

For Immediate Release

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IPO Announces 2016-17 Season and Music Director Candidate Finalists

Six Concert Season Includes Programs Led by the Five Finalists Plus a Holiday Offering

PARK FOREST, March 4, 2016 -

The Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra Board of Directors is pleased to announce the names of the Music Director candidate finalists who will guest conduct five of the six 2016-17 season concerts.

After an extensive search process which began in June 2015, the IPO Conductor Search Committee narrowed the field to five extraordinary conductors, from a field of almost 200 from around the globe. They are, in order of appearance:

- **Holly Mathieson**, Resident Conductor of the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland Junior Orchestra; Founder and Artistic Director of the Horizont Musik-Kollektiv (Berlin); recipient of the Leverhulme Fellowship at the Royal Conservatoire
- **Alastair Willis**, Grammy-nominated Music Director of the Illinois Symphony Orchestra; Guest Conductor for the Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, China National Orchestra and Silk Road Ensemble (with Yo-Yo Ma)
- **Stilian Kirov**, Music Director of the Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra and Symphony in C; 2015 Malko Competition prizewinner
- **Darko Butorac**, Music Director of the Tallahassee and Missoula Symphony Orchestras; Principal Conductor of the Fidenza Opera Festival in Italy
- **Sean Newhouse**, Winner of the Aspen Conducting Prize and major prizes at the Fitelberg and Malko competitions; former Assistant Conductor of the Boston and Indianapolis Symphony Orchestras

The Search Committee was comprised of IPO board members, IPO musicians, community members and Executive Director Eska Koester, and was advised by

Henry Fogel, Dean of the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University and former President and CEO of the League of American Orchestras and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Full conductor candidate bios can be found at jpomusic.org.

The 2016-17 Season includes the following programs:

**2016-17 Season Opening Night
BEETHOVEN 3 AND THE MEANING OF LIFE**

Saturday, October 15, 2016, 7:30PM

GSU Center for Performing Arts

1 University Parkway, University Park, IL

Holly Mathieson, Conductor

IVES *The Unanswered Question*

SIBELIUS Violin Concerto with Guest Artist Stefan Milenkovich, Violin

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 3 (*Eroica*)

The IPO's 39th season debuts with New Zealand-born Maestra Holly Mathieson, who currently serves as the Resident Conductor of the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland Junior Orchestra. Ms. Mathieson will be leading a program that guarantees to pluck at the heartstrings beginning with Ives' haunting and poignant work. Next, guest violinist Stefan Milenkovich joins the IPO for Sibelius' thrilling violin concerto, a signature work by the Finnish master. The second half of the program is dedicated to Beethoven's revolutionary third symphony (the "Heroic"), one of the greatest symphonies in the entire repertoire.

A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC

Saturday, November 19, 2016, 7:30PM

Lincoln-Way West Performing Arts Center

21701 Gougar Rd., New Lenox

Alastair Willis, Conductor

BORODIN *In the Steppes of Central Asia*

TCHAIKOVSKY Piano Concerto No. 1, with Guest Artist William Wolfram, Piano

BARTOK Concerto for Orchestra

November brings conductor candidate finalist Alastair Willis to the IPO stage. Grammy-nominated Willis opens the program with vivid musical pictures from Borodin's 1880 work representing the Russian troops and the people of the steppe. American pianist William Wolfram then joins the orchestra for Tchaikovsky's famous first piano concerto, among the all-time favorites with audiences around the world. The evening continues with Bartok's dramatic Concerto for Orchestra, a dazzling orchestral showpiece that will display the IPO's virtuosity.

WINTER WONDERLAND HOLIDAY CONCERT

Saturday, December 17, 2016, 3PM

Lincoln-Way West Performing Arts Center, 21701 Gougar Rd., New Lenox

Francesco Milioto, Guest Conductor

Guest Conductor Francesco Milioto makes his debut with the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra for our very family-friendly Winter Wonderland Holiday Concert returning to its 3PM Saturday matinee time. Maestro will lead the orchestra in familiar favorites from *The Nutcracker*, featuring dancers from Ballet 5:8 and Vivaldi's "Winter" from *The Four Seasons* along with other seasonal classics. In the second half, the orchestra will bring the music from the beloved children's book and movie, *The Polar Express*, to life. The afternoon is sure to fill all kids and kids at heart with plenty of holiday spirit. (And children's tickets are just \$5 each!)

