

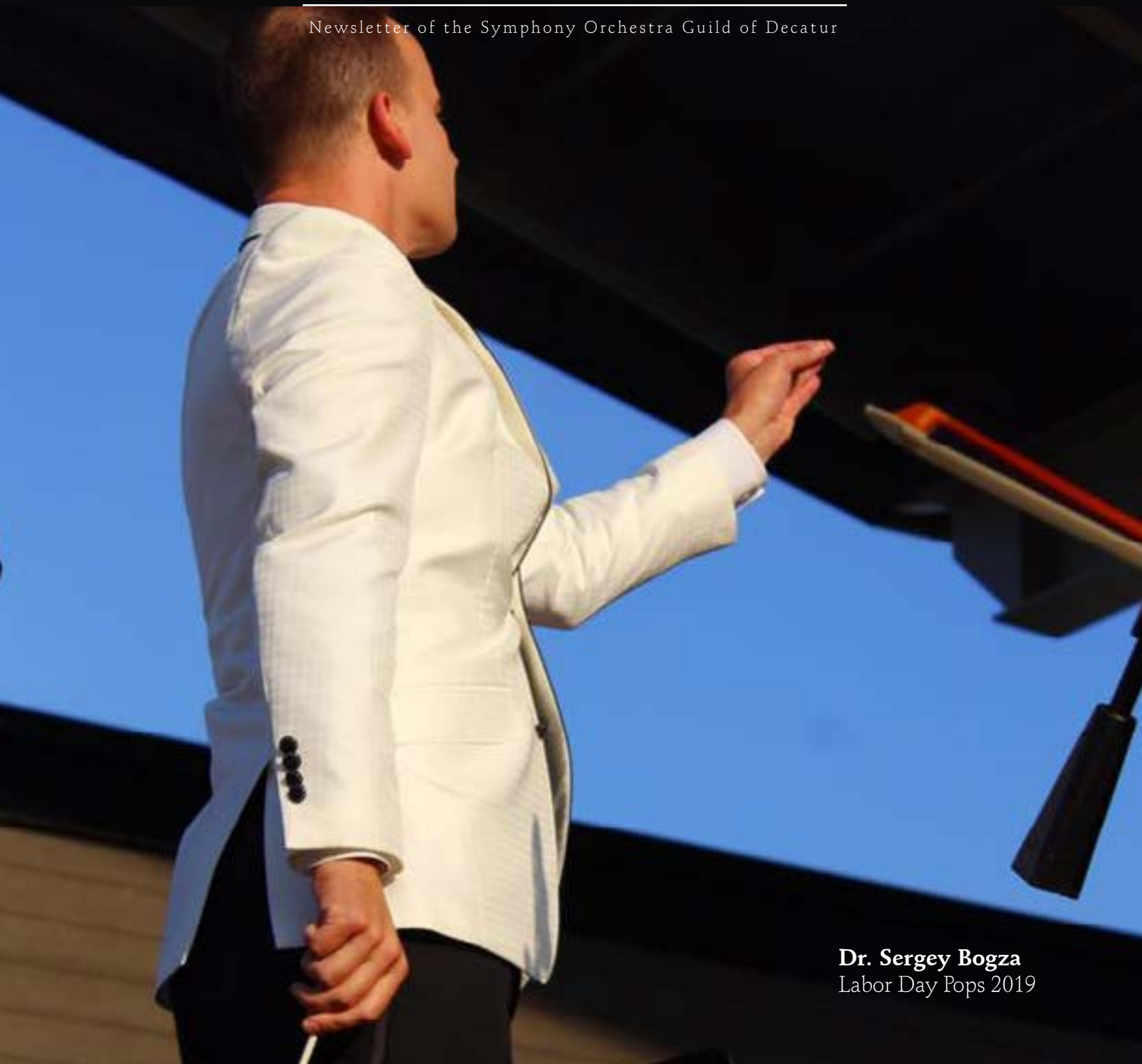
September 2019

ISSUE 01

2019/2020 season

# Overture

Newsletter of the Symphony Orchestra Guild of Decatur



**Dr. Sergey Bogza**  
Labor Day Pops 2019

## MASTERWORKS I

Stravinsky's Rite of Spring, Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1  
Saturday, Saturday 21, 2019 | Kirkland Fine Arts Center

# WELCOME



Please accept a warm welcome to guild members and friends of the guild to the 72nd continuous season of the Millikin-Decatur Symphony Orchestra and the 46th year of the Symphony Orchestra Guild of Decatur. This is going to be a very exciting year.

The annual Labor Day Pops Concert was held at The Devon Amphitheater in Nelson Park on September 2. The concert was underwritten this year by Ramona Borders as her gift to the community. Ramona has been a loyal and generous Symphony Orchestra Guild Board member for over 30 years, sharing her time, talents, and gifts. We thank Ramona for this exceptional gift for our enjoyment.

