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

The Florida Orchestra, musicians reach agreement on new 3-year contract

ST. PETERSBURG, FL – The Florida Orchestra and The Florida Orchestra Musicians Association have ratified a three-year contract that continues a steady increase in musician salaries and gradually extends the length of the orchestra season, bringing more concerts to the Tampa Bay community, the orchestra announced today.

“This was one of the most positive negotiations in all my years in orchestras – and it only took six sessions,” said TFO President & CEO Mark Cantrell, who took over the state’s largest professional orchestra in 2019. “Musicians and management came together as true partners who share a common vision for the growth and success of The Florida Orchestra and the Tampa Bay region. It’s the same team approach that kept us performing successfully throughout the pandemic, and now it will help us define our destiny as a world-class orchestra.”

The collective bargaining agreement, which largely defines how TFO’s board, management and musicians do business together, will carry through the 2024-25 season. It was ratified by the board and musicians well before the current contract expires on Aug. 31, 2022, as TFO gets ready to celebrate its 55th season in September. Highlights include:

Provides steady increases in musician wages. The new agreement will grow pay for TFO’s 68 full-time musicians each of the next three years: 5 percent for the 2022-23 season, followed by 4 percent and 3 percent. The contract will make it more than a dozen years of salary increases, with the exception of the 2020-21 season, when musicians and staff took a one-year 20 percent salary reduction to help weather the pandemic. The wage increases keep TFO more competitive with other orchestras in attracting and retaining musicians of the highest caliber under the artistic leadership of [Music Director Michael Francis](#), who will enter his eighth season with TFO in the fall. Francis’ contract extension runs through at least the 2024-25 season.

Increases the number of weeks TFO performs concerts. The contract adds one week of concerts for each of the next three seasons, which brings more music to the community and provides a more stable work environment for musicians. The upcoming season, which runs from mid-September 2022 through the end of May 2023, will increase to 37 weeks, and 39 weeks will be guaranteed by the 2024-25 season. The contract also increases paid vacation for musicians from two to three weeks a season.

“Our negotiations were respectful and collaborative and we are very pleased with the agreement,” said Principal Flute Clay Ellerbroek, Chair of The Florida Orchestra Musicians Committee. “The common organizational vision and leadership of TFO by the musicians, management and the board will ensure the growth of the orchestra, help us attract the finest musicians from around the country and deliver the world-class orchestra that our community deserves.”

“While a new contract is just one piece of a solid foundation for the future of The Florida Orchestra, it underscores that all facets of the organization are working together. The collaboration that TFO has with its musicians gives us a stability that is not that common in the orchestra world,” said Gregory Yadley, Chair of TFO's Board of Directors. “This justifies the commitment of our generous patrons and donors, to whom we are so grateful. Their vital support of TFO is an investment in our community and allows us to grow and serve a thriving Tampa Bay through this magnificent orchestra and its musicians.”

The Florida Orchestra celebrates its 55th season in the fall. On Oct. 7-9, [Maestro Francis](#) will debut the Hough Family Foundation Masterworks series with the iconic *Carmina Burana*, kicking off the classical series that ranges from Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 4* to Rachmaninoff's *Piano Concerto No. 2* and much more. The Raymond James Pops series includes blockbusters such as Harry Potter vs Star Wars and the Beatles' iconic *Abbey Road* album. TFO will perform more than 100 concerts this season in venues throughout Tampa Bay. Single tickets go sale to the public Aug. 15; season tickets are available now. Details at [FloridaOrchestra.org](#).

[About The Florida Orchestra](#)

The Florida Orchestra (TFO) 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. It celebrates its 55th season in 2022-23. Under the leadership of Music Director Michael Francis, TFO performs series of classical, popular, and morning coffee concerts in Tampa, St. Petersburg and Clearwater, as well as free Pops in the Park concerts. The orchestra is dedicated to connecting to the community both in-person and virtually, with family and youth concerts and other educational programs. For tickets and information: [FloridaOrchestra.org](#). The Florida Orchestra is a non-profit 501(c)3 EIN: 59-1223691 CH#1830. To learn more how you can support the power of music in building community, contact: sweymouth@floridaorchestra.org To donate now: [FloridaOrchestra.org/donate](#)