



Naomi Grabel Named First Chief Executive Officer of the American Friends of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra

AFIPO Raises \$2 million at US Fundraisers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: NOVEMBER 21, 2016



David Hirsch, President of the Board of the [American Friends of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra \(AFIPO\)](#), announced today that the Board, following a unanimous recommendation of a search committee, has appointed **Naomi Grabel** as the **AFIPO's first Chief Executive Officer** effective December 12, 2016.

Mr. Hirsch states: "Ms. Grabel's extensive background made her a great candidate, but it was her vision that ultimately led to her selection as our very first CEO. The board of the AFIPO has found in Naomi a leader who will focus not only on development but on increasing our footprint through social media to a much larger, more diverse, and younger audience. We recognize that young people are looking to connect with Israel in many ways, and as Israel's greatest non-political ambassador, we fill a very clear and important space."

Ms. Grabel will lead a team including AFIPO's Director of Finance and Administration, Catherine Lou, and West Coast Director, Danielle Ames Spivak, to implement a strategic plan with the goals of expanding awareness of the Orchestra's important mandate and revitalizing the organization's image in order to reach a new generation.

"There is no other orchestra in the world whose commitment to international diplomacy through music and educational outreach initiatives elicit the same response as the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra," says Grabel. "I am thrilled to collaborate with the very dedicated board and staff of the AFIPO to engage new audiences of all ages across the United States, and to build greater awareness of and support for the extraordinary programs that are core to the orchestra's mission."

Ms. Grabel's credentials in arts administration and marketing were instrumental in the Board's recommendation and appointment. She was most recently Director of Marketing and Creative Services at Carnegie Hall, where she oversaw marketing, brand management, ticketing, digital content and engagement, publications, volunteer management and retail operations. Previously,

she served as Director of Marketing and Development, for the Sydney Opera House, leading a major re-branding project as well as launching the first-ever philanthropy program for Australia's leading arts center, and as the Vice President of Marketing and Communications for Philadelphia's Kimmel Center and Managing Director of Philadelphia's Wilma Theater. She is presently on the Board of Overseers of the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Pennsylvania, and on the Advisory Board of the National Center for Arts Research based at Southern Methodist University.

AFIPO is the North American support organization for the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra (IPO). The IPO, which celebrates its **80th anniversary season** this year, is one of the world's illustrious and most toured classical ensembles and is a beacon of Israeli culture in its extensive appearances at home and around the world. The Orchestra's musical endeavors take place on an international scale, ranging from local chamber music performances to transcontinental tours.

Through recent fundraising events held in **New York City, Los Angeles, and San Francisco**, the AFIPO announced today that it raised **\$2 million** to benefit the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and its educational outreach programs, **KeyNote and Sulamot: Music for Social Change**. The November 9 musicale in the Bay Area, featuring a string trio of musicians from the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, was chaired by Varda Rabin, Lydia Shorestein, Susan Libitzky, Diane Zack and Eta Somekh. Internationally renowned **violinist Julian Rachlin** and members of the IPO headlined the New York and Los Angeles festivities. The New York celebration was chaired by **Rochelle and David A. Hirsch, Linda and Michael G. Jesselson, and Ruth and Theodore N. Mirvis** on November 15 at the Plaza Hotel and was hosted by **journalist Paula Zahn**. On November 17 at the Beverly Hills Hotel, **Lynn Harris and Matti Leshem, and Blair and David Kohan** co-chaired alongside **Emmy Award-winning actress Julie Bowen**, who served as host.

AFIPO continues its mission of social development and dialogue through music with Sulamot: Music for Social Change, which focuses its resources on bringing intensive musical education given by IPO musicians to at-risk youths. Sulamot provides students with private lessons, supervised practice time, advanced ensemble study, performance opportunities, and access to quality instruments in underserved regions. In addition, the KeyNote program brings the joy of classical music to nearly 30,000 children in Israel each year, while promoting tolerance and mutual respect. AFIPO seeks to strengthen the reach of the IPO as the preeminent cultural ambassador for the State of Israel and expand the support of classical music and musical education in Israel.

Pictured: Naomi Grabel, Chief Executive Officer of the American Friends of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra

###

MEDIA CONTACT

U.S. Press Representation:

Kirshbaum Associates Inc.

(212) 222-4843

info@kirshbaumassociates.com