiated first time contracts with scores of Philadelphia venues, including Academy of Music, Kimmel Center, Merriam, Pearlman and Zellerbach Theaters, Commerce Bank Performing Arts Center and Opera Shop. All of these deals replaced handshake and rate card agreements and all of the deals included benefits."

It seems to be an axiom in stage organizing that wardrobe workers are

tied at the hip to stagehands. Often times, like in the case of the Local 336 [Stagehands] in Phoenix, Arizona, led by business agent Bill Hennessy, and Local 875 [Theatrical Wardrobe], an influential stage local has been able to serve as a resource for a wardrobe local to draw upon. The Fox Theater, in St. Louis, Missouri, is a slightly different example; last summer Local 6 [Stagehands], spearheaded by International Vice President Jack Beckman, supported Local 805 Theatrical Wardrobe workers [headed up by business agent Karen Stone], which had identified a core group of hair and make-up workers in the building yet to be organized.

As New York-based International Representative and Local 764 [Theatrical Wardrobe] President Pat White tells it, "Local 805 organized the hair and make-up people inside the theater and the stagehands had their back, providing the Local 6 office for meetings and acting as the conduit to the building's employer to facilitate the organizing drive, which was successful. It began with the wardrobe people identifying workers in their own facility, who were not part of the IA family, and concluded with the stagehands using their influence to help close the deal. That's what cooperation among locals is all about."

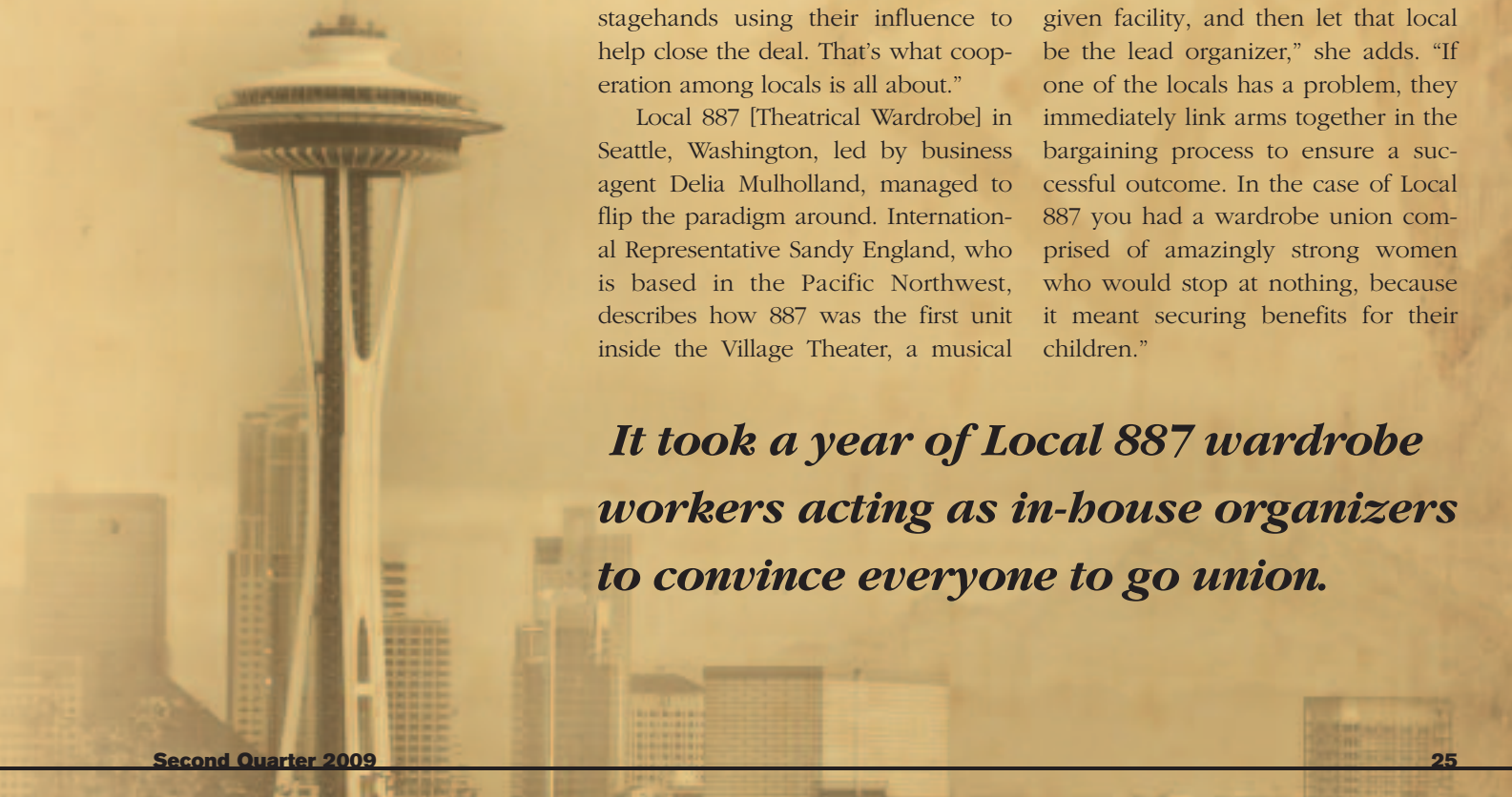
Local 887 [Theatrical Wardrobe] in Seattle, Washington, led by business agent Delia Mulholland, managed to flip the paradigm around. International Representative Sandy England, who is based in the Pacific Northwest, describes how 887 was the first unit inside the Village Theater, a musical

