

23/24



Academy of St Martin in the Fields with Joshua Bell

Saturday, April 6, 2024 • 7:30 pm
Jackson Hall, UC Davis

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We should take a moment to acknowledge the land on which we are gathered. For thousands of years, this land has been the home of Patwin people.

Today, there are three federally recognized Patwin tribes: Cachil DeHe Band of Wintun Indians of the Colusa Indian Community, Kletsel Dehe Wintun Nation and Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation.

The Patwin people have remained committed to the stewardship of this land over many centuries. It has been cherished and protected, as elders have instructed the young through generations. We are honored and grateful to be here today on their traditional lands.

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In Memory of Rodney Boon | 1967 - 2024

Rodney Boon began working for the Mondavi Center in 2011 with a background as a musician, touring sound engineer and tour manager working with bands in the 1990s and early 2000s. He was promoted to Head Audio Engineer in 2013. Over the years, he worked tirelessly to improve and upgrade the sound and sound control systems in both Jackson Hall and the Vanderhoef Studio Theatre, especially the Meyer Leopard speaker arrays that are hanging in Jackson Hall and strived to make our theatre spaces sound perfect for our patrons. In fact, whenever you hear the lobby chimes, know that he personally created and recorded them!

Rod was able to pass on his knowledge of touring and live sound mixing to our current Mondavi Center team and leaves behind a legacy of excellence and ensuring a superb patron experience for all who come to the Mondavi Center. He was also a great friend and mentor to all of us on the production team.

Rod's impact to the Center cannot be overstated and his presence is felt every time you hear music in our venues. Our thoughts are with his wife, Melissa, and Rod will be greatly missed by those who knew him.

Academy of St Martin in the Fields

Joshua Bell, music director and violin

PROGRAM

Flight of Moving Days

(New commission to mark the centenary of Sir Neville Marriner)

Vince Mendoza

(b. 1961)

Douglas Marriner, percussion

Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64

Allegro molto appassionato

Andante

Allegretto non troppo — Allegro molto vivace

Felix Mendelssohn

(1809-1847)

Original cadenzas by Joshua Bell

Joshua Bell, violin

---INTERMISSION---

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 72

Allegro non troppo

Adagio non troppo

Allegretto grazioso (quasi andantino)

Allegro con spirito

Johannes Brahms

(1833-1897)

The Academy's work in the U.S. is supported by Maria Cardamone and Paul Matthews together with the American Friends of the Academy of St Martin in the Fields.

Joshua Bell appears by arrangement with Park Avenue Artists (www.parkavenueartists.com) and the Academy of St Martin in the Fields. Mr. Bell records exclusively for Sony Classical - a MASTERWORKS label.

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PROGRAM NOTES

***Flight of Moving Days* (2024)**

VINCE MENDOZA

Born in Norwalk, Connecticut, November 17, 1961

Lyricism and rhythmic freedom have always been the starting point of my approach to composition. Where can we place our melodies in relation to a perceived pulse? Moreover, the challenge for written ensemble music in the jazz tradition is to invite the listener to imagine that what they are hearing is not actually written down but being made up right on the spot.

The sound of a modern drum set combined with the attitude of a post-romantic-sized orchestra is most certainly an odd juxtaposition. But in the construction of *Flight of Moving Days* I saw this juxtaposition as nothing less than a recipe for invention, and especially for providing a new point of view that enhances our understanding of the story. Think of the drum soloist as the unexpected party guest, who in the end changes the direction of the party, to a new and exciting mood, energy and emotion. My point of departure for the orchestra is their quasi-romantic language but with a more improvisational approach to phrasing, not to mention recurring Schumann-esque moments that become a basis for a quasi-theme-and-variation treatment over the course of the piece. The drum soloist's role in *Flight* may begin with coloristic flourishes, rolls and washes, but it gradually becomes more influential to the rhythmic awareness of the orchestra. I also enjoy the blurring of the lines between what is written for a jazz drum soloist and what they would otherwise choose to play to accentuate a particular melody, rhythm or energy. The drummer is in this case riding gracefully over a steadily moving wave, always going forward. By the time we reach the end of *Flight* the drums are transformed from a provider of color to the main driving force of rhythm to the end, culminating in a drum-violin dialog reminiscent of early Stravinsky or Milhaud's impressions of 1920's Jazz. But I'd rather think of it as an improvised late night jam session amongst musical rivals. That's when the real party gets started.

I would like to thank the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, Joshua Bell and Douglas Marriner for inviting me to contribute *Flight of Moving Days* to their grand celebration of Sir Neville Marriner and the beautiful legacy that he built for us.

— VINCE MENDOZA

Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64 (1844)

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

Born in Hamburg, Germany, February 3, 1809

Died in Leipzig, Germany, November 4, 1847

Felix Mendelssohn cultivated a diverse musical career in early nineteenth-century Germany, working throughout his life as a composer, conductor and pianist. From a young age, Mendelssohn and his sister Fanny—who would later become a virtuosic pianist and composer in her own right—took piano lessons from the highly-praised piano tutor Marie Bigot. The two children thirsted for exposure to larger instrumental and vocal works, prompting them to attend rehearsals of the choral society Berliner Singakademie. It is here that Mendelssohn first developed a love for contrapuntal Baroque composer Johann Sebastian Bach. On March 11, 1829, Mendelssohn revived J.S. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* at the aforementioned Singakademie. Significantly, this performance not only influenced Mendelssohn's compositional style, but it also altered how modern classical music performers view the history of Western classical music today, as this revival instigated a trend of performing historic instrumental and vocal works.

