

Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra Reaches Multi-year Contract Extensions With Music Director and Musicians

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Park Forest, IL – With Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra’s milestone 45th anniversary season getting underway this fall, the organization is excited to share two incredible milestones. Led by Executive Director Christina Salerno, IPO has reached long-term agreements with both Music Director Stilian Kirov and the IPO musicians.

“IPO is committed to both collaboration and innovation, and we are very excited to embark upon our 45th Anniversary Season with renewal commitments in place between IPO, our talented musicians, and our incredible music director,” states Salerno. *“With energy and enthusiasm, we look forward to working together to create many more years of fine classical music experiences for our community.”*



Stilian Kirov, current Music Director and one of the most popular Maestros in IPO history, has agreed to a 4-year contract extension. The new deal keeps the beloved Maestro on the IPO podium through the 2026-2027 season, bringing his total time with IPO at that point to ten years. This new contract marks the second time IPO has renewed Kirov.

“Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra is excited to celebrate four more years of Maestro Kirov’s exciting and adventurous leadership as its music director,” says Kathleen Field Orr, Immediate Past President of IPO Board of Directors who was involved in the negotiations. *“Given Maestro’s accomplishments these past years, we are certain that the orchestra will continue to achieve even newer heights as the premier presenter of classical music in the Southland.”*

“I am very happy to continue working with our Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra and I am thrilled to keep building our organization together,” says Kirov. *“We have a stellar IPO team with our fantastic musicians, administration, and board as well as our exceptional Executive Director Christina Salerno. IPO is a real musical family and performing for our audiences has been a true privilege. I look forward to a bright future with exciting projects and many unforgettable concerts!”*

IPO has thrived under Kirov’s direction and grown in ways never before imagined. Along with expanding commitments to American music and underrepresented composers, and cementing IPO’s commitment to music education for area youth, Kirov has achieved some major accomplishments including the introduction

of the highly popular, nationally acclaimed *Classical Evolve* composer competition as well as IPO's first professional recording and album release with Cedille Records (release date TBD). Additionally, Kirov has overseen fifteen IPO world premieres during his tenure, is helping to lead an exciting co-commission with Anima-Glen Ellyn Children's Chorus, and is partaking in a NewMusic USA consortium bringing Vijay Iyer's *Human Archipelago* with cellist Inbal Segev to the stage this upcoming season.

Kirov's accomplishments aren't limited to the stage, as they reach well beyond the concert hall. In his time thus far with IPO, he has helped raise the regional profile of IPO, vastly increased board membership, and helped secure IPO's first seven figure endowment gift.

Along with signing Kirov to a long-term deal, IPO and the **Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra Musicians' Committee** have come together on a new 3-year collective bargaining agreement (CBA) for the musicians that extends through the 2024-2025 season.

Highlights of the new CBA include a 12.5% increase in base pay rates across the term, increased collaboration between musicians and management to expand the variety and availability of small ensemble concerts, adopted changes to recruitment, audition, and retention procedures to address equity and inclusion at IPO, and updated Covid-19 Wellness Protocols, aimed at keeping musicians healthy and performances live. In a first for per-service orchestras in our region, musicians will now be able to accrue a limited amount of sick time.

"We are pleased to have reached a new three-year agreement with the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra that recognizes the contributions of our musicians and allows us to continue providing music to Chicago's Southland," notes Caroline Slack, Chair of the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra Musicians' Committee. *"We are proud that the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra is committed to creating a sustainable future for the orchestra in our community, and we look forward to continued collaboration to ensure the orchestra's artistic growth."*

Barbara Sturges, President of IPO Board of Directors, shares Slack's enthusiasm. *"I am thrilled to be involved with this vibrant group of musicians who have agreed to continue working with IPO. Their faith in our organization has been enhanced by our ability to navigate through the pandemic. We are all looking forward to many more wonderful seasons of live music!"*

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ABOUT ILLINOIS PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

IPO celebrates its 45th anniversary season in 2022-23. Under the leadership of Music Director Stilian Kirov and Executive Director Christina Salerno, 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, IPO 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.

Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra is supported in part by the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelly Foundation and the Illinois Arts Council Agency. For more information, visit ipomusic.org.

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