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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Indianapolis Symphonic Choir to perform at prestigious Carnegie Hall October 16

*Choir returns to legendary concert hall after nearly 40 years
for New York City debut of “Zabur”*

Tickets on sale now!

INDIANAPOLIS – For the first time since 1978, the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir will make its return to New York City’s Carnegie Hall on Sunday, October 16, 2016 at 2 p.m. Tickets are on sale now and available for purchase at www.indychoir.org or through the Carnegie Hall website.

Conducted by Indianapolis Symphonic Choir Artistic Director Eric Stark, currently in his second decade with the 79-year-old choral ensemble, the Choir will perform Mohammed Fairouz’s first Oratorio, “Zabur,” originally commissioned and debuted by the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir alongside the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra in April 2015 at historic Hilbert Circle Theatre in downtown Indianapolis. The performance will be the New York City debut of “Zabur.”

As the Symphonic Choir celebrates its 80th anniversary season, a large-scale project such as this is fitting. Joined by the well-respected Indianapolis Children’s Choir, founded 30 years ago with involvement from the Symphonic Choir, the performance will also include “Les Illuminations” for orchestra and tenor, written by 20th century English composer Benjamin Britten.

“This is no small achievement! The opportunity to represent the entire Indianapolis community at Carnegie Hall represents a clarion call to the nation and, perhaps even to the world: Indianapolis is a community rich with innovative arts, and we think everyone needs to know this,” states Artistic Director Eric Stark. “Only a few choruses in the nation have the opportunity to present a concert at Carnegie Hall, let alone to perform the New York debut of a piece they have commissioned.”

“Financially, artistically, logistically – by any measure – this is a major undertaking,” adds Executive Director Michael Pettry. “The Symphonic Choir last performed at Carnegie nearly 40 years ago, and few other Indy arts institutions have taken the stage at Carnegie since then. It’s up to us to dream big and then to execute at the highest level when it comes to projects of this magnitude.”

Carnegie Hall has witnessed some of the biggest names in music and the arts over the years including, Frank Sinatra, Judy Garland, the New York Philharmonic, Pavarotti, Yo-Yo Ma, and others.

Described by *Gramophone* as “a post-millennial Schubert,” Mohammed Fairouz is an adept and accomplished writer for the voice with hundreds of art songs to his credit. For “Zabur,” Fairouz looked to Stravinsky’s Latin “Symphony of Psalms” and Bernstein’s Hebrew “Chichester Psalms” as models. “I was eager to bring my own cultural dimension to the Psalms,” he said. “By bringing back the essential Arabic aspect of the Psalms as well as by setting the ancient texts in a contemporary environment, “Zabur” attempts to take the Psalms 'off the shelf' and restore their original form as raw human poetic documents.”

The performance will feature internationally renowned tenor Thomas Cooley, and bass-baritone Michael Kelley who debuted the role in “Zabur” in Indianapolis in April 2015. The New York City-based Mimesis Ensemble orchestra will accompany, dedicated to the mastery of music from the 20th and 21st centuries and familiar with much of Fairouz’s work.

Non-singing fans are invited to travel with the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir to New York City for the performance. Space is available for 75 persons to join as non-singing travelers, via a package that includes flight, lodging, concert tickets and a few special opportunities. More information is available at indychoir.org or by calling (317) 940-9057.

About the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir

The Indianapolis Symphonic Choir is proud to be one of the nation’s most established and dynamic musical institutions, marking its 80th season in 2016/2017. Among the most active symphonic choruses in the United States, the Choir reaches in excess of 25,000 people each season with more than 25 performances and a comprehensive educational outreach program. The 200 volunteer singers demonstrate the Choir’s commitment to musical excellence through their talent and dedication during each 42-week season. The choral partner of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Symphonic Choir was founded in 1937 at the ISO’s request to perform the great choral-orchestral repertoire. This continued partnership exhibits the very best of collaborative ideals – two independent arts organizations combining their strengths to create beautifully lasting musical results. The Choir is dedicated to excellence in the performance of choral music, the creation of new choral masterworks, and to community outreach and education throughout the community. The Choir is now in its seventh year as the official choral partner of the Indianapolis Public Schools, providing teacher training, educational resources, performance experiences and free printed music. For more information about the Symphonic Choir, visit www.indychoir.org.

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