

Press Release

Lahav Shani is appointed Music Director of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra

**At age 29, the Israeli conductor and pianist becomes
the second ever Music Director of the IPO**

TEL AVIV, 17 January 2018 - The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra announced the appointment of **Lahav Shani** as its Music Director, beginning in the orchestra's 2020-2021 season. In the 2019-20 season, he will have the title Music Director Designate. The 29-year-old Israeli conductor and pianist will succeed Zubin Mehta, the IPO's legendary Music Director, who was appointed to the position in 1969.

Concurrently, Shani will hold the position of Chief Conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra in the Netherlands, a position he assumes in September 2018, succeeding Yannick Nezet-Seguin. He also serves as Principal Guest Conductor of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra.

Shani began his relationship with the IPO as a solo pianist when he was just 16 years old. In October 2013, just after he won first prize at the Gustav Mahler International Conducting Competition in Bamberg, Germany, the IPO invited him to conduct its season-opening concerts. *Globes*, reviewing one of the performances, wrote that "this concert will be remembered as a dizzying, perhaps even historic event in the history of the Israel Philharmonic." Since then, he has appeared regularly with the IPO each year, both as a conductor and a pianist, and in December 2016, he conducted the final concert of the IPO's 80th birthday celebrations.

Shani was born in Tel Aviv in 1989. He started his piano studies at age six with Hannah Shalgi, and continued with Professor Arie Vardi at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music at Tel Aviv University. He then went on to complete his studies in conducting with Professor Christian Ehwald and piano with Professor Fabio Bidini, both at the Academy of Music Hanns Eisler Berlin. While a student, he was mentored by Daniel Barenboim.

Recent and upcoming highlights as guest conductor include engagements with many leading international orchestras including the Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Staatskapelle, the

Philadelphia Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, London Symphony Orchestra, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunk, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and the Boston Symphony Orchestra amongst others.

Lahav Shani, says: “It is an enormous honor for me to be appointed as Music Director following such a huge figure as Zubin Mehta. This orchestra shaped my musical development from a very early age and my close relationship with the orchestra has been a constant thread in my artistic life. I look forward immensely to the years ahead”.

Yoel Abadi, Chairman of The Management, Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, says: “We are honored to announce the appointment of Lahav Shani as the IPO’s next music director after he was elected by a large majority of the orchestra’s musicians.

The IPO has been following, with great interest Lahav’s meteoric development as a conductor, both in Israel and abroad, and we are looking forward to a fascinating musical partnership.

The orchestra is very proud that the successor to Zubin Mehta, one of the musical giants of recent generations, will be a young Israeli with whom the IPO initially developed a relationship years ago when he was taking his first steps as a conductor.

On behalf of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, I would like to congratulate Lahav Shani on his appointment and to thank from the bottom of our hearts Zubin Mehta for his many decades of contributing to the IPO and to the State of Israel. We love him deeply”.

Avi Shoshani, Executive Director of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, says: “We’re proud and excited to appoint Lahav Shani as Music Director of the IPO. After learning of the appointment, Zubin Mehta congratulated Lahav, with whom he worked a good deal in recent years. For us, this step is not only the closing of a circle but the beginning of an exciting and promising future.”

For more about the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, please visit: www.ipo.co.il/en/

For further information, please contact: Jasmin Loy Kalisky +972-54-8879055

Jasmin@shalomtelaviv.com