



NEWS RELEASE | February 27, 2019

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The Florida Orchestra's new season celebrates 250 years of Beethoven

- Powerhouse concert: Beethoven's Fifth, Rite of Spring, Poem of Ecstasy
- Eric Whitacre's Deep Field: A Cosmic Experience with Hubble video
- Plus: Vivaldi Four Seasons, Rascher Sax Quartet, Bach St. John Passion
- Pops series features Beatles, James Bond, Broadway giants, superheroes
- Season tickets for all concert series on sale now at FloridaOrchestra.org

[Click for photos of the orchestra, conductors and guest artists](#)

SEE CONCERT-BY-CONCERT DETAILS FOR EACH SERIES BELOW

ST. PETERSBURG, FL – With the new 2019-2020 season in the fall, The Florida Orchestra will celebrate the greatest composer in classical music, Ludwig van Beethoven, in honor of the 250th anniversary of his birth, the orchestra announced today. Led by Music Director Michael Francis, TFO's 52nd season explores the life and music of Beethoven as well as his influence on the modern American masters of today. Highlights include rare performances of the supersized Mahler arrangements of both **Beethoven's Fifth** and **Eroica Symphony**, modern masterpieces such as Eric Whitacre's **Deep Field: A Cosmic Experience**, beloved favorites such as **Vivaldi's The Four Seasons**, and popular standards that range from the music of **The Beatles** to **James Bond**.

"Beethoven is the greatest composer because he took all that life threw at him and turned it into inspirational art that still unites humanity today," said Maestro Francis, who is programming all of Beethoven's symphonies and major concerti over two seasons, with the 250th anniversary falling in December 2020. "We'll use Beethoven as a framework to explore deeper issues of his life and music, such as perseverance, hope and heroism. Then we'll ask: Who are the Beethovens of today? Who are the people reflecting our society through music? We'll continue to transform our own community through the power of music."

Opening night concerts focus on Tampa Bay, reflecting its cultural roots through a melting pot of music with Latin, European and modern influences. Cuban pianist and composer Frank Fernandez will perform one of the most famous concerti of all time, **Grieg's Piano Concerto**, on a program with **Ravel's Bolero**, **Beethoven's Leonore Overture No. 3**, **Gershwin's Cuban Overture**, and **Bates' Mothership**.

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“As the most-performed young American composer, Grammy-winner Mason Bates is a Beethoven of today,” Francis said. “This piece is perfect for the opening concert because it symbolizes all cultures coming together under one *Mothership*.” The Tampa Bay Times Masterworks series will open Sept. 27-29, 2019, with concerts in Tampa, St. Petersburg and Clearwater.

Some of the season’s big moments come in the 14-concert Masterworks series, which is the lifeblood of the orchestra. For the first time, TFO will perform the Mahler arrangement of **Beethoven’s Eroica Symphony** – often called “Beethoven on steroids.” It’s the original work, with a few tweaks, powered by an orchestra much larger than Beethoven could have ever imagined. In another first, TFO welcomes superstar American composer and conductor [Eric Whitacre](#) in November for **Deep Field: A Cosmic Experience**, which also will mark the 50th anniversary of the moon landing, with stunning Hubble Telescope video ([click here for video](#)) and The Master Chorale of Tampa Bay singing in the aisles. The Master Chorale also is center stage for the orchestra’s first-ever performance of **Bach’s** masterful **St. John Passion**, which is part of TFO’s ongoing Easter choral series.

By far the most ambitious concert of the season comes in the spring of 2020 with the enormous **Beethoven’s Fifth: Darkness to Light**. This jaw-dropping concert opens with **Stravinsky’s The Rite of Spring** followed by the enlarged Mahler arrangement of **Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony**, ending with **Scriabin’s Poem of Ecstasy**. “These are some of the biggest, most impressive sonic experiences you’ll ever have, all in one concert,” said [Maestro Francis](#), entering his fifth season with TFO. “We start with the darkness of Stravinsky and rise through the triumph of Beethoven. Just when you think it can’t get any better, we launch into the pure, mind-blowing bliss of Scriabin’s *Poem of Ecstasy*.”

