



Les Arts Florissants

Théotime Langlois de Swarte, violin

Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* at 300

FRIDAY MARCH 21, 2025 | 7:30PM

JACKSON HALL | UC DAVIS

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Discovering What's Next

The artists we select for each Mondavi Center season generally fall into one of two categories: returning favorites that Mondavi Center audiences are telling us they'd like to see again; and artists that we believe belong on our stages but haven't yet made an appearance.

We adore our relationships with artists making return engagements. Part of the magic of these returns comes from watching artists evolve their craft and explore new repertoire, but with the warmth and comfort of seeing an old friend.

An exemplar of the power of long-term relationships is Joshua Bell, who returns in recital on April 4. Bell first performed at the Mondavi Center in November 2002, during our inaugural season. He appeared as a guest soloist with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, an ensemble he now leads. He was 34 and it had been just two years since he was deemed one of *People* magazine's 50 most beautiful people in the world. Bell is still a beautiful person, and in ways that run far deeper than a glossy magazine article.

Over these last 20+ seasons, we've watched a young star become an absolute legend. At this stage in his career, Bell's extraordinary tone and mastery of the repertoire are so remarkable that he sometimes seems superhuman. It has been an incredible journey so far.

All season long I've been communicating about the idea of discovery, encouraging you, our wonderful patrons, to embrace the familiar and the beloved while trying something new. Supporting those artists making their Mondavi Center debuts is critical to the long-term health of the performing arts.

The collaborative process of discovery, between audiences and arts organizations, is part of the fuel that feeds the birth of stars. The Joshua Bells of the world, while in possession of innate and extraordinary talent, have their careers because arts institutions and arts audiences believed in them, supported them, and showed up to see them perform.

As the end of my first full season as Executive Director approaches, I'm grateful that so many of you heeded the call of discovery, supporting our efforts to ensure a vibrant and interesting future for the arts. I'm sure that the more than 20 artists that made their Mondavi Center debuts this season are grateful too.

Thank You!

Jeremy Ganter

Executive Director

Les Arts Florissants

Théotime Langlois de Swarte, violin
Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* at 300

PROGRAM

Adoramus te, SV 289 (transcription)	Claudio Monteverdi (1567 - 1643)
Concerto for strings and basso continuo "Madrigalesco" RV 129 Adagio - Allegro - Adagio - Without indication	Antonio Vivaldi (1678 - 1741)
Bergamasca	Marco Uccellini (1603 - 1680)
Concerto in D Minor, RV 813 <i>Allegro - Adagio - Allegro - Adagio - Andante e piano - Largo - Allegro</i>	Vivaldi
Concerto XII in D Minor "Follia" (after Corelli)	Francesco Geminiani (1687-1762)
The Four Seasons:	
Concerto No. 1 in E Major, Op. 8, RV 269, "Spring" (La primavera) <i>Allegro</i> <i>Largo</i> <i>Allegro</i>	Vivaldi
Concerto No. 2 in G Minor, Op. 8, RV 315, "Summer" (L'estate) <i>Allegro non molto</i> <i>Adagio</i> <i>Presto</i>	Vivaldi
---INTERMISSION---	
Overture to "La Fida Ninfa" ("The Faithful Nymph") in F-Major, FV 714	Vivaldi
Concerto No. 3 in F Major, Op. 8, RV 293, "Autumn" (L'autunno) <i>Allegro</i> <i>Adagio molto</i> <i>Allegro</i>	Vivaldi
Grave from Violin Concerto in Bb Major, RV 370	Vivaldi
Concerto No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 8, RV 297, "Winter" (L'inverno) <i>Allegro non molto</i> <i>Largo</i> <i>Allegro</i>	Vivaldi

PROGRAM SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Land Acknowledgement » 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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Program Notes

A colorful figure in fascinating Baroque Venice who captivated audiences with his extravagance and virtuoso violin playing, Antonio Vivaldi is one of the most influential musicians of 18th-century Europe.

Born in Venice in 1678, Vivaldi quickly became violin master, choirmaster and then concert master at the Ospedale della Pietà. There, he explored a wide range of musical activity, demonstrating an incomparable talent, notably in the invention of the solo concerto, which enchanted 18th-century musical Europe and inspired virtually all subsequent composers. His career also flourished in opera, particularly at the San Angelo theater in Venice, but also in Mantua, Rome and Vienna.

The Four Seasons, whose 300th anniversary we are celebrating today, played an essential role in the composer's fame. With its descriptive and imaginative writing, this work anticipates the programmatic music that would prevail among later Romantic-era composers, and even included descriptive sonnets to help illustrate the music for performers and listeners. For violinist Théotime Langlois de Swarte it embodies the essence of spirituality, a metaphysical work evoking life and death, with moments of great gentleness as well as extreme violence. Through his interpretation Théotime seeks to capture the drama characteristic of Venetian arts: expressive density, operatic and theatrical emotion, and jubilant energy.

