



INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF THEATRICAL STAGE EMPLOYEES LOCAL 118 – VANCOUVER, CANADA

April 11, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE: VSO STRIKE NOTICE

For the first time in our local's 118-year history, we have filed a 72-hour strike notice.

IATSE Local 118, which represents over 400 stagehands and theatre technicians at dozens of live event venues across Vancouver, filed strike notice today on behalf of workers employed by the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra.

VSO stagehands have been without a contract since June 30th, 2022. On February 23rd, 2023, members voted **97.5% in favour** of job action, with a record-high 92% turnout.

Following the vote, both parties returned to the table - but the VSO came back with an offer *lower* than the one they last offered in mediation. The VSO also reopened discussion on the Cost of Living Adjustment clause that has been in this collective agreement since the 1970s.

To add insult to injury, the VSO is arguing that the cost of living adjustment owed to us at the end of the 2021-2022 collective agreement counts as a rate increase for the 2022-2023 year - which simply isn't accurate.

“We are truly disappointed that it has come to this. Our relationship with the VSO goes back decades. We made it through the stagflation of the 1970s together, we supported them through the 1980s when they almost went bankrupt, we made it through the 2008 recession and through the COVID-19 pandemic. To see new leadership come in and throw away all that history for a few pennies is really just heartbreaking.”

- Diana Bartosh, IATSE 118 Vice-President

IATSE 118 has not yet disclosed what job action might be upcoming but has launched the website [Stagehands on Strike](#) calling for public support.

For press inquiries, please contact the IATSE 118 Executive Board at executive@iatse118.com.