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CELLIST YO-YO MA TO PERFORM WITH THE FLORIDA ORCHESTRA FOR BENEFIT CONCERT

ST. PETERSBURG, FL – Legendary cellist Yo-Yo Ma will join The Florida Orchestra for its gala benefit concert on Friday, Feb. 28, 2025, at 8 pm at Ruth Eckerd Hall in Clearwater, the orchestra announced today. The 19-time Grammy Award winner will perform Dvorak's beautiful, soul-stirring *Cello Concerto* in this one-night-only special event, conducted by Music Director Michael Francis. **Tickets go on sale exclusively to orchestra subscribers on October 15.**

The orchestra also will perform Richard Strauss' famed tone poem *Don Juan* for the benefit concert, which helps to support TFO's high standard of artistic excellence, as well as robust education and community programs. TFO serves about 155,000 throughout Tampa Bay each year.

One of the most universally loved artists in music, the incomparable Yo-Yo Ma's multifaceted career is testament to his belief in culture's power to generate trust and understanding. Whether performing new or familiar works for cello, bringing communities together to explore culture's role in society, or engaging unexpected musical forms, Yo-Yo strives to foster connections that stimulate the imagination and reinforce our humanity. For more on Yo-Yo Ma, click here.

Tickets for An Evening with Yo-Yo Ma go on sale to TFO subscribers and top donors at 10 am October 15 and to the general public at 10 am October 22. Prices are $75, $100, $150, $200, $250, $275, $300, $325, $350; fees apply. Tickets will be available only through The Florida Orchestra: online at FloridaOrchestra.org, by phone at 727.892.3337, or in person at TFO's Ticket Center, 244 Second Ave. N (first floor) in downtown St. Petersburg.

VIP and sponsorships are limited availability on a first reserved basis, and include premium concert seating, pre-concert reception and seated dinner at Ruth Eckerd Hall Great Room. For information, contact TFO Chief Development Officer Susana Weymouth at (727) 362-5430 or sweymouth@floridaorchestra.org.

The benefit concert is generously presented by The Cassaly Foundation.

The Florida Orchestra's mission is to Inspire | Educate | Unite to build community through the power of music. TFO will perform more than 100 concerts this season in venues throughout Tampa Bay, including a wide range of classical, popular and family-friendly music. Celebrating his 10th year with TFO, Music Director Michael Francis launches the Hough Family Foundation Masterworks series with **Opening Night! Ravel's Bolero** Oct. 5 & 6 at the Mahaffey Theater and Ruth Eckerd Hall. The Raymond James Pops series opens Sept. 28 with two performances of **Country Hits: Songs from Nashville** at the Mahaffey Theater – TFO's first-ever country concerts. Now led by Resident Conductor Chelsea Gallo, the Morning Matinees series kicks off Oct. 9 & 10 at Ruth Eckerd Hall and the Mahaffey Theater.

About Michael Francis

The 2024-25 season celebrates 10 years of Michael Francis as The Florida Orchestra's music director, with a contract extension through at least the 2029-30 season. With bold innovation and passionate performances,

Maestro Francis has raised artistic excellence to new heights, strengthened the audience's connection to the music and reinvigorated TFO's community and education programs. The internationally acclaimed conductor also is music director of the Mainly Mozart Festival in San Diego and principal conductor of Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz in Germany. For more, click here

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 57th season in 2024-25. 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