The Devon Amphitheater sits along the shore of Lake Decatur in Nelson Park. It is owned and operated by the Decatur Park District and was made possible by a generous donation from the Howard G. Buffett Foundation. The Devon is having its inaugural season this year and enjoying the support of the Decatur community. It is an amazing venue, the exceptional sound quality, seating, and concessions provides a memorable and enjoyable experience for the audience. The Millikin-Decatur Symphony Orchestra under the leadership of Dr. Sergey Bogza, Music Director and Conductor, provided a delightful evening of show tunes, patriotic favorites, and a taste of Masterworks concerts. Attendance for this event was just over 1,000 people according

to the Park District. It was a wonderful evening, and I hope you all enjoyed it as much as we did.

As you know, the Symphony Orchestra Guild of Decatur is an independent, non-profit organization that supports the Millikin-Decatur Symphony Orchestra, the Decatur Youth Symphony Orchestra, and young musicians in our community through our music education initiative. The support for these programs is made possible through the generosity of guild members, donors, advertisers, and sponsors in the Decatur area. On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, please accept our appreciation and sincere thanks for your continued support.

We are looking forward to the start of the season and the Masterworks I concert on September 21, 2019. We particularly want to welcome Ilya Yakushev back to Decatur, and we look forward to his performance of *Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1* with MDSO. I hope to see you at Kirkland this season.

Sincerely,

**Peggy Ruff**  
President,  
Symphony Orchestra Guild  
of Decatur



# FROM THE CONDUCTOR



It seems that it was only yesterday that the orchestra was preparing for its season-opener. Fast forward 10 months, and the last concert of the season just a few weeks away, I can't help but ask, how did time pass so quickly? Shared by millions of musicians and concert-attendees around the world at the end of a successful season, such a reaction is often the evidence of time spent pursuing one's passion and artistic excellence. Please accept my deep sense of gratitude for being a tremendous audience and showing appreciation for the artistic growth of the orchestra and its innovative approach to concert programming.

See you at the Symphony,

**Dr. Sergey Bogza**

Music Director  
and Conductor

## PRE-CONCERT TALKS

One hour prior to each Masterworks performance, concertgoers are invited to attend informal pre-concert conversations to guide you through the music you are about to hear, providing an enlightening look at the repertoire and composers. Held in Kirkland's lower lobby. Hosted by Dr. Sergey Bogza.

## 2019-2020 SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA GUILD BOARD

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Labor Day Photos courtesy of  
nowdecatur.com

2019/2020 season

# MASTERWORKS I

## Stravinsky's **Rite of Spring**

Saturday, September 21, 7:30 pm

By Valeria Chavez Roncal

James Millikin Scholar  
Class of '21

Since 1913, audiences have been captivated by the unconventional dissonances, rhythmic complexities, and evocative choreography of *The Rite of Spring*. This ballet was produced by the famous *Ballet Russes*, a modernist ballet company managed by Serge Diaghilev (1872 - 1929). Composer Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) had previously written musical scores for the *Ballet Russes*, but *The Rite* did not achieve the same success at its premiere: eyewitnesses described an aggressive riot that ensued in the theatre, and music critics condemned the piece. Later generations have come to appreciate *The Rite*, however, for the very reasons it was initially denounced. The score has become one of the most influential pieces of twentieth century music, particularly because it dared to defy the conventions set by previous eras of music.

By the early twentieth century, ballet audiences had come to expect performances that featured royal and magical characters such as fairies and princesses in dazzling tutus, and elegant choreography typically danced *en pointe*. Yet, ballet master Vaslav Nijinsky's (1889-1950) choreography for *The Rite* defied all of these expectations: the movements were harsh, and dancers jolted to follow the rhythmic complexity of the score. Their bodies were jagged and angular, in contrast to the preferable extended, sculptural lines from head to toe, and the costumes were far from fairy-like, especially with the absence of pointe shoes. The choreography and scene designs were created this way to evoke scenes of a Pagan Russian ritual and convey the primitive nature of those scenes.



*“Almost no musical work has had such a powerful influence or evoked as much controversy as Igor Stravinsky’s ballet score ‘The Rite of Spring’”.*  
NPR Online

Nijinsky's choreography mimicked Stravinsky's equally daunting score. Stravinsky layered chords without conventional harmonic function in order to create the crunchy dissonances, he reduced any sort of rhythmic meter to a mere pulsation to convey a primitive effect, and he composed using sonorous blocks for various instruments, rather than writing typical long, tuneful, and melodious phrases. These unique compositional techniques, combined with Nijinsky's bold choreography, baffled the audience at the premiere. The overwhelmingly negative response humiliated Stravinsky: he would go on to tell critics that he had preferred *The Rite* to be performed as a stand-alone concert piece. While dance companies seldom restage ballet productions of *The Rite*, the piece has been performed numerous times in a concert setting.