theater house in the Bellevue/Issaquah area. "The stagehands were not yet inside the facility," England notes. "And this past February we won an NLRB election that now covers everyone in the theater, stagehands and scenic artists included. It's a jump from 15 union wardrobe employees to now more than 50 IA workers, counting the construction shop, stagehands, and scenic artists. It took a year of Local 887 wardrobe workers acting as in-house organizers to convince everyone to go union."

England says Seattle is a model of locals working together for mutual betterment.

"Scenic artists and hair and make-up workers, which are both small groups and represented by Local 488 [Studio Mechanics] for both stage and screen work, have organized most of the shops in the region," she points out, "and they know what's coming into town before anyone." England says that alongside Local 15 [Stagehands], who represent shop carpenters, welders, and property makers, and Local 887 wardrobe, the unions not only bargain together, they also organize together. "They'll decide who has the best chance in any given facility, and then let that local be the lead organizer," she adds. "If one of the locals has a problem, they immediately link arms together in the bargaining process to ensure a successful outcome. In the case of Local 887 you had a wardrobe union comprised of amazingly strong women who would stop at nothing, because it meant securing benefits for their children."

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Halfway across the country is a “band of brothers” story in a city already known for its unified labor force. With the tone set decades ago by retired International Vice President and Local 2 [Stagehands] business manager emeritus Daniel Kerins, whereby no Chicago stage contract was signed unless all the IA locals with jurisdiction in the region were on-board, the Windy City, in recent years, has continued and expanded upon Kerins’ “All for One” mantra.

Led by the team of International Vice President and Local Two business manager Craig Carlson and International Representative and Local 750 [Treasurers & Ticket Sellers] business manager Ira Alper, the Chicago stage locals, over the last four years, have organized mainstream agreements at numerous high-end venues, including the 10,000-seat House of Hope, operated by International Facility Group, Charter One Pavilion, an 8,000-seat open-air venue on the shores of Lake Michigan that’s operated by concert behemoth Live Nation, Inc., the Lolla-Palooza Festival at Butler Park in downtown Chicago, an annual 10-day music event that routinely employs more than 100 stagehands and is operated by C-3 Entertainment, as well as the 28,000-seat soccer stadium at Toyota Park which is owned by the village of Bridgeview, IL.

“In all our new agreements,” explains Carlson, “Locals 110 [Motion Picture Projectionists, Audio Visual Engineers and Computer Technicians] and 769 [Theatrical Wardrobe] are

working side-by-side with the stagehands and treasurers and ticket sellers locals. Local 2, again working in conjunction with Local 750, also signed a first-ever multi-year agreement with SMG at the newly renovated Genesee Theater, which was a landmark in nearby Waukegan. That contract introduced health and annuity benefits at the venue.”

Local 110 Business Manager and Secretary-Treasurer Steve Altman, along with Carlson and Alper, also points with pride to a Chicago election in 2006 in which all of the city’s locals joined hands to help elect a pro-labor alderman in the largest ward in the city. “For the first time ever, Locals 2, 110, 476 [Studio Mechanics], 750 and 769 supplied volunteers to cover all 65 precincts in Bob Fioretti’s 2nd Ward,” notes Alper. “The area includes the biggest convention center in the city, McCormick Place, as well as Charter One Pavilion, a busy summer concert facility operated by Live Nation.”

