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THIS WEEK: THE FLORIDA ORCHESTRA PERFORMS BEETHOVEN'S SYMPHONY NO. 5, WELCOMES 6 NEW MUSICIANS

ST. PETERSBURG, FL – This week The Florida Orchestra presents Beethoven's iconic *Symphony No. 5* in venues throughout Tampa Bay and welcomes six new musicians to their first full season with TFO. All have won highly competitive blind auditions that attracted top candidates from around the nation and world.

The concert celebrates Michael Francis' 10th season and pairs two of the most famous openings in music: Beethoven's triumphant Symphony No. 5 and Richard Strauss' *Also sprach Zarathustra* (*Theme from 2001: A Space Odyssey*) – one of the first works Maestro Francis ever conducted with TFO. The concerts are 8 pm Friday (Nov. 1) at Straz Center, 8 pm Saturday (Nov. 2) at Mahaffey Theater, and 7:30 pm Sunday (Nov. 3) at Ruth Eckerd Hall. Tickets are on sale now at FloridaOrchestra.org and 727.892.3337.

In a bonus performance on Wednesday, Maestro Francis will dive deeper into *Also sprach Zarathustra* in his signature Inside the Music series. With humor and insight, he takes audiences on a journey through a single work using orchestra demonstrations. The night ends in a full performance. Admission is pay what you can at the door at 7:30 pm Wednesday (Oct. 30) at the Mahaffey Theater. The series is generously sponsored by The Cassaly Foundation. (Note: Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5* will only be performed at the full weekend concerts.)

In its 57th season, TFO is the largest professional orchestra in Florida with 70 full-time musicians and conductors. In a decade with the orchestra, Michael Francis has appointed 33 of the current musicians. Here are highlights of the new musicians, who come from prestigious schools and varied backgrounds from around the world.

Diana Galimova, Assistant Principal Second Violin | Born in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, she pursued her undergraduate studies at the State Conservatory of Uzbekistan, performed numerous solo recitals with various orchestras and was recognized in international competitions. She served as principal second violin in the Turkiston Chamber Orchestra and held the role of associate concertmaster in the Soloists of Uzbekistan Chamber Orchestra. In the U.S., she earned a master's degree in violin performance at the University of North Texas under the mentorship of Professor Julia Bushkova. Read more here.

Eugeniu Cheremoush, Violin | The Moldovan-American violinist earned master's degrees from both the Rice University Shepherd School of Music and the Cleveland Institute of Music. He has appeared with the Houston Grand Opera, Houston Ballet, Mercury Baroque Orchestra and the Texas New Music Ensemble. In 2016, Cheremoush participated in the Pacific Music Festival in Sapporo, Japan. Read more here.

Carter Coleman, Violin | Beginning violin lessons at age 4, Coleman went on to earn performance degrees from the Cleveland Institute of Music, the Juilliard School and East Carolina University. He has toured Europe and Asia with the orchestral academies of the Schleswig Holstein Musik Festival and Pacific Music Festival, as well as the Juilliard Orchestra. He has performed with the Atlanta Symphony, Sarasota Orchestra and North Carolina Symphony. Read more here.

Daniel Urbanowicz, Viola | He holds a master's degree from the New England Conservatory of Music and a bachelor's degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music. Previously, he was a member of the Sarasota Orchestra. He has served as principal viola of the Augusta Symphony, and has appeared with the Jacksonville Symphony, Charleston Symphony, and the New World Symphony at Carnegie Hall. Urbanowicz is the founder and artistic director of St. Pete Baroque, a concert series that brings period music to Tampa Bay on period instruments. Read more here.

James Riggs, Associate Principal Oboe | Previously, he served as principal oboe of the Peoria Symphony, the Palm Beach Symphony and Florida Grand Opera. He has performed with the Metropolitan Opera, New Jersey Symphony, Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra and the Jacksonville Symphony. Riggs has held fellowships at the New World Symphony, Ensemble Connect and the Aspen Music Festival. Riggs holds a bachelor's of music degree from Oberlin Conservatory and a master's of music degree from The Juilliard School. Read more here.

Maggie O'Leary, Associate Principal Bassoon | A native of Southern California, she began playing the bassoon at age 12 and went on to earn her bachelor's of music from the Curtis Institute of Music and her master's from Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. Previously, she was a bassoon fellow at the New World Symphony and served as acting section bassoon of the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra. Passionate about sharing her love of music, she frequently performed recitals for children at the Philadelphia Ethical Society and served as a teacher for New World Symphony's College Track Mentorship Program. Read more here.

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. The centerpiece will be TFO's gala benefit concert featuring one of the most universally loved artists in classical music, superstar cellist Yo-Yo Ma, on Feb. 28, 2025. Each year, the orchestra serves more than 155,000 people through concerts and education/community programs.

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. He is generously sponsored by The Hough Family. 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