

## Haynes and Boone Office Turns to Houston Symphony to Commemorate Whimsical Occasion

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April 26, 2019 Ricardo Garcia-Moreno

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For the past decade, lawyers in the Houston office of Haynes Boone have had a unique tradition started by retired finance Partner Theresa Einhorn of banging an ornamental gong on the 20th floor when their teams closed a big transaction. The instrument embodies the troupe of characters in the firm's Houston office – particularly Partner Buddy Clark, who is known for his annual April Fools' Day art installations.

For this April Fools' Day, Buddy decided to replace the ornamental gong with a majestic handcrafted musical gong from Nepal that would make a stronger statement in the office – and a better sound.

“Our original gong wasn't meant to be played, it was mainly decorative. Rather than ring out, it would go ‘thunk,’ which was not a pleasing sound. But it was all we had for a number of years, so we kept it,” Buddy said.

He turned to “the exotic mystical land of eBay” to find a brass gong worthy of celebratory events. Buddy, who is a woodworker in his spare time, took things a step further by constructing a large wooden frame to hold the 22-inch gong. He painted the frame with black lacquer and adorned it with gold Chinese characters ??<sup>1</sup>, which represent the name of the firm's Shanghai office.

Buddy's plan: to inaugurate the new gong on April Fools' Day, with the help of an expert who could teach how to properly play a gong.

“I wanted the team to understand and appreciate the art of playing a gong as a symphonic instrument,” he said.

Buddy asked John Magnum, the Houston Symphony's CEO, and his sister, Janet Clark, the Symphony's President, if a percussionist (with a good sense of humor and patience) might be available to help his team members master the technique of playing a gong.

For the unveiling of the new instrument, Principal Percussionist Brian del Signore came to the Houston office along with John and Janet and tutored the team on different styles of playing the gong. (Click [here](#) to watch a short video of del Signore with Buddy.)

Over the past month, the team has used the new gong to hail several closings, Buddy said, adding that the youngest person on the team typically gets to hit the gong. “People here not only like to celebrate their successes but also others' successes,” he said.

Anyone is welcomed to use it for whatever purpose they deem appropriate. “Some just walk by and bang it whenever they like,” Buddy explained. “[Tim Powers](#) opened our last board meeting with it, too.”

Another character in the office, Administrative Partner [Ricardo Garcia-Moreno](#), likes to use the gong to announce his arrival to the office in the mornings.

<sup>1</sup> Albert Tan explained the origin of the firm's Shanghai name. 海博 translates to "Hai Bo." "Hai" means "sea," and "Bo" means "abundant; plentiful; rich." "Bo" can also be used as a verb in Chinese to mean "to have a wide knowledge of; to be well-read." While 海博 is not a Chinese word that has a specific meaning by itself, it conveys an impression of grandeur, knowledgeable and resourcefulness."