Chicago’s locals are also aligned in the area of political lobbying. Mark Hogan, Business Manager of Local 476, with full support from his sister IA Locals, successfully lobbied a film industry tax-incentive that Alper and Carlson have been working to move forward. “Bill 1353” includes theatrical tax break initiatives similar to the film tax credits and would apply to legitimate stage houses. Broadway in Chicago is the largest legit theater owner in the city and its president, Lou Raizin, estimates that

the Chicago theater industry does \$750 million in annual business. “If passed,” Alper explains, “this bill would mean that much more work for IA stagehands, treasurers and ticket sellers, hair and make-up and wardrobe members.” Hogan and Carlson are also working on an amendment to a Pyrotechnic Statute that will re-allow members of Locals 2 and 476 the ability to perform pyro duties on productions and special events.

Back on the original theatrical thoroughfare in New York City, exists a coalition of seven stage locals known as the IA Broadway Council that meets to share contract information, organizing strategies, and employer relations stories that will help one or all of the locals better leverage the city’s theatrical producers during bargaining sessions. Comprised of ATPAM 18032 [Association of Theatrical Press Agents and Managers] Locals One [Stagehands], 306 [Motion Picture Projectionists, Operators, Video Technicians & Theatrical Employees & Allied Crafts], 751 [Treasurers & Ticket Sellers], 764 [Theatrical Wardrobe], 798 [Make-Up Artists & Hair Stylists], USA 829 [United Scenic Artists], the IA Broadway Council is

emblematic of the unified approach New York’s stage locals have practiced for many years.

“I remember in 2002, when the Manhattan Theater Club renovated the Biltmore Theater, a house that had been closed for more than 20 years,” begins International Vice President Anthony DePaulo, co-director, with International Vice President Brian J. Lawlor, of the Alliance’s Stagecraft Division, and a former business agent and trustee for Local One Stagehands, “and all the IA locals in New York made it known that we would be flexible, because it was a subscription based, non-profit type of venue, but they had to make a deal with everybody. We could negotiate in groups or separately, however the employer wanted to do it, but in the end it had to be all IA. And that’s exactly what happened.”

The same scenario is happening now with the Henry Miller Theater, at 124 West 43rd St., closed in 2004 and subsequently remodeled to make way for the 57-story Bank of America Tower. The Henry Miller’s façade was landmarked by the city and inside a new 950-seat theater was created, which will be operated by the Roundabout Theater Company. “Negotiations are going on now, and it’s different than the Biltmore example,” DePaulo continues, “because some of the Locals already have contracts from the other facilities Roundabout operates. But it’s anticipated that the facility will be entirely IA before all of the Locals sign off.”

DePaulo says communication, as directed by International President Matthew Loeb (in the form of a weekly conference call with all of the International stage reps in the U.S. and Canada), has been vital to the flow of information amongst stage locals, especially since the industry, in both arena management and legit theater, is dominated by a handful of corporate players, AEG, Live Nation, SMG, Nederlander, Shubert, NETworks Pre-

sentations, and Troika Entertainment, among them. “Even the big film studios are all on Broadway, now,” DePaulo points out. “Universal, DreamWorks, and Warner Bros. have all produced Broadway shows. Disney, who was the first to come in, is also a theater owner.”

Cooperation among New York locals also extends to the political side. Pat White points to her own union, Local 764 [Theatrical Wardrobe], which along with belonging to the Central Labor Council and

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attending meetings also holds an annual fund-raiser for the IA PAC.

“We create a quilt, which taps into our traditional skills,” White says, “and then sell five-dollar a pop raffle tickets that have raised more than \$6,000 each year. It serves as a teaching opportunity to get people engaged in the political process and brings money into the PAC from those who wouldn’t go to a cocktail party and write a \$100 check.”

The formation of COBUG [Coalition of Broadway Unions and Guilds] in 2002 has also helped to further unify New York’s stage locals with the larger Broadway community. Along with all of the Locals in the IA Broadway Council, COBUG’s members include Actors’ Equity Association

[AEA], American Federation of Musicians [AFM], Dramatists Guild, Service Employees International Union, [SEIU Local 32BJ Theatre Division], and the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers. COBUG was formed after the events of 9/11, when every Broadway union and guild took unprecedented action to keep long-running shows from closing.

That cooperative spirit has also fanned out across the U.S. and Canada to help ensure touring Broadway shows are performed under an IA contract. The best and most recent example of such internal IA coordination is NETworks Presentations, LLC, formerly the largest non-union touring company in the nation, which licenses hit shows like Annie, Hairspray, Drowsy Chaperone, and Sweeney Todd after the Broadway hits have run their course for a primary tour.

