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To whom it may concern:

I met Debra Porter when I was a young artist newly introduced to the world of metal and metalworking. My father owned a thriving aerospace welding shop in Connecticut. He offered materials, time and expertise to pursue my artistic career. My Mother was equally supportive. She had grown up with the daughters of Alexander Calder and related many inspirational stories besides hands on assistance. At that time (in the 80s) I had been living in New Haven and was succeeding with many public sculptures, as well as gallery representation.

As the Director of Brookfield Arts Complex in South Norwalk, Debra Porter spotted my work represented in the Southern New England Telephone Company calendar. She searched for me (before the internet existed), and requested my pieces for display and shows. Brookfield SONO was thriving. Much was related to Deb's tireless perseverance, vision and dedication to the arts. Not only did she run the gallery, she was the director, organizing studio rentals, teachers and classes. She began to secure commissions for many of us at Sono, and introduced me to other artists, teachers and gallery owners. She set me on my path.

As our careers grew, she became an ally and was one of the first people I consulted regarding trade show involvement. By that time she had answered a call from Sidney Frank to represent the artist Agam. She suggested that I participate in the Art Expo at the Javits Center in New York, while others suggested gift and stationery shows. I participated in all of them, and ended up an artist with a crew of 13, annual sales above \$1 million, and worldwide representation. Debra remained my coach and ally and grew to become a cherished friend. We had long conversations regarding the arts and how to remain true to my artist self within a commercial world.

As I watched both of our careers grow, Debra continued to earn Sidney Frank's deep respect and confidence. He entrusted her to grow the Grey Goose vodka brand. She developed tasting adventures throughout major American cities and often included me to join and sketch the escapades of leading press, food and wine critics, visiting top restaurants in competition for the best Grey Goose Martini! She was inclusive too, including the LGBTQ world in events that celebrated and cherished their uniqueness, all the while in a quest to develop the Brand.

At one point, she involved my art by including sculptures that I designed and produced to be presented as awards to women jazz legends. This is just one example of the non-profit fundraising efforts that Debra led for the arts, and drew artists into.

When she decided to assist the unbanked people of the world, she enlisted Angel investors and put together a board of directors with similar interests. She learned some Spanish so she could communicate with the population she sought to serve, while negotiating contracts in Mexico. I'm

not sure how she managed to have spare time, but she explored her own artistic roots while living in Mexico, and learned horticulture and even farming in the Princeton area.

Debra is a person with great stamina that manages to rise and thrive with any task at hand. She is resourceful and creative and uses those talents with precision. I've never met a person who so easily transitions from their left brain to their right brain. She manages creative problem-solving with ease. Debra is kind, patient and a wonderful listener. People LOVE Deb. It's difficult to say no to her.

Please contact me with any questions you have. I can be reached at: info@karenrossi.com.

Thank you.

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