



**NEWS RELEASE | April 27, 2020**

**CONTACT:** Kelly Smith, Communications Manager, [ksmith@floridaorchestra.org](mailto:ksmith@floridaorchestra.org); 727.362.5448

## **The Florida Orchestra, Master Chorale of Tampa Bay perform women's suffrage anthem virtually**

*Technology gives new life to original arrangement of 19th century march*

[Click here for Daughters of Freedom virtual performance video](#)

ST. PETERSBURG, FL – Inspired by the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women's right to vote this year, The Florida Orchestra and The Master Chorale of Tampa Bay have brought together about 50 musicians for a virtual performance of the 19<sup>th</sup> century anthem *Daughters of Freedom*, delivering a message of perseverance, hope and unity amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Accomplished composer and TFO Associate Conductor Daniel Black was already working on an original arrangement of the anthem for concerts this summer when the pandemic hit.

"Obviously, there are a lot of differences between a 50-year struggle for the cause of women's suffrage and the current pandemic, but one thing I find in common is the need for resilience and perseverance. This music speaks powerfully to that need," Black said.

The *Daughters of Freedom* project has been a personal one for Black, whose great-grandmother, Emma Marks Palmer, was a prominent suffragette in Wisconsin in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. He hoped to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 2020 but could find virtually no music for orchestras. So he used a simple vocal score from the Library of Congress to create a three-minute arrangement for orchestra and voice of *Daughters of Freedom*, a prominent march song for women fighting for the right to vote. Obscure composer Edwin Christie wrote the original in 1871, with lyrics by George Cooper.

Since the coronavirus prevented a live group performance, Black sent the music digitally to musicians, who recorded their parts individually at home using smartphones and other devices. He also provided a "click track" to set an even tempo for musicians so he would be able to line up the individual recordings into one seamless video. He added archival photos and a special image – a collage celebrating his great-grandmother created by his mother, Janet Black, a graphic designer and collage artist.

"Though I never met my great-grandmother, I can imagine what she must have been like, what her voice must have sounded like. I imagine her marching proudly, chin held high, perhaps singing *Daughters of Freedom* as she went. If she could be strong then, we can be strong now."

The video is part of the orchestra's new TFO at Home series, which is keeping the music going through an online collection of radio rebroadcasts, musician videos, virtual learning and more all in one place: [FloridaOrchestra.org/tfo-at-home](https://FloridaOrchestra.org/tfo-at-home). *Daughters of Freedom* is TFO's second virtual orchestra video; it released [Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4 \(finale\)](#) last week.

"Musicians respond to distress and adversity by creating art, and we're so fortunate to live in a time when, even in isolation, we can make music together," said Brett Karlin, Artistic Director of The Master Chorale, longtime collaborators with TFO. "As the voice of your Florida Orchestra and the Tampa Bay area, the singers of The Master Chorale and I hope our community enjoys this uplifting virtual collaboration, and we can't wait to be back in the concert hall."

Black hopes the video is not only a tribute to the suffrage movement, but a good reminder of the cultural riches in Tampa Bay.

"We don't know how long it will be before The Florida Orchestra and The Master Chorale of Tampa Bay are able to perform live again," Black said. "In the meantime, I hope this video will show Tampa Bay that our premier performing arts organizations are still here. We are still making music, and we are still a part of the community. With courage and determination, together we will get through this."

#### **[About Daniel Black](#)**

*"Firm, decisive," "vital and engaging" and "with a droll sense of humor on the podium," Canada-based American conductor Daniel Black has begun to attract attention as a conductor who "makes music in a way that is meaningful to audiences in the 21st century."*

#### **[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. This is its 52<sup>nd</sup> 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. Tickets and information:*

*[FloridaOrchestra.org](http://FloridaOrchestra.org).*

#### **[About The Master Chorale of Tampa Bay](#)**

*Praised by music critics as "one of the country's finest choirs" and a "cultural treasure," and recognized as the premier choral ensemble in Tampa Bay and the Principal Chorus of The Florida Orchestra, The Master Chorale has a rich tradition of elevating the cultural experience in our community for over 41 years. Under the direction of Brett Karlin, Artistic Director, The Master Chorale is an auditioned, highly select 150-voice volunteer chorus embracing a broad representation of singers from the entire Tampa Bay area. The Master Chorale performs for more than 25,000 people every season and proudly serves our community and advances the choral art-form through exciting choral music education programs, engaging free community sing events, internationally distributed recordings, and important commissions from renowned contemporary choral composers. [MasterChorale.com](http://MasterChorale.com)*