“NETworks’ business model,” notes International Vice President and Co-Director of Stagecraft Division Brian Lawlor, “was to pick and choose during each touring cycle which shows they would work union, initially offering 50 or perhaps 60 percent of the work they took out on the road. Over the past several years that percentage kept dwindling down, until the last touring cycle when [the IATSE] were only offered one out of their planned six shows working under a pink contract. President Loeb coordinated a full-scale, international effort aimed at bringing NETworks under agreement.”

Lawlor goes on to note that as a result of information shared during weekly Alliance-wide conference calls among all the stagecraft representatives, two simultaneous work actions were planned in Buffalo and Detroit targeting NETworks road shows.

“At that point,” adds DePaulo, “we determined that NETworks would need to go entirely union. The resulting effort showcased tremendous cooperation among all the stage locals. For example, we had planned

the first work action against NETworks for Shreveport [Louisiana], with International Representative Don Gandolini. While ultimately the consensus was not to interrupt the first production [Hairspray] that city had seen since Hurricane Katrina, all of the IA Locals in the area were poised to throw in their support for the effort.”

While Shreveport was opted out, the simultaneous work actions that did occur in Detroit [The Fisher Theater] and in Buffalo [The Shea's Theater] quickly convinced NETworks to sign a two-year term agreement that covered all five of the company's shows on the road for this season, and all the company's product the coming two seasons. The landmark blanket contract addressed weekly run, split-weekly run, and one-night touring shows, in a model that Lawlor says, “will likely be recognized” by NETworks other competitors - roughly half-a-dozen other low-budget touring companies. The model for this agreement was derived from past modified Pink Contracts that were developed to address this type of production under the aggressive organizing instituted by President Emeritus Tom Short.

“The communication and outreach among all the IA stage locals made this kind of success possible in a remarkably short period of time,” Lawlor concludes. “We got the call on the afternoon of March 16th [2009] and by the evening of March 31st negotiations with NETworks had been concluded. The picket lines and handbills lasted just a few hours in each location, and were suspended before that evening's show; that kind of coordination doesn't just happen without a lot of sustained planning and shared information.”

Adds President Loeb: “Widespread communication and coordination amongst locals is a practice that's been going on in film and tradeshow for many years, and is now reaping huge benefits in stagecraft. NETworks was a priority organizing target and

[our] intensive and unrelenting efforts led to a relatively quick and decisively positive outcome.”


CANADA

International Vice-President and Director of Canadian Affairs, John Lewis, has been involved in Canadian labor affairs his entire professional career. An attorney by training, Lewis was the former in-house counsel for a 4,000-member carpenters union in Toronto and while he knows that Canada and the United States have different political and social cultures, he says the concerns of working people on both sides of the border are much the same.

That's why examples of IA locals reaching across the border are so plentiful. The Global Spectrum Agreement (noted above in stagecraft) is the most prominent story of U.S. and Canadian IA locals working in partnership for the greater benefit of the International Alliance. Global Spectrum currently manages six venues in Canada (three in Ontario and three in British Columbia) and Lewis says the International is working with the stage locals to ensure they can service these venues and to negotiate rate sheets under the agreement, adding that, “the London, Ontario venue was actually close to signing an agreement with NASCO, a non-union labor contractor, until the International, working together with Local 105, secured an agreement that started a discussion with Global Spectrum about the idea of an International Agreement covering venues in both countries.”

On the opposite side of the continent, Lewis says Canadian film and TV locals are working hand-in-glove with their American IA counterparts to ensure both sides of the international border shoot union. “In 2006, Local 488 [Studio Mechanics] led by Portland-based business agent Charlie Carlson, and the West Coast Studio locals, all under the direction of for-

mer Motion Picture Production Division Director [now International President] Matt Loeb, struck a feature called Home of the Brave that was shooting in Spokane. The producers, North by North West Productions (NXNW), a formerly non-union low-budget feature mill based in Spokane, and Millennium Films, tried to move it across the border to British Columbia,” Lewis recounts. “But when they got to Vancouver, Locals 891 [Motion Picture Studio Technicians] and 669



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[Camerapersons] refused to crew the show, so the producers were forced to return to Washington State and sign their first-ever IA term agreement.”