*“...it’s also got the best dissonances anyone ever thought up, and the best asymmetries and polytonalities and polyrhythms and whatever else you care to name.”*  
Leonard Bernstein

In the decade since its premiere, *The Rite's* radical complexity and vivid energy has gained respect and popularity among audiences and scholars alike. It is now often considered one of the first pieces of true modernist music, and it has become a standard of orchestral repertoire. Twenty-first century audiences are fascinated by the eccentricity of the work and the moods it evokes, no longer feeling overwhelmed by its primal nature. While audiences in 1913 may have been appalled by the “barbarity” that the *Ballet Russes* introduced to the theatre, *The Rite's* innovations have earned it a rightful place in the Millikin-Decatur Symphony Orchestra's upcoming Masterworks concert.

# EDUCATION

## Striving for Excellence!

By Dr. Neil Smith

Music Director,

Decatur Youth Symphony Orchestra

Many of you reading this might have played an instrument when you were younger and probably spent many hours with that instrument perfecting your technique, honing your musical skills, and preparing for performances. However, it's likely that few of you ever became professional musicians, at least not a sustaining career as an instrumental performer. Yet, I doubt you ever look back at the time and effort you spent learning an instrument as being wasted. That's because you saw the effort spent developing your skills on that instrument as worthwhile to learning how to work toward a goal and achieve a high level of musical excellence.

Some members of the Decatur Youth Symphony Orchestra over the years have continued on to study music in college.

A fair number of them currently make their living in some aspect of the music field, teaching music in schools, playing in military ensembles, working as an artist representative in Nashville, and more. However, a good number have continued on to work in professions that may have little, if anything, directly to do with their musical training. None-the-less, I have no doubt they would look back at their experience working in a finely-tuned musical ensemble such as the DYSO as an important component in learning how to work toward a high level of excellence.

An interesting new field of psychology has recently focused on something called "Flow." This is the idea that people naturally seek out opportunities to grow and improve themselves, and that when they have a feeling of continued accomplishment, they can lose themselves in the effort, almost as if time ceases to exist. I can't imagine a better example of "Flow" than the opportunity to rehearse, study, and perform first-rate musical repertoire with other excellent musicians. I know I've had many musical experiences where I lost myself in the music and felt

completely connected with those that I was performing. The Decatur Youth Symphony Orchestra has been an example of musical excellence at Millikin University for over 25 years, and the continued support of the Symphony Orchestra Guild of Decatur is an integral part of that effort. We hope you can join us for our performances this year.

### 2019-20 DYSO PERFORMANCE CALENDAR

• Monday, September 16th  
First DYSO Rehearsal  
Kirkland Fine Arts Center

• Monday, November 25th, 7pm  
Winter Concert  
Central Christian Church

• Friday, December 6th  
DYSO Concerto Competition

• Sunday, April 14 at 4pm  
Spring Concert  
Kirkland Fine Arts Center Stage

• May 22 - 24  
Heart of Illinois Youth Orchestra  
Festival | Eastern IL University

# RECENT EVENTS

## Retro @ the Texaco



By Dr. Christina Shields  
Music Therapist  
SOGD Board Member

Everyone in the not-for-profit world knows that fundraising is at it's very best, a gamble. Case in point: Who invites the same crowd known to dress up and attend the Millikin-Decatur Symphony on Saturday evenings, to dress in clothes from the 60's and 70's and hang out together one summer night, behind an old garage on Main Street? I mean, seriously folks, who does that? We did.

On June 14, 2019 The Symphony Orchestra Guild of Decatur put on "Retro @ The Texaco". It was a huge success. We are doing it again, with a variation on the theme, "Westward HO @ The Texaco." June 12, 2020. Mark your calendars now. Get your tickets early. 2019 was a sellout. Well that isn't exactly true. We had one dinner left.

There has been some speculation on how the concept for this particular fundraiser came about. Without revealing all the tricks of the trade, we just needed something to do for a summer event. So, at the March SOGD Board Meeting, the idea was offered that we could have "a garage sale." Let me tell you, eyes rolled, and people grimaced. One person did say, "What a good idea, we did that at church". Two members present from the Ways and Means Committee were tasked with "looking in to it".

They did, look in to it, that is. Bruce and Kay Nims graciously loaned their really cool Texaco Station at 266 W. Main Street, the band was hired, the caterer found and BOOM!, there you have it, a fundraiser was born. It became more complicated than that.