Mendelssohn showcases his predilection for *counterpoint*, or the way in which individual instruments move, in his Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64. Throughout the first movement, he highlights the interweaving of instrumental parts to showcase the violin soloist's mastery of his instrument. In a traditional concerto the orchestral whole plays the main melody first. It is not until the main melody's repetition that the soloist enters. In Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E Minor, however, the soloist joins prematurely with the full orchestra, creating a dramatic moment as the soloist wails upon an emotionally-dense, lyrical line. Mendelssohn's departure from tradition allows the violinist to explore his technical excellence through weeping, lyrical passages and vibrant, melodic runs.

Additionally, the *cadenza*, or the improvisational, virtuosic solo that traditionally occurs before the final cadence of the first movement of a concerto, appears earlier than expected. The soloist then spins out into a pre-composed rhythmic passage, creating a complex, contrapuntal interplay between soloist and orchestra. The unexpected placement of the cadenza forces the soloist to more deeply understand the musical context of the movement before considering his solo, perhaps inspiring thematic borrowing and contrapuntal invention.

Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 73 (1877)

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Born in Hamburg, Germany, May 7, 1833

Died in Vienna, Austria, April 3, 1897

German composer Johannes Brahms began his musical education quite early in life, starting piano and music theory lessons at only seven years of age. He expanded his study of music with cello and horn lessons, simultaneously developing interests in folk poetry and Hungarian rhythms, all of which would influence his compositional career.

Throughout his lifetime, Brahms composed across a wide range of symphonic and chamber genres, including symphonic poem, art song, string quartet, and symphony, receiving particular acclaim for his intricate treatment of musical themes.

Many Germanic composers of the nineteenth century expressed the burden of innovating upon the symphony after virtuoso Ludwig van Beethoven's symphonic compositions gained widespread acclaim for their ingenuity and reinvention of the form. In this post-Beethoven world, debates sprung up throughout music journals surrounding the future of German symphonic music. Composer Richard Wagner coined the term *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or total work of art, which proposed the idea of a symphonic work that incorporated theater, voice, instruments, poetry, movement, staging, and costuming in an integrated whole. Staunchly opposing Wagner's proposition for the "Music of the Future," Brahms advocated for a music that was independent from any pre-prepared story. As a result, Brahms became a figurehead of what is known today as *abstract music*, or instrumental music that is not associated with a concrete story or poem. It is through this lens of abstract music that we can better understand Brahms' Second Symphony.

With the symphonic legacy of Beethoven looming over his shoulders, Brahms turned to symphonic composition in 1862 in an effort to establish himself as a serious composer in the Western classical music canon. Building upon Beethoven's symphonic *oeuvre*, Brahms premiered his Symphony No. 1 in C Minor in 1876, a dense, brooding work which took over a decade to complete.

In contrast with his First Symphony, Brahms' light, sprightly Second Symphony was completed in only one year. Although the work is primarily cheerful throughout, the symphony lands on the occasional somber moment, making for an emotionally complex whole. Although the work is not associated with a prescribed program or poem, it is often labelled as pastoral and associated with rural themes such as broad expanses of land and roaming livestock. The French horn is often used to signal a pastoral theme, as the instrument's round, warm timbre when played in open intervals evoke green, rolling fields. From the beginning of the first movement, the horns soar above the string bassline, inviting audience members to imagine a verdant countryside. Throughout the work, simple tuneful melodies abound, perhaps taking inspiration from folksong. Florid, lyrical string runs may represent the fluttering of birds in the trees as the villagers go about their daily work. Of course, these images are up to personal interpretation, as abstract music does not rely on concrete, external images. In other words, the music can stand on its own.

The Academy of St. Martin in the Fields closes tonight's concert with Brahms' Symphony No. 2 in honor of their late founder, as "Brahms' sunny, witty second symphony is also the perfect metaphor for Sir Neville, who shared his expertise with affection and a light touch."¹

— **SARAH K. MILLER** is a Ph.D. Candidate in Musicology at the University of California, Davis. Her research specialties include eighteenth-century *opera buffa*, *commedia dell'arte*, Gender Studies and Disability Studies. She is a proud member of Baku-hatsu Taiko Dan, the Japanese-American taiko drumming ensemble at UC Davis. In her free time, Sarah enjoys reading novels about Roman and Greek mythology and playing indie video games.

1. Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, "Sir Neville Marriner Centenary Concert—ASMF & Joshua Bell," Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, 2024, www.asmf.org.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



ACADEMY OF SAINT MARTIN IN THE FIELDS

The Academy of St Martin in the Fields (ASMF) is one of the world's finest chamber orchestras, renowned for fresh, brilliant interpretations of the world's greatest orchestral music.

Formed by Sir Neville Marriner in 1958 from a group of leading London musicians, the ASMF gave its first performance in its namesake church in November 1959. Through unrivalled live performances and a vast recording output – highlights of which include the 1969 bestseller Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* and the soundtrack to the Oscar-winning film *Amadeus* – the orchestra gained an enviable international reputation for its distinctive, polished and refined sound. With over 500 releases in a much-vaunted discography and a comprehensive international touring program, the name and sound of the ASMF is known and loved by classical audiences throughout the world.

Today the orchestra is led by Music Director and virtuoso violinist Joshua Bell, retaining the collegiate spirit and flexibility of the original small, conductor-less ensemble which is an ASMF hallmark. Under Bell's direction, and with the support of Leader/ Director Tomo Keller, ASMF continues to push the boundaries of player-directed performance to new heights, presenting symphonic repertoire and chamber music on a grand scale at prestigious venues around the globe.

ASMF has enjoyed a full 2023, including a European tour with Joshua Bell, a visit to the US with cellist Gary Hoffman and mandolinist Avi Avital, concerts across Germany and

Italy with pianist Seong-Jin Cho, festival performances at Bravo! Vail, and features at multiple German summer festivals. A busy 2023/24 season has already included a tour of Australia with Joshua Bell & a live screening of *Amadeus* at the Royal Albert Hall, with a tour of Germany with Beatrice Rana and Adam Fischer, appearances in Spain with Julia Fischer, multiple visits to the US with our Chamber Ensemble, and an extensive tour of the USA with Joshua Bell to come.

Marriner 100 in April 2024, forms the centrepiece of our season in a series of special concerts and events to celebrate the life and legacy of our founder, Sir Neville Marriner, in his centenary year. At the heart of the festivities will be four UK concert performances each at a significant venue in Marriner's musical life, and showcasing the versatility and musical excellence of ASMF. The season is inspired by Sir Neville's entrepreneurial spirit, and the many ways in which his musical achievements continue to influence the orchestra today and into its future.

The ASMF continues its dedication to Learning & Participation, taking the player-directed essence of the ensemble and working with communities across London and beyond to increase wellbeing, connectedness, and autonomy. This includes work with schools, people experiencing homelessness, and supporting the next generation of orchestral musicians through collaborations with Southbank Sinfonia.



JOSHUA BELL

Music Director and Violin

With a career spanning almost four decades, GRAMMY® Award-winning violinist Joshua Bell is one of the most celebrated artists of his era. Bell has performed with virtually every major orchestra in the world, and continues to maintain engagements as a soloist, recitalist, chamber musician, conductor and as the Music Director of the Academy of St Martin in the Fields.

Bell's highlights in the 2023-24 season include an international tour of his newly-commissioned project, *The Elements*, featuring works by renowned living composers. The work will receive its premiere performances with the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Hong Kong Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and Seattle Symphony Orchestra. Bell released his new album on Sony Classical, *Butterfly Lovers*, in summer 2023. Bell will also lead the Academy of St Martin in the Fields on tour in Australia and throughout the United States. He will appear as artist-in-residence this season with the NDR Elbphilharmonie, and as guest artist with the New Jersey Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony, Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Philadelphia Orchestra, and more.

Born in Bloomington, Indiana, Bell began playing the violin at age 4, and at age 12, began studies with his mentor, Josef Gingold. At age 14, Bell debuted with Riccardo Muti and the Philadelphia Orchestra, and made his Carnegie Hall debut at age 17 with the St. Louis Symphony. At age 18, Bell signed with his first label, London Decca, and received the Avery Fisher Career Grant. In the following decades, Bell has been nominated for six GRAMMY® awards, named "Instrumentalist of the Year" by Musical America, a "Young Global Leader" by the World Economic Forum, and has received the Avery Fisher Prize. He also received the 2003 Indiana Governor's Arts Award and in 2000 was named an "Indiana Living Legend."

Bell has performed for three American presidents and the justices of the Supreme Court. Bell also participated in President Barack Obama's Committee on the Arts and Humanities' mission to Cuba, performing on an Emmy-nominated PBS Live from Lincoln Center special; Joshua Bell: Seasons of Cuba, celebrating renewed diplomacy between Cuba and the United States.

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- Nancy Fisher

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Hal and Carol Sconyers°	L.J. Herrig°	Don McNary°	<i>remain anonymous</i>

To learn about planned giving opportunities, please contact Liz King, 530.752.0563.

ARTISTIC VENTURES FUND

We applaud our Artistic Ventures Fund members, whose major gift commitments support artist engagement fees, innovative artist commissions, artist residencies, and programs made available free to the public.

James H. Bigelow	Patti Donlon	Wanda Lee Graves and Steve	Nancy Lawrence°
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ENDOWMENT GIVING

Thank you to the following donors for their special program support

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We apologize if we listed your name incorrectly. This list reflects all gifts received as of February 29, 2024.

Please contact Laurie Espinoza, 530.752.7354, to inform us of corrections.

* Friends of Mondavi Center

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