A similar joint action prevailed on the 2007 feature, Battle in Seattle. Produced by Kirk Shaw of Insight Productions, a large non-union production company based in British Columbia that specializes in low-budget features, the show needed to shoot several key scenes in Seattle, Washington and IA Local 488 refused to crew the show until Shaw agreed to shoot his next three projects in Vancouver with all IA crews! Local 488 was pleased to be able to return the favor.

“All for One” stories within Canada are actually too numerous to cite, but a few highlights include Locals 667 [International Cinematographers Guild] and 514 [Motion Picture Studio Technicians] in Quebec, working side-

by-side with the International on one of the most intensive and successful organizing drives since the IA first entered Canada. The same goes for when Locals 667 and 411 [Production Coordinators, Craftservice Providers and Honeywagon Operators] assisted the efforts of Local 873 [Motion Picture Studio Technicians] in Toronto to secure agreements with Canadian producers. Lewis says indigenous productions in Canada have traditionally been shot with NABET in Toronto, and “Local 873, working in conjunction with 667 and 411, has made tremendous organizing strides.”

Local 667 is also at the heart of a fight in Eastern Canada that includes Locals 849 [Motion Picture Studio Technicians] and 514 [Motion Picture Studio Technicians]. Lewis notes that the Quebec Producers Association has been attempting to expand their agreements into the Atlantic

Provinces, New Brunswick in particular, which is 50 percent French-speaking. “These three locals, working together, have been successful in fighting this challenge,” Lewis adds. “And no story about mutual cooperation would be complete,” he continues, “without noting the efforts of the New York production locals, along with the efforts of other U.S. motion picture production locals to secure IA agreements in Canada by leveraging Producers. The U.S. locals have helped the International to secure vitally important term agreements here in Canada.”

In fact the Director of Canadian Affairs says his job is increasingly more focused on coordinating cross-border efforts, due to so many U.S. based or international companies trying to drive down wages and conditions with IA locals in Canada after they already have signed more favorable contracts with IA locals in the U.S. One recent example was Kansas City, MO based exhibitor AMC Theaters. Lewis says Local 262 [Operators] certified the front of house and projectionists at a large venue in Montreal, and the International has obtained agreements from the West Coast Office with AMC to assist in the negotiations.

Lewis adds that he's taken part in weekly conference calls with the IA's Motion Picture Division for the last two years, and recently in weekly calls with the Stagecraft Division. Lewis says these calls are instrumental in ensuring the IA is on the same page in both countries and to let employers know that an attack against one is an attack against all.

“As more traditional and mainstream industries in Canada, like the auto sector and the steel industry, continue to be marginalized by the global economic downturn, the large industrial unions here continue to seek out other industries for growth,” Lewis concludes. “We need to be ever mindful of other labor organizations attempting to establish themselves in

traditional IA crafts. And the best method to do this is by having locals on both sides of the border work in cooperation in organizing, so there's no opening for these other labor groups to come in."

TRADE SHOW & DISPLAY

William Gearns, Jr., who was appointed as the Director of Trade Show Division by International President Emeritus Thomas Short ten years ago, worked as a stagehand out of Indianapolis for ten years before becoming Local 30's [Stagehands] business agent and international representative. He says the trade show industry is unique within the Alliance, and that cooperation amongst IA locals, often in adjoining different states and jurisdictions, is vital.

"We have two types of employers in this industry," he explains. "The large general services contractors like Freeman, GES, and Champion, will contract the freight, carpet, pipe and drape, and rental of everything inside the booth. The exhibitor appointed contractors [EACs] typically handle the more skilled labor inside the exhibit. Local 835 [Exhibition Employees] in Orlando has a few dozen agreements with general services contractors and more than 100 with different EACs, and that's just in one city."

Gearns points to a recent joint action by Local 12 [Stagehands] out of Columbus, Ohio, and Local 197 [Stagehands] in Knoxville, TN, against a large Cincinnati-based General Services Contractor (GSC) that's been honored by other IA locals around that region and the country. "Local 12 won an NLRB election to represent the GSC's venues in Local 12's jurisdiction four years ago," Gearns points out. "And two years into the bargaining, we got an economic proposal from the employer that was a 30 percent cut in wages and benefits; over time the employer has subcontracted about 85 percent of the work out to a non-union labor broker. The wage

and benefit rollback, which long predated the economic meltdown, was a punitive measure against Local 12 because they went to the NLRB to achieve a collectively bargained agreement."

