

IPO Names 25-Year-Old Oswald Huýnh As Next IPO Composer-in-Residence

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By way of an innovative competition, Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra has found a future Composer-in-Residence in Oswald Huýnh.

Nearly 100 composers from across the nation submitted their original work to be considered for one of the three finalist slots in IPO's 4th annual *Classical Evolve* competition. Of those three finalists, 25-year-old Oswald Huýnh of Portland, Oregon emerged the victor. As a result of his selection, Huýnh will serve as IPO's Composer-in-Residence for the 2023/24 season and see three of his original pieces make their World Premiere as part of IPO's regular season concert programming.

Huýnh was named after he, along with finalists Aaron Mencher (La Jolla, CA) and Max Vinetz (Princeton, NJ), had his submission workshopped and then performed by IPO last Thursday in front of a live audience at the Marg Kallemeyn Theatre at Trinity Christian College. Esteemed composers James Stephenson, Hans Thomalla, and Lita Grier served as judges and they, along with IPO Maestro Stilian Kirov, had the difficult task of sorting through the three works to determine a winner. A collective audience vote, as well as a collective musician vote, also factored into naming Huýnh IPO's next Composer-in-Residence.

"The whole experience was so much fun," said an emotional Huýnh on the heels of the live announcement. *"Stilian did such an amazing job working with the orchestra and working with us composers. Even though it was only three very short hours, it felt very collaborative. The orchestra was very responsive to everyone's music."*

"This is an incredible opportunity for composers and I'm so glad it's happening. I think it's so important that new music be advocated for because at one point, everyone was new. Beethoven was new, Bach was new, so I think it's a tradition we need to continue pushing for. Orchestra is my favorite medium to write for, so to be able to continue doing that is an amazing opportunity for me. I'm really excited to work with IPO next season."

Classical Evolve is the brainchild of IPO Music Director Stilian Kirov.

"Our goal is to provide young American composers with opportunities to create, grow and

learn while being part of a vibrant professional organization,” says Kirov. “As IPO’s Composer-in-Residence for one year, the winner will have their original works performed by IPO on a regular basis. This, along with experimenting and interacting with our outstanding musicians, should offer extremely valuable experience that will hopefully give these composers the tools to lead American classical music into a very bright, exciting future!”

IPO’s *Classical Evolve* composer competition is open to all US citizens or permanent residents who have had no more than two original compositions performed by a professional orchestra in their career. Previous winners include Ben Ash, Martha Horst and 2021 winner Jonathan Cziner, who will premiere three of his works with IPO during this upcoming 2022/23 season.

ABOUT ILLINOIS PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

IPO celebrates its 45th anniversary season in 2022/23. Under the leadership of Music Director Stilian Kirov and Christina Salerno (2022 Illinois Council of Orchestras ‘Executive Director of the Year), the mission of IPO is to provide compelling professional symphonic music, support music education, and expand audience awareness of musical excellence for the diverse communities of the greater Chicago region.

During this milestone anniversary season, the three-time Illinois Council of Orchestras “Professional Orchestra of the Year” will perform several classical concerts at their home venue, Ozinga Chapel at Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, IL. In addition, the orchestra performs a myriad of educational youth offerings each year via their educational arm - The Marilyn Tannebaum Educational Institute. IPO also performs an annual summer chamber series, IPO Summer @ Olympia Fields Country Club.

From its community orchestra roots in Park Forest, the 69-member orchestra has grown into a critically acclaimed professional regional orchestra. Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra is supported in part by the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelly Foundation, Ozinga Foundation, the Walder Foundation, Gerhard Manufacturing and Design, Northern Trust, and the Illinois Arts Council Agency. For more information, visit ipomusic.org.

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