SLAVIC SOUL

Saturday, January 21, 2017, 7:30PM

Lincoln-Way East Performing Arts Center, 201 Colorado Ave., Frankfort

Stilian Kirov, Conductor

KODALY *Dances of Galanta*

LIGETI *Concert Romanesc*

RACHMANINOFF Piano Concerto No. 3 with Guest Artist Sean Chen, Piano

The IPO rings in the new year with conductor candidate Stilian Kirov, Music Director of the Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra and Symphony in C, with an exciting program of Eastern European works. Kodaly, like his peer Bartok, was a master of incorporating Hungarian folk melodies into his compositions, and the *Dances of Galanta* are no exception. Written as recruiting songs to show a soldier's life as endless "fun," these dances will delight. Similarly, Ligeti's work draws on his Transylvanian heritage with tuneful folk melodies. Closing the evening is Rachmaninoff's demanding Piano Concerto No. 3, featuring guest pianist Sean Chen. This work took center stage in the movie *Shine*, the true story of Australian concert pianist David Helfgott. Rachmaninoff's piece is one of the most challenging of all Romantic-era concertos...and the most exhilarating. Truly, this concert will set your soul on fire!

OPPOSITES ATTRACT

Saturday, February 25, 2017, 7:30PM

Lincoln-Way West Performing Arts Center, 21701 Gougar Rd., New Lenox

Darko Butorac, Conductor

VERDI *La forza del destino* Overture

MOZART Sinfonia Concertante

with Guest Artists Jasmine Lin, Violin and Matthew Lipman, Viola

PROKOFIEV Symphony No. 5

Maestro Darko Butorac takes the stage to deliver a program of considerable contrasts. He is currently Music Director of the Missoula Symphony Association and the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra. Excerpted from Verdi's tangled tale, *La forza del destino*, the overture introduces multiple melodies from the charming Italian opera.

Soloists Jasmine Lin and Matthew Lipman, who both hail from the Chicago Southland, appear together on Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante, which is considered one of his early masterpieces. This work features unusually rich symphonic texture and is a study in contrasts with the viola tuned a semi-tone higher than normal. On the program's second half, Maestro Butorac says of Prokofiev's fifth symphony, "This is a work of incredible positive energy written during one of the darkest periods of human history, deeply affected by the Second World War." Even while knowing its dark roots, your spirit cannot help but soar as you listen to "A hymn to the free and happy man."

Season Finale

AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES

Saturday, April 8, 2017, 7:30PM

Lincoln-Way East Performing Arts Center, 201 Colorado Ave., Frankfort

Sean Newhouse, Conductor

COPLAND *Buckaroo Holiday*

EDGAR MEYER Violin Concerto with Guest Artist Tessa Lark, Violin

DVORAK Symphony No. 9 "New World"

In the Season Finale, Maestro Sean Newhouse, former Assistant Conductor of the Boston and Indianapolis Symphony Orchestras, leads the IPO in a captivating musical journey from "sea to shining sea." All three of these works were written in America, but by composers of diverse backgrounds. The American-born Copland's *Buckaroo Holiday* instantly conjures up images of the historical American West, while virtuoso double bassist Edgar Meyer's captivating and touching Violin Concerto marries an earthy, folk-like feel with toe-tapping contemporary rhythms. Dvorak's Ninth Symphony, written during his American sojourn, embodies the inspiration he found in African-American spirituals and American Indian legends, as well as the musical heritage of his Czech homeland and the German symphonic tradition. Kentucky-born Tessa Lark joins the IPO for Meyer's Concerto.

Subscriptions are now on sale, including a Music Lovers All-6-Concert option and an introductory "You-Pick-3" offering for first time subscribers. Details are online at ipomusic.org or call [708.481.7774](tel:708.481.7774) to request a Season Preview flyer and subscription form.

PHOTO CAPTION: The Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra announces its 39th season featuring the five Music Director Candidate Finalists who will conduct five of the six 2016-17 Season concerts.

ABOUT THE ILLINOIS PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

The IPO is YOUR Orchestra in YOUR Community! Entering its 38th season, the IPO is the only professional orchestra in the Chicago Southland. Under the baton of the charismatic, Austrian-born Maestro David Danzmayr, the IPO performs a season of 7 concerts at its home venue of Lincoln-Way North Performing Arts Center in Frankfort with an additional 3 matinee performances at the beautiful Rialto Square Theatre in Joliet.

The IPO also stands by its commitment to music education, reaching over 3,000 students with its annual Youth Concerts, as well as sending small ensembles into area schools through its Artists in the Schools program. Further, the IPO offers \$5 student tickets (with ID) to any student grade school through college.

For more information, visit ipomusic.org.

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