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LA Lawyers Put Objections Aside to Make Music

No objections sustained when the LA Lawyers Philharmonic decides it's time to play

By **JOHN ROGERS** Associated Press Writer
LOS ANGELES December 28, 2009 (AP)

The Associated Press
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If a defense attorney, a prosecutor and a judge were to walk into a music hall what would be the first thing they'd do?



In this photo taken on Monday, Sept. 21, 2009, the Los Angeles Lawyers Philharmonic, "L.A.'s Only... (AP)

"Spend a half-hour arguing legal motions," veteran Los Angeles lawyer David Waller says one of his colleagues told him when he learned Waller would be toting his cello to a rehearsal of the fledgling Los Angeles Lawyers Philharmonic Orchestra.

But there was no time for that on this night.

The orchestra had just two hours to run through Johannes Brahms' "Hungarian Dance No. 5," Edvard Grieg's "Triumphal March" and a rousing John Philip Sousa number, followed by a couple more

classical and pops pieces.

In just a few days the group's 60-plus members would be decked out in black tie, playing their biggest gig to date — the grand opening of the Los Angeles County Bar Association's new downtown office. Not that anyone in the ensemble of brass, woodwind, string and percussion sections seemed to be showing any nervousness.

"We're not just a bunch of lawyers playing music. We're actually a good orchestra," maestro Gary S. Greene, who organized the ensemble earlier this year, said confidently before putting his players through their paces.

Greene, a litigation attorney, didn't threaten to sue anyone who intruded on anyone else's solo. But he did bring his baton down quickly whenever various musicians wandered off to the beat of their own drummer during the rehearsal at Wilshire United Methodist Church, a cavernous but acoustically stunning old cathedral in a particularly tony section of Los Angeles' west side.

"Blend. Play softly. That's where I want everybody soft so you can hear the trombone," Greene implored as they struggled with a challenging selection from the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical "The King and I."

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A few minutes later one could hear the crash of a music stand as it vibrated off an elevated rehearsal stage and came smashing down on the brass section.

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