The works complementing the *Seasons* on our program serve to highlight musicians who influenced Vivaldi's approach, and one he in turn inspired.

The transcription of Claudio Monteverdi's **Adoramus te SV 289** is closely linked to Vivaldi's childhood, when he accompanied his father, a musician in the San Marco orchestra which Monteverdi previously directed. The work also embodies the liturgical vocal style specific to Venice, as well as the city's theatrical and musical environment. In a way, it represents Vivaldi's musical DNA, upon which he built his virtuosity, notably through the abundance of repeated notes.

The **Madrigalesco** from Vivaldi's *Concerto for strings and continuo* RV 129 is composed in the "antico" style. Its presence here establishes an interesting connection between Monteverdi and Uccellini, revealing the extent to which the influences of the masters shaped Vivaldi's new style.

If Monteverdi marks the beginning of Vivaldi's musical journey, Marco Uccellini's **Bergamasca** reveals the origin of

his instrumental repertoire. A pioneer in the art of violin and sonata composition, Uccellini exerted a decisive influence on the young Vivaldi. This dance, based on a popular theme with variations, also celebrated the art of improvisation, an element dear to the Venetians and to the composer throughout his life.

Vivaldi's **Concerto in D minor RV 813** was one of his earliest written for the Ospedale della Pietà in Venice. All the hallmarks of Vivaldi's style are already present: joy, virtuosity, theatricality, exaltation. The popularity of this concerto is also due to Johann Sebastian Bach's masterly transcription for keyboard.

Francesco Geminiani's *Follia* from **Concerto XII in D minor**, a transcription of Corelli's treatment of this famous baroque-era theme, illustrates the lineage of three Italian masters. Corelli, whose groundbreaking Op. 5 (concluding with "Follia" and published in 1700) – was an inspirational figure to the young Vivaldi. And Geminiani's "Follia", published in 1729, was almost certainly influenced by the appearance of Vivaldi's Op. 8 just four years prior. It also highlights the particularly lively and joyful spirit inherent to the art of the concerto, which Geminiani had undoubtedly heard in many of Vivaldi's works.

Vivaldi's Overture to **La Fida Ninfa in F major RV 714** evokes the Teatro San Angelo and shows how opera influenced Vivaldi's instrumental music, offering extraordinary vocality. Opera also enabled him to create dramatic interactions between instruments, where brilliance, impetuosity, sensuality and seduction blend harmoniously in the soundscape.

The "Grave" movement from Vivaldi's **Concerto in B flat major RV 370** is an unfinished piece, built on an ostinato chromatic bass. Théotime Langlois de Swarte has completed it here; a tribute from a young violinist to his illustrious elder.

Vivaldi's singular genius continues to inspire artists the world over, as demonstrated by this concert of Les Arts Florissants led by violinist Théotime Langlois de Swarte. As this great Vivaldi performer and loyal member of Les Arts Florissants puts it: "For one of the best-known composers in Western music, it is astonishing to realize that there are still so many facets to explore."

When published in 1725 nobody could imagine Vivaldi's Opus 8, Nos. 1–4 ("The Four Seasons") would become perhaps the most frequently heard music of all time. Vivaldi's singular genius continues to inspire artists the world over, as demonstrated by this concert of Les Arts Florissants led by violinist Théotime Langlois de Swarte. As this great Vivaldi performer and loyal member of Les

Arts Florissants puts it: "For one of the best-known composers in Western music, it is astonishing there are still so many facets to explore."

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Sonnets published in the first edition of "The Four Seasons"

These Sonnets appeared in the first edition of "The Four Seasons" published in 1725. Many assume they were penned by Vivaldi, although nobody is certain. They nevertheless must have been important to the composer.

SPRING

Allegro

Springtime is upon us.

The birds celebrate her return with festive song,
and murmuring streams are
softly caressed by the breezes.
Thunderstorms, those heralds of Spring, roar,
casting their dark mantle over heaven,
Then they die away to silence,
and the birds take up their charming songs once more.

Largo

On the flower-strewn meadow, with leafy branches
rustling overhead, the goat-herd sleeps,
his faithful dog beside him.

Allegro

Led by the festive sound of rustic bagpipes,
nymphs and shepherds lightly dance
beneath spring's beautiful canopy.

SUMMER

Allegro non molto

Under a hard season, fired up by the sun
Languishes man, languishes the flock and burns the pine
We hear the cuckoo's voice;
then sweet songs of the turtledove and finch are heard.
Soft breezes stir the air, but threatening
the North Wind sweeps them suddenly aside.
The shepherd trembles,
fearing violent storms and his fate.

Adagio e piano - Presto e forte

The fear of lightning and fierce thunