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CONTACT: Kelly Smith, Communications Manager, ksmith@floridaorchestra.org; 727.362.5448

Coronavirus cancels more Florida Orchestra concerts

TFO's Board of Directors is committed to paying musicians and staff.

['We will keep bringing you music.' Read a letter from Music Director Michael Francis to our community](#)

ST. PETERSBURG, FL – In accordance with the stay-at-home order issued by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, The Florida Orchestra is extending concert cancellations through at least May 10, 2020, to fight the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) in Tampa Bay. To help lift up our community as we face this health crisis, TFO will keep the music going through weekly radio broadcasts and short performance videos straight from our musicians' homes to yours via Facebook, Instagram and YouTube.

"This pandemic is one of the most stressful times in our lives. Music helps. We hear that every day from people who are so thankful that we're keeping the music going however we can," said Mark Cantrell, TFO President & CEO. "Music has a tremendous power to heal. A tremendous power to comfort and connect. The Florida Orchestra is committed to using the power of music to help our Tampa Bay community emerge stronger than ever."

The Board of Directors is committed to paying TFO's musicians and staff through the end of the season in May. "An orchestra is not just music – it's people. These virtuoso musicians are your neighbors and an integral part of our community," said Board Chair Janet Paroo. "TFO is a close family, and we're doing everything we can to keep our family strong so we will be here for the Tampa Bay community, just as our community has been here for us. We are so grateful for those who have chosen to donate back their unused tickets or make extra gifts to the orchestra during this difficult time."

For TFO musicians, the board's decision is a lifeline. "While our stages remain dark, we yearn for Michael Francis to raise his baton and bring 'our sound' to life once again for our community. But for now, TFO musicians are extremely grateful and relieved that we have such a courageous and compassionate board. This is a lifeline for us. For many, TFO is our only income," said TFO Principal Flute Clay Ellerbroek, chair of the Orchestra Committee.

Without ticket revenue, which accounts for about 40 percent of TFO's operating budget, the orchestra is relying solely on contributions to cover expenses. Ticketholders can help by donating the value of their unused tickets to the orchestra at FloridaOrchestra.org/donate-your-tickets. Contributions of any amount can be made at FloridaOrchestra.org/donate.

TFO's season is still scheduled to go through the end of May, but coronavirus concerns have forced the cancellation of concerts since March 20. These upcoming concerts are canceled, most at TFO's main venues: Straz Center in Tampa, Mahaffey Theater in St. Petersburg and Ruth Eckerd Hall in Clearwater: **April 3-5:** Vivaldi's The Four Seasons Tampa Bay Times Masterworks concert; week of community chamber concerts at hospitals, Tampa International Airport, ZooTampa and R.E. Olds Park

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April 17-19: Beethoven & Paganini Masterworks concert

April 22-23: Once Upon a Concert Coffee concert

April 24: Livin' Thing: The Music of The Electric Light Orchestra Rock concert

April 25-26: Prohibition Raymond James Pops concert

May 1-3: Beethoven's Fifth: Darkness to Light Masterworks concert

May 3: Woodson Chamber Series: Cello and Piano Duo

May 7: Made in America Coffee concert

May 9-10: Free Pops in the Park concerts at Coachman Park in Clearwater and Julian B. Lane Riverfront Park in Tampa

A Q&A on concert cancellations is available at FloridaOrchestra.org at [this link](#).

Even without concerts, TFO is keeping the power of music going. Every Thursday, the orchestra is sharing live recordings of select Masterworks concerts for free on Classical WSMR 89.1 and 103.9 FM radio and online at WSMR.org, thanks to TFO's partnership with the station. This week featured an archival recording of Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* with Jeffrey Multer as leader and violin soloist in place of the canceled Vivaldi concert this weekend. The broadcasts continue through June 11, and rebroadcasts are available on demand for 45 days after the airdate. [Click here for details](#).

The world may be at a standstill, but Florida Orchestra musicians are unstoppable. Every day TFO is sharing short musician videos on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube to provide comfort, hope and joy to our community. [Watch several here](#). Go to [FloridaOrchestra.org](#) for more links and the [TFO Blog](#).

[About The Florida Orchestra](#)

The Florida Orchestra is recognized as Tampa Bay's leading performing arts institution, the largest professional orchestra in Florida, and one of the most vibrant and innovative orchestras in America. This is its 52nd season. 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 concerts. 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. FloridaOrchestra.org