Other Masterworks highlights include **Beethoven’s Violin Concerto** and his **Piano Concerto No. 4**; **Vivaldi’s The Four Seasons** directed by TFO Concertmaster Jeffrey Multer on violin; **Mozart’s Clarinet Concerto** with TFO Principal Clarinet Natalie Hoe; **Rachmaninoff’s Piano Concerto No. 3** with Joyce Yang; and the [Rascher Saxophone Quartet](#) performing a piece by modern American master **Philip Glass**.

The nine-concert Raymond James Pops series kicks off Oct. 4-6, 2019, with **Revolution: The Beatles Experience**, which includes hundreds of rare photos and video and is led by [Principal Pops Conductor Jeff Tyzik](#). Other highlights include a traditional **Holiday Pops**; the thrilling **Music of Bond ... James Bond** with Michael Francis; **Out of this World**, a musical voyage into space and sci-fi themes; a tribute to Broadway giants **Sondheim and Lloyd Webber**; and **Superhero Soundtracks** featuring memorable themes from blockbusters like *Superman*, *Batman*, *Spider-Man* and more.

The light-symphonic matinee Coffee series, led by [Principal Guest Conductor Stuart Malina](#), offers up **Spooktacular** music for Halloween, music from **The Wild West** and melodies from some of America’s greatest composers such as Gershwin, Rodgers and Copland. All come with complimentary coffee and doughnuts, along with a dose of humor, at morning concerts in St. Petersburg and Clearwater.

The 2019-2020 season brings back a slew of world-renowned guest artists who have developed a dynamic rapport with Maestro Francis and the orchestra. They include cellist **Maximilian Hornung on**

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Strauss' Don Quixote, Benjamin Beilman on Sibelius' Violin Concerto, Augustin Hadelich on Paganini's Violin Concerto No. 1, and fan favorite Byron Stripling for Lush Life: Ellington & Strayhorn.

The season also provides multiple ways for TFO to expand its partnerships with the Tampa Bay community, including our largest ever collaboration with St. Petersburg's Museum of Fine Arts in January 2020 for the opening of its new exhibit, the Tobin Collection of Theatre Arts. Images of artwork will be shown on a big screen during Rimsky-Korsakov's *Golden Cockerel* and a staged version of Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* (Ballet in One Act). The title piece on the Masterworks concert will be **Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3.**

The orchestra is planning a wide variety of local arts partnership programs for the upcoming season. A full schedule of TFO's community concerts such as Inside the Music, Sing Out! Tampa Bay, Family Concerts, Happy Hour concerts at Armature Works, and more will be released over the summer.

Season tickets for all series on sale now

Florida Orchestra 2019-2020 season packages are on sale now at FloridaOrchestra.org. Premium fixed packages are offered for The Tampa Bay Times Masterworks, Raymond James Pops, Weekend Matinee and morning Coffee series, and feature a variety of benefits including priority seating, single ticket discounts, bonus concerts, and free flexible ticket exchanges. Subscribers also save money: Masterworks, Pops and Matinee subscribers save \$3 per ticket, per concert. Subscribers to the Coffee series receive 20% off the single ticket price. For more information, call the TFO Ticket Center at 727.892.3337 or 800.662.7286 Monday through Friday 9 am to 5 pm, or Saturday and Sunday 10 am to 3 pm. Single tickets are the same low price as last season: Masterworks and Pops are \$18, \$33 and \$48, and may vary. Coffee tickets are \$24, \$29, \$34 and \$42. Single tickets go on sale in August.

Compose Your Own series

This flexible and affordable series allows patrons to mix and match Masterworks and Pops concerts for just \$25 per ticket for seats in the top two price categories, based on availability. A minimum of three concerts is required and seat assignments are on a first-come, first-served basis. Fixed package benefits do not apply. Go to ComposeYourOwn.com to subscribe.

Listen local

The Florida Orchestra primarily plays in three Tampa Bay area venues: Straz Center for the Performing Arts in Tampa, Mahaffey Theater in St. Petersburg, and Ruth Eckerd Hall in Clearwater.