And then there was this garage sale, up-scale garage sale that is. Guild members searched attics, closets and basements, donating great items. This sale took on a

*"Since the beginning in 1974, the Symphony Orchestra Guild of Decatur has been in the game, gambling on great ideas..."*

life of it's own, and one of the committee members large garage, for a month. Although said committee member's husband was not pleased, he was a trooper and took one for the team. And then, along with his son and son's horse trailer, carted all of the up-scale garage sale treasures from his garage to The Texaco Garage and the remainder back to his garage in the morning after. Not a trooper this man, but a prince, indeed.

Since the beginning in 1974, the Symphony Orchestra Guild of Decatur has been in the game, gambling on great ideas and holding successful fund-raising events each year. Most of the SOGD members who have worked together on these ventures will tell you that while the work is rigorous, it is worth the effort and the process and fellowship is fun. The "Retro @ The Texaco" team will tell you they had a blast from the past. Sorry, I couldn't resist.

Currently, the SOGD Ways and Means Committee is at it again. Under the leadership of Co-Chairs, Kathy Brown and Heidi Sack, we are working on what promises to be an award-winning event in Decatur's winter season. "It's Christmas Time Decatur" will be held at the Country Club of Decatur, the evening of December 6th, 2019. Details will be forthcoming. Please come. It will be a beautiful beginning for your Christmas season.



# JOIN US

Please consider joining the membership of the Symphony Orchestra Guild of Decatur. Membership in the Guild supports the Millikin-Decatur Symphony Orchestra, the Decatur Youth Orchestra, and music in Decatur schools.

Guild membership allows us to:

- Present affordable Masterworks and other concerts for the community
- Support the careers of working musicians
- Deliver music education to hundreds of students
- Provide financial aid to students
- Be cultural leaders in the community and make Decatur a wonderful place to live

Guild members enjoy:

- Season tickets for the Masterworks I-IV series
- Priority Seating
- Priority Ticket Access
- Free shuttle service to Kirkland ticketed events
- Invitations to all social events

### CHOOSE YOUR MEMBERSHIP LEVEL:

IVORY BATON CIRCLE	\$30 - \$59
SILVER BATON CIRCLE	\$60 - \$119
GOLD BATON CIRCLE	\$120 - \$249
CONDUCTOR'S CIRCLE	\$250 - \$499
PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE	\$500 - \$999
ORCHESTRA CIRCLE	\$1,000 AND UP

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Make checks payable to:  
The Symphony Orchestra Guild of Decatur

Mail to: Symphony Orchestra Guild, c/o 651 W. Karen Ct., Decatur IL 62526

Your donation is tax deductible within the fullest extent of the law.



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## UPCOMING PERFORMANCES AND EVENTS

- OCT** MASTERWORKS II, Shostakovich Symphony No. 5  
*Saturday October 26, 7:30 pm | Kirkland Fine Arts Center*
- DEC** Symphony Guild Gala, "It's Christmas Time Decatur!"  
*December 6, 2019 | Country Club of Decatur*
- FEB** MASTERWORKS III, Gaelic Symphony by Amy Beach and Young Artists  
*Saturday, February 1, 7:30 pm | Kirkland Fine Arts Center*
- The Pirates of Penzance with Millikin Chamber Orchestra  
*February 20-23, Thursday, Friday, Saturday at 7:30 pm*  
*Sunday at 2:00 pm | Kirkland Fine Arts Center*

PASS Concert with Classical Kids Live:  
Beethoven Lives Upstairs! (Children's Concert)  
*Thursday, February 27, 10:00 am | Kirkland Fine Arts Center*

MASTERWORKS IV, Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 and Young Artists  
*Saturday, February 29, 7:30 pm | Kirkland Fine Arts Center*

**APR** MASTERWORKS V, Carmina Burana, Bogza's Symphony No. 1  
*Saturday, April 18, 7:30 pm | Kirkland Fine Arts Center*

### Single tickets

Kirkland Fine Arts Center Box Office | 217.424.6318

### Guild events, & Membership information

Symphony Orchestra Guild of Decatur | 217.877.2963

Visit [decaturorchestra.com](http://decaturorchestra.com) for more information.

### Free Shuttle Service to Kirkland Events

SOGD has made arrangements with Baldwin Shuttle to provide free round-trip shuttle service to seniors who would like to attend ticketed events at Kirkland. Call Baldwin Shuttle at 1-800-747-3593 to reserve your seat on the mini-bus. Baldwin will pick you up at your front door, and bring you to the front patio at Kirkland so you can catch your favorite shows.

Photo credits:

## PRE-CONCERT TALKS SERIES

One hour prior to each Masterworks performance, concert goers are invited to attend informal pre-concert conversations to guide you through the music you are about to hear, providing an enlightening look at the repertoire and composers. Hosted by Dr. Sergey Bogza.

## AFTERGLOW

Mingle with Guild members and Dr. Sergey Bogza after each MDSO performance at Bizou, located at 259 N. Main St., Decatur, for appetizers, desserts, and wine.