

Dear ivory bassoon bell owners,

Yes, I have had many enquiries and below you can find what I know. I have not heard of anyone having any problems with a bassoon. I travel to Europe every year and have never had a customs official go through my stuff. I think the real risk is low but the knowledge that an official could smash a bell is real and scary.

I can replace the ivory with a nice synthetic ivory. It does not look like the traditional white plastic but has a grain and a texture that is ivory like. On close inspection it does look like a synthetic. I must have the bell to make the ring. Each bassoon is different and it is difficult to get the ivory ring off without splitting the wood. The cost is around \$250 but varies with the tenacity of the old glue and ivory.

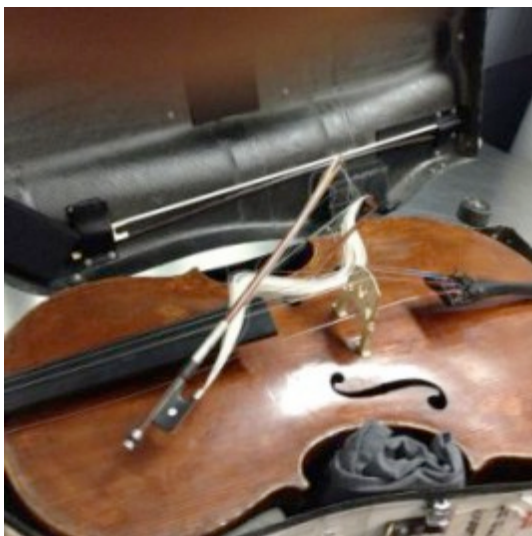
Good traveling to all,

Keith Bowen

Dear Colleague,

I'm writing to make you aware of an urgent policy development. If your orchestra engages international artists, or your musicians travel internationally as individuals, this will matter to you. If your orchestra tours internationally, this development will most certainly concern you.

On February 25, 2014, new strict limits immediately took effect for traveling internationally with instruments that contain African elephant ivory. Following a new Obama Administration effort to protect African elephants from poaching by combatting illegal trade in ivory, the director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) ordered strict enforcement procedures related to the Endangered Species Act and the African Elephant Conservation Act.



According to the order, many instruments containing African elephant ivory will not be allowed into the U.S., even if a musician is simply returning to the U.S. with instruments in their personal possession, not intended for sale. Under the rules, a musical instrument that contains African elephant ivory may only be brought into the U.S. if it meets all of the following criteria: Was legally acquired prior to February 26, 1976; Has not subsequently been transferred from one person to another person for financial gain or profit since February 26, 1976; The person or group qualifies for a CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) musical instrument certificate; and The musical instrument containing African elephant ivory is accompanied by a valid CITES musical instrument certificate or an equivalent CITES document.

A great many professional orchestra musicians, particularly string players, perform with instruments that contain small amounts of ivory, most frequently found in the tips of bows. Most of these musical instruments, while legally manufactured and acquired, would have been purchased after 1976, and will now be prohibited from entering into the U.S.

Still others that have not been sold since 1976 may be missing key documentation. While the timeline for strict enforcement of this policy at U.S. borders is uncertain, it could occur at any time. The League is in ongoing dialogue with federal officials to seek a solution that addresses wildlife conservation goals while also protecting international musical activity that requires musicians to travel across borders with the essential tools of their trade.

We need your help. Please complete this survey to provide us with information that will help us make the case. Become aware of the rules for travelling with instruments containing endangered species material. We have posted background on the new ivory ban as well as detailed guidance on the existing CITES rules for travel with items that contain other protected species, such as tortoise shell and rosewood. Contact the League's Washington, D.C. office with questions. We are working to get all of the answers we can. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and your ongoing partnership as we work on your behalf.

Sincerely,

Jesse Rosen President and CEO, League of American Orchestras