CONCERT-BY-CONCERT DETAILS FOR EACH SERIES FOLLOW

The Florida Orchestra Series Concert by Concert

Venue codes:

CMH = Morsani Hall in the Straz Center in Tampa

FH = Ferguson Hall in the Straz Center

MAH = Mahaffey Theater in St. Petersburg

REH = Ruth Eckerd Hall in Clearwater

Tampa Bay Times Masterworks Series

The 14-concert series of classical masterworks is led by Music Director Michael Francis, entering his fifth season with TFO. Concerts are performed in Tampa, St. Petersburg and Clearwater. A free pre-concert talk delves into the stories behind the music and is included with every concert ticket, starting one hour before the performance.

Masterworks Matinee series: In its third season, the matinee series includes five concerts at 2 pm Sundays at the Mahaffey Theater, convenient for families and anyone who wants to spend the day along downtown St. Petersburg's waterfront. Subscribers get full benefits. Concerts are **Winter Dreams: Tchaikovsky & Sibelius** (Nov. 17); **Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3** (Jan. 19); **Beethoven's Violin Concerto** (Feb. 23); **Bach's St. John Passion** (March 22); and **Beethoven & Paganini** (April 19).

Free Classical Kids & Teens tickets: Kids and teens ages 5-18 get in free to all Tampa Bay Times Masterworks concerts. At least one adult ticket purchase required. Only available in advance through the TFO Ticket Center.

For more information on guest artists and conductors, please click the name.

1) Opening Night

[Michael Francis](#), conductor

[Frank Fernandez](#), piano

Gershwin: Cuban Overture

Grieg: Piano Concerto

Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 3

Mason Bates: Mothership

Ravel: *Bolero*

Fri, Sept 27, 2019, 8 pm, CMH | Sat, Sept 28, 2019, 8 pm, MAH | Sun, Sept 29, 2019, 2 pm, REH **Matinee**

2) Beethoven's Eroica Symphony

[Michael Francis](#), conductor

[Maximilian Hornung](#), cello

R. Strauss: *Don Quixote*

Beethoven: Symphony No. 3, "Eroica" (arr. Mahler)

Fri, Oct 11, 2019, 8 pm, FH | Sat, Oct 12, 2019, 8 pm, MAH | Sun, Oct 13, 2019, 7:30 pm, REH

3) Deep Field: A Cosmic Experience

[Eric Whitacre](#), conductor

[Master Chorale of Tampa Bay](#)

Whitacre: Lux Aurumque

Whitacre: Equus

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Bernstein: Chichester Psalms

Copland: Quiet City

Whitacre: Deep Field (with video)

Fri, Nov 8, 2019, 8 pm, FH | Sat, Nov 9, 2019, 8 pm, MAH | Sun, Nov 10, 2019, 7:30 pm, REH

4) Winter Dreams: Tchaikovsky & Sibelius

[Daniel Black](#), conductor

[Benjamin Beilman](#), violin

Vivian Fung: Fanfare

Sibelius: Violin Concerto

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 1, "Winter Dreams"

Fri, Nov 15, 2019, 8 pm, FH | Sat, Nov 16, 2019, 8 pm, MAH | Sun, Nov 17, 2019, 2 pm, MAH **Matinee**

5) Mozart & Tchaikovsky

[Michael Francis](#), conductor

[Natalie Hoe](#), clarinet

Beethoven: Consecration of the House Overture

Mozart: Clarinet Concerto

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6, "Pathetique"

Fri, Dec 6, 2019, 8 pm, FH | Sat, Dec 7, 2019, 8 pm, MAH | Sun, Dec 8, 2019, 7:30 pm, REH

6) Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 3

In partnership with St. Petersburg's Museum of Fine Arts

[Michael Francis](#), conductor

[Gilles Vonsattel](#), piano

Rimsky-Korsakov: Golden Cockerel Intro/Wedding March

Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 3

Stravinsky: Pulcinella (Ballet in One Act)

