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THE FLORIDA ORCHESTRA ANNOUNCES TWO $1 MILLION GIFTS

Edward Kaloust with TFO Board Director Carol Balkcom.

ST. PETERSBURG, FL – The Florida Orchestra is proud to announce two separate gifts of $1 million each, setting the stage for a new era of TFO growth and impact in the Tampa Bay community. These transformational contributions totaling $2 million come from dedicated patron and donor Edward Kaloust and an additional donor who wishes to remain anonymous. This is the first time the orchestra has received two such substantial gifts from multiple donors in the same year.

"We are extremely grateful to these donors for their generosity and continued support of The Florida Orchestra," said TFO President & CEO Ignacio Barrón Viela, who announced the gifts Friday at the orchestra's sold-out gala benefit concert featuring legendary cellist Yo-Yo Ma at Ruth Eckerd Hall in Clearwater. "These extraordinary contributions not only help ensure the stability of the orchestra, but also send a powerful message reaffirming the confidence, trust and commitment of our supporters who believe in the vital role TFO plays in the lives of so many."

These gifts allow the orchestra to amplify the power of music and make a lasting impact through service to our community. The funding lays the foundation for strategic growth to keep pace with a thriving Tampa Bay and enhances TFO's efforts to reach new heights of excellence onstage, strengthen essential music education in schools and create innovative programs in underserved communities.

"The Florida Orchestra and Michael Francis have profoundly inspired us for many years – in the concert hall and beyond," said Edward Kaloust, founder and former CEO of MEDI-Weightloss. "As a businessman, I see this as a sound investment in an organization and mission I believe in. Now I hope my investment will inspire others who understand what an incredible asset this orchestra is to our community, our economy and our own lives. It is essential to keep this orchestra strong now and for generations to come." Kaloust also dedicated the donation in memory of his children Richard Kaloust and Kimberly Ann Kaloust.

"I am deeply grateful to Ed Kaloust for his incredible generosity to the Florida Orchestra. He is a dear friend, and we are honored to receive this donation in memory of his beloved children, Richard and Kimberly Ann," said Music Director Michael Francis, who is celebrating 10 years with TFO. "Ed is a great man of vision, and it fills us with confidence that he has chosen to make such a significant investment in the future of this orchestra. Together we share a deep passion for how live symphonic music can positively transform our community."

"We are excited by this new chapter for TFO," said Barrón Viela, who took over as orchestra CEO in August 2023. "We invite the community to join us at upcoming concerts to celebrate this great news and be part of the momentum that will shape the future of their Florida Orchestra."

The Florida Orchestra's mission is to Inspire | Educate | Unite to build community through the power of music. Deeply rooted in the Tampa Bay community for 57 years, TFO is the largest professional orchestra in the state with 70 full-time musicians and conductors. This season, the orchestra will perform more than 100 concerts in

venues throughout Tampa Bay, including a wide range of classical, popular, film and family-friendly music, as well as perform with global stars including cellist Yo-Yo Ma and *Wicked* star Cynthia Erivo May 2 & 3, 2025. Through concerts and education/community programs combined, TFO serves more than 155,000 residents each year – nearly half through free or low-cost 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. 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 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