Unions in the nation's top two trade show cities have also had to stand together against such hardball tactics. Local 835 in Orlando had a one-day strike in 2005 and the Teamsters honored its picket line; likewise when the Teamsters went on strike in Vegas and all the other unions in the nation's top convention city, including IA Local 720 [Mixed] honored its picket line. In 2006, at the Cincinnati Convention Center, Gearns says the International, acting as co-bargaining agent, was able to get Global Spectrum to place language in the bid [that went out to the subcontracting vendor], which ensured the rigging and A/V work inside the facility would be done under an IA contract.

Working together to achieve political objectives has become a way of life for IA Unions in Central Florida, where Local 631 [Stagehands] treasurer, Kimberly Bowles, a former chairman of the Democratic Party in Orange County, has used her political

access to coordinate with the interests of Local 835 [Exhibition Employees]. No surprise really, as the ties between exhibition workers and stagehands have always run deep – cities with stand-alone IA exhibition unions, most notably Locals 829 in New York City, 834 in Atlanta, 835 in Orlando, and 838 in Salt Lake City, were all formed as outgrowths of existing stagehands locals.

Clearly one of the biggest organizing challenges in the trade show game is the presence of so many different unions vying for the same work. For example, one union, like the Teamsters in Las Vegas, will dominate the tradeshow work, while in Los Angeles the painter's union has much of the interior general services under contract. In some cities, like Chicago, the jurisdiction is carved up among multiple unions. "You'll see five or six unions on the trade show floor in Chicago putting the show in, with the IA typically doing all of the theatrical elements, along with the general session convention work," Gearns notes. "The nature of the trade show also plays into it: electronics, broadcasting, and technology shows require more skilled labor than a nurse's conven-

tion, for example, so the IA will typically have a larger presence."

Either way, Gearns says it's essential for IA locals to work together to combat the industry's many regional non-union labor brokers, some of whom have become so big, they've bought their own equipment and gone into competition with the general services contractors that originally hired them, to try and avoid working union!

Thankfully, the impact of the IA General Office has been substantial.

"Since the International formed this division, and became co-bargaining agents," Gearns continues, "the trade show locals have secured more collectively bargained agreements, rather than just rate sheet agreements that typically float around, mainly in the secondary or tertiary markets. Because there are now international reps on the scene, the large national employers are less inclined to take advantage of our individual locals. Much like what happened in the motion picture industry [before the Area Standards Agreement], the various trade show locals were being played against each other in a dive to the bottom. With the International on-board, we now have hundreds of these collectively bargained agreements covering trade show facilities from coast-to-coast."

It should be noted that the creation of the various Divisions within the IATSE, and a solid foundation for inter-union cooperation and coordination was laid by International President Emeritus Thomas C. Short; and while International President Matthew Loeb notes, "there is still much to do in embedding the notion of mutual assistance into the everyday activities of the IA, there is a clear plan to do so, and I owe much to my predecessor." Loeb goes on to say that he is, "fully committed to strengthening the Alliance through broad-based solidarity," calling it, "a top priority."

In fact, many of the above "All For One" examples are just a portion

of the stories across the breadth of the Alliance, and they all illustrate what President Loeb calls, "a defined synergy between the many crafts, industries and regions," in which IATSE men and women are employed. The approach is essential, given an age that, irrespective of industry sector – stage, screen, or convention floor – has grown to become dominated by a handful of corporate giants.

"There's no doubt this union is at its most powerful when our members communicate, cooperate, and consolidate our power base," Loeb emphasizes. "Seizing opportunities and adapting are the keys to success on a broad basis, regardless of what aspect of the entertainment industry we're talking about. And part of positioning ourselves for this success is the realization that Locals must work together, through coordination at the International level, to pool their information, resources and strengths, and that they must be ever-cognizant of just how essential this type of approach really is."

To be sure; that "One For All, All For One" mindset, which formed the foundation of Dumas' classic 19th Century tale of honor, glory, and friendship, still resonates throughout our Union today, whether it's a small band of wardrobe workers in Seattle fighting to unionize their theater, or an entire Vancouver film production refusing to crew up a show that had been moved across the border specifically to avoid shooting union. It's a spirit of cooperation that, in many ways, reflects the changing social and political tenor of our times.

As President Loeb concludes: "I think the many examples of our Union men and women, at both the rank and file and administrative level, working in mutual harmony with each other drives home a point that cannot ever be stressed too much in this modern age: the very best way to achieve professional gain and benefit for every single IA member is through the shared and mutual endeavors of the entire Alliance. One for all and all for one is not just a good concept; for this Union it must be a way of life."

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