Fri, Jan 17, 2020, 8 pm, CMH | Sat, Jan 18, 2020, 8 pm, MAH | Sun, Jan 19, 2020, 2 pm, MAH **Matinee**

7) American Masters

Featuring Rascher Sax Quartet

[Stuart Malina](#), conductor

[Rascher Saxophone Quartet](#)

Bernstein: Candide Overture

Christopher Theofanidis: Symphony No. 1

Philip Glass: Concerto for Saxophone Quartet

Gershwin: An American in Paris

Fri, Feb 14, 2020, 8 pm, FH | Sat, Feb 15, 2020, 8 pm, MAH | Sun, Feb 16, 2020, 7:30 pm, REH

8) Beethoven's Violin Concerto

[Larry Rachleff](#), conductor

[Simone Lamsma](#), violin

Beethoven: Coriolan Overture

Beethoven: Violin Concerto

Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra

Fri, Feb 21, 2020, 8 pm, FH | Sat, Feb 22, 2020, 8 pm, MAH | Sun, Feb 23, 2020, 2 pm, MAH **Matinee**

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9) Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 3

[Michael Francis](#), conductor

[Joyce Yang](#), piano

Sibelius: Symphony No. 7

Beethoven: Symphony No. 8

Rachmaninoff: Piano Concerto No. 3

Fri, March 6, 2020, 8 pm, CMH | Sat, March 7, 2020, 8 pm, MAH | Sun, March 8, 2020, 7:30 pm, REH

10) Bach's St. John Passion

[Michael Francis](#), conductor

[Master Chorale of Tampa Bay](#)

J.S. Bach: St. John Passion

Fri, March 20, 2020, 8 pm, Idlewild Baptist Church

Sat, March 21, 2020, 5 pm, First Baptist Church of Indian Rocks

Sun, March 22, 2020, 2 pm, MAH **Matinee**

11) Vivaldi's The Four Seasons

[Jeffrey Multer](#), leader and violin

Golijov: Last Round

Tchaikovsky: Serenade for Strings

Vivaldi: The Four Seasons

Fri, April 3, 2020, 8 pm, CMH | Sat, April 4, 2020, 8 pm, MAH | Sun, April 5, 2020, 7:30 pm, REH

12) Beethoven & Paganini

[Vladimir Kulenovic](#), conductor

[Augustin Hadelich](#), violin

Respighi: Fountains of Rome

Paganini: Violin Concerto No. 1

Beethoven: Symphony No. 4

Fri, April 17, 2020, 8 pm, FH | Sat, April 18, 2020, 8 pm, MAH | Sun, April 19, 2020, 2 pm, MAH **Matinee**

13) Beethoven's Fifth: Darkness to Light

[Michael Francis](#), conductor

Stravinsky: The Rite of Spring

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 (arr. Mahler)

Scriabin: Poem of Ecstasy

Fri, May 1, 2020, 8 pm, CMH | Sat, May 2, 2020, 8 pm, MAH | Sun, May 3, 2020, 7:30 pm, REH

14) Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4

[Michael Francis](#), conductor

[Dejan Lazic](#), piano

TFO Student Composer Competition Winner

Beethoven: Piano Concerto No. 4

Brahms: Symphony No. 2

Fri, May 22, 2020, 8 pm, FH | Sat, May 23, 2020, 8 pm, MAH | Sun, May 24, 2020, 7:30 pm, REH

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Raymond James Pops Series

The nine-concert series features the best of Broadway, movie and popular music, with many arrangements by TFO Principal Pops Conductor Jeff Tyzik.

Pops Matinee series: In its third season, the matinee series includes five concerts at 2 pm Saturdays at the Mahaffey Theater, convenient for families and anyone who wants to spend the day along downtown St. Petersburg's waterfront. Subscribers get full benefits. Concerts are **Latin Pops** (Oct. 26); **Holiday Pops** (Dec. 14); **Lush Life: Ellington & Strayhorn** (Jan. 11); **Music of Bond ... James Bond** (Feb. 8); and **Superhero Soundtracks** (May 16).

