MEDIA ALERT | Oct. 2, 2024

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DUE TO HURRICANE, THE FLORIDA ORCHESTRA MOVES OPENING WEEKEND 'BOLERO' CONCERT TO RUTH ECKERD HALL

Orchestra partners with Habitat for Humanity to collect items at concerts

ST. PETERSBURG, FL – Due to disruptions from Hurricane Helene that affect the Mahaffey Theater, The Florida Orchestra will now open the Hough Family Foundation Masterworks series with two performances at Ruth Eckerd Hall in Clearwater. Music Director Michael Francis will conduct **Opening Night! Ravel's Bolero** Saturday (Oct. 5) at 8 pm and Sunday (Oct. 6) at 7:30 pm to launch TFO's 57th season.

At both concerts, the orchestra is partnering with **Habitat for Humanity Tampa Bay Gulfside** to help #FillTheTruck with cleaning and safety supplies to support relief efforts in our community. Patrons are encouraged to bring items such as paper towels, protective gloves, batteries and more. Items will be collected in bins at Ruth Eckerd Hall starting one hour before both concerts. For full list of items to donate, click here.

All ticketholders for Saturday's concert originally scheduled at the Mahaffey Theater are being notified of the change. Any ticket questions should be directed to TFO's Ticket Center at TicketCenter@FloridaOrchestra.org and 727.892.3337.

"Tampa Bay is our home, and our hearts go out to everyone affected by Hurricane Helene," said TFO President & CEO Ignacio Barrón Viela. "The hurricane has taken a toll on almost everybody – emotionally and physically. With our Habitat for Humanity partnership, our concerts bring people together to offer support in as many ways as possible. Live music has the extraordinary power to bring comfort and peace when we need it most. We hope this weekend's uplifting concerts will provide the space you need for inspiration, encouragement and connection to each other as one strong community."

Inspired by Tampa Bay's Latin roots, Maestro Francis opens his 10th season with TFO with one of the most colorful concerts of the year. The night features The Master Chorale of Tampa Bay in unexpected ways – even the exhilarating crescendo of Ravel's *Bolero* gets a twist that will bring audiences to their feet. Also on the program: De Falla's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*, perfumed by the Alhambra, featuring guest soloist Chelsea Guo on piano; Chabrier's flamboyant *España*; Villa-Lobos' exotic *Choros No. 10*; and Borodin's *Polovtsian Dances*. The night includes a short surprise work that will not be listed in the program. This is the second season of "mystery pieces," personally chosen by Maestro Francis to enhance the program.

To deepen the concert experience, patrons can attend a Pre-Concert Conversation with Maestro Francis that starts one hour before both concerts; generously sponsored by The Ruth & J O Stone Foundation. Michael Francis is generously sponsored by The Hough Family. Patrons also can listen to audio program notes, read musician bios, hear music samples and more on TFO's digital program page here. For full calendar, click here.

Before Sunday's concert, the East Lake High School Orchestra, directed by Melissa Wight, will give a free performance in the lobby as part of a TFO program that spotlights young local musicians. Students and their teachers receive complimentary tickets to the concert.

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, at Ruth Eckerd Hall. Each year, the orchestra serves more than 155,000 people through concerts and education/community programs.

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