



**ILLINOIS PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA  
CELEBRATES 70<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF ORIGIN**  
*Three-time Professional Orchestra of the Year Celebrates  
Its 70 Years of History*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024**

**Park Forest, IL** – July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024, will mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the day the Park Forest Symphony signed Articles of Incorporation beginning what would later become the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra. So, in a strange twist of events, this summer Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra will celebrate its 70<sup>th</sup> year of existence BEFORE it performs its upcoming 47<sup>th</sup> season.

The Park Forest Symphony performed with volunteer musicians from its inception until the 1978/79 season, when Maestro Tim Gareth Bobinsky took the baton and the organization reformed into a professional chamber orchestra, slightly altering its name to become the Park Forest Orchestra. The third and final name change came in 1982 when the orchestra was renamed to better reflect its regional mission, officially becoming the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra.

Initially performing at Freedom Hall in Park Forest, as the orchestra outgrew its original home, new Music Director Robert Frisbie led the newly named IPO into two new performance venues in Bloom High School's Workman Auditorium and Homewood-Flossmoor High School's Mal Auditorium. It wasn't until the fall of 1996 that IPO took up residence at the Center for the Performing Arts at Governors State University (GSU) in University Park. In 2008, the orchestra began a new residency at the Lincoln-Way North Performing Arts Center in Frankfort, a regionally centralized location. Today, the 1,100 seat, state-of-the-art Ozinga Chapel performance venue on the grounds of Trinity Christian College in Palos Heights, IL is IPO's primary concert home, with a return to GSU in October 2024 for "Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street."

Instrumental to IPO's growing success was the naming of Carmon DeLeone as Music Director in 1986. During DeLeone's 25-year tenure, IPO expanded its Artists-in-Schools Education Program to include interactive Youth Concerts. IPO now reaches over 4,000 students annually through the Marilynn Tannebaum Youth Music Education Institute. DeLeone continued his mastery with IPO until May 2011, when David Danzmayr became Music Director and DeLeone assumed role of IPO Conductor Laureate.

Today, IPO is led by Gibb Music Director Stilian Kirov, along with Executive Director Christina Salerno, and has swelled to 69 professional musicians.



Over the years, IPO has received many coveted awards for artistic excellence, including being named as the Illinois Council of Orchestras "Illinois Professional Orchestra of the Year" three times in 1991, 2010 and again in 2020. Additionally, Christina Salerno was named ICO's "Executive Director of the Year" in 2020.

IPO will celebrate its 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of origin all summer long with numerous live concerts including their regular IPO Summer @ Olympia Fields Country Club chamber concert series, a four-concert series taking place June through August, the fourth annual Flossmoor Chamber Night on Thursday, July 25<sup>th</sup> and a special appearance at Frankfort Fine Arts Fest on Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup>. All concerts are open to the public. Concert information is available at [IPOmusic.org](http://IPOmusic.org).

### **ABOUT ILLINOIS PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA**

*The 2023/24 concert season marked the 46<sup>th</sup> for Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra, the three-time Illinois Council of Orchestras "Professional Orchestra of the Year." Under the leadership of Gibb 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 the upcoming 2024/25 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 Youth Music Education 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, Gerhard Manufacturing and Design, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Illinois Arts Council. For more information, visit [IPOmusic.org](http://IPOmusic.org).*

### **MEDIA INQUIRIES:**

Ken Churilla – IPO Marketing & Communications Director  
708.481.7774  
[kchurilla@ipomusic.org](mailto:kchurilla@ipomusic.org)