1) Revolution: The Beatles Experience

[Jeff Tyzik](#), conductor

It's a ticket to ride through the history of The Beatles as told through their hits and Grammy winner Jeff Tyzik's arrangements using the original Abbey Road recordings. Featuring hundreds of rare photos and stunning video along with top vocalists singing hits like *Penny Lane*, *Get Back*, *Here Comes the Sun* and *Hey Jude*.

Fri, Oct 4, 2019, 8 pm, CMH | Sat, Oct 5, 2019, 8 pm, MAH | Sun, Oct 6, 2019, 7:30 pm, REH

2) Latin Pops

[Matt Catingub](#), conductor

You'll be *Living' La Vida Loca* with some of the greatest Latin-influenced pop music from the past 75 years, featuring premier vocalists for songs from Carlos Santana, Sergio Mendes, Gloria Estefan, Ricky Martin and more.

Fri, Oct 25, 2019, 8 pm, FH | Sat, Oct 26, 2019, 2 pm & 8 pm, MAH Matinee

3) Holiday Pops

[Daniel Black](#), conductor

Santa on the beach? Lighted palm trees? When you're longing for traditional holiday favorites, there's no place like The Florida Orchestra. It's a jolly good time for the whole family.

Fri, Dec 13, 2019, 8 pm, FH | Sat, Dec 14, 2019, 2 pm & 8 pm, MAH Matinee

Sun, Dec 15, 2019, 2 pm & 7:30 pm, REH Matinee

4) Lush Life: Ellington & Strayhorn

[Byron Stripling](#), conductor and trumpet

The music and story of Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn, who collaborated on some of the most beloved jazz standards of all time including *Take The A Train*, *Satin Doll* and the legendary adaptation of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*.

Fri, Jan 10, 2020, 8 pm, CMH | Sat, Jan 11, 2020, 2 pm & 8 pm, MAH Matinee

5) Music of Bond ... James Bond

[Michael Francis](#), conductor

Be stirred, not shaken, by more than 50 years of music for the world's most famous spy. With soaring strings and bold brass, the themes of 007 are instantly thrilling and unforgettable.

Sat, Feb 8, 2020, 2 pm & 8 pm, MAH Matinee | Sun, Feb 9, 2020, 7:30 pm, REH

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6) Out of this World

[Sarah Hicks](#), conductor

All systems are go for a voyage to distant galaxies with stellar music from *Star Trek*, *E.T.*, Holst's *The Planets*, *Star Wars*, *2001: A Space Odyssey* and more.

Fri, Feb 28, 2020, 8 pm, CMH | Sat, Feb 29, 2020, 8 pm MAH

7) Broadway: Sondheim & Lloyd Webber

[Stuart Malina](#), conductor

Honoring two giants of Broadway, this concert stars Hugh Panaro (*Phantom*), Tony Award Winner Debbie Gravitte and Scarlett Strallen, in a program featuring favorites from *Phantom of the Opera*, *Evita*, *West Side Story* and more.

Fri, March 27, 2020, 8 pm, FH | Sat, March 28, 2020, 8 pm, MAH | Sun, March 29, 2020, 7:30 pm, REH

8) Prohibition

[Jeff Tyzik](#), conductor

Indulge in the decadence of the 1920s, with music from Rudy Vallée, Josephine Baker and Kurt Weill, along with vintage images and video. Features three premier vocalists. Note: Suitable for all ages, but contains adult themes and imagery.

Sat, April 25, 2020, 8 pm, MAH | Sun, April 26, 2020, 7:30 pm, REH

9) Superhero Soundtracks

[Stuart Chafetz](#), conductor

Dust off your cape and come dressed as your favorite superhero (or villain) for a concert featuring some of the most memorable themes of all time from blockbusters like *Superman*, *Batman*, *Spider-Man*, *Supergirl*, *X-Men: The Last Stand*, and more.

Fri, May 15, 2020, 8 pm, CMH | Sat, May 16, 2020, 2 pm & 8 pm, MAH **Matinee**

Coffee Series

Light symphonic favorites are served up with complimentary coffee and doughnuts in two series: the 9-concert package at the Mahaffey Theater on Thursdays and 5-concert package at Ruth Eckerd Hall on Wednesdays. Free pre-concert talk included with every ticket, starting at 10 am.

1) Spooktacular

[Stuart Malina](#), conductor

Saint-Saens: *Danse Macabre*

Mussorgsky/Rimsky-Korsakov: *Night on Bald Mountain*

Wagner: *Flying Dutchman* Overture

Thu, Oct 31, 2019, 11 am, Mahaffey

2) Café Ole

[Stuart Malina](#), conductor

Gershwin: *Cuban Overture*

Marquez: *Danzon* No. 7

Caturla: *Three Cuban Dances*

Wed, Jan 8, 2020, 11 am, Ruth Eckerd Hall | Thu, Jan 9, 2020, 11 am, Mahaffey Theater

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3) The Wild West

[Akiko Fujimoto](#), conductor

Williams: *The Cowboys Overture*

Copland: *Rodeo* selections

Copland: *Billy the Kid* Ballet Suite

Thu, Jan 30, 2020, 11 am, Mahaffey Theater

4) World on a String

[Michael Francis](#), conductor

Mozart: *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*

Barber: Adagio for Strings

Tchaikovsky: Serenade for Strings

Wed, Feb 5, 2020, 11 am, Ruth Eckerd Hall | Thu, Feb 6, 2020, 11 am, Mahaffey Theater

5) All About Tchaikovsky

[Stuart Malina](#), conductor

Tchaikovsky: Capriccio Italien

Tchaikovsky: *Romeo and Juliet* Overture -- Fantasy

Tchaikovsky: 1812 Overture

Wed, Feb 26, 2020, 11 am, Ruth Eckerd Hall | Thu, Feb 27, 2020, 11 am, Mahaffey Theater

6) On the Bright Side

[Stuart Malina](#), conductor

Justine LeBaron Young Artist Competition Winner

Ibert: Divertissement

Beethoven: Symphony No. 8

Wed, March 25, 2020, 11 am, Ruth Eckerd Hall | Thu, March 26, 2020, 11 am, Mahaffey Theater

7) Once Upon a Concert

[Stuart Malina](#), conductor

Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade selections

Bizet: *Carmen* Suite No. 2 selections

Wagner: *Prelude und Liebestod* from *Tristan and Isolde*

Wed, April 22, 2020, 11 am Ruth Eckerd Hall | Thu, April 23, 2020, 11 am, Mahaffey Theater

8) Made in America

[Stuart Malina](#), conductor

Gershwin: An American in Paris

Rodgers: The Carousel Waltz

Still: Festive Overture

Thu, May 7, 2020, 11 am, Mahaffey Theater

9) From Russia with Love

[Daniel Black](#), conductor

Shostakovich: Festival Overture

Rachmaninoff: Vocalise

Rimsky-Korsakov: Capriccio Espagnol

Thu, May 14, 2020, 11 am, Mahaffey Theater

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[About Michael Francis](#)

Michael Francis took over as music director of The Florida Orchestra in the fall of 2015 and instantly became a huge hit. Quickly establishing an international presence, the British conductor also is music director of the Mainly Mozart Festival in San Diego and was just named principal conductor of Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz in Germany. He has made a long-term commitment to The Florida Orchestra and the Tampa Bay community, extending his contract through at least 2024.

[About The Florida Orchestra](#)

The Florida Orchestra is recognized as Tampa Bay's leading performing arts institution, the largest professional symphony orchestra in Florida, and one of the most vibrant and innovative orchestras in America. Its 51st season runs through May. Under the leadership of Music Director Michael Francis, it performs more than 130 concerts a season, with series of classical, popular, and morning coffee concerts in Tampa, St. Petersburg and Clearwater, as well as free Pops in the Park. Dedicated to bringing music to all people, connecting to the community is a priority, with pre-concert talks, family and youth concerts and other educational activities. Kids and teens get in free to Masterworks concerts with Classical Kids tickets. FloridaOrchestra.org and 727.892.3337 or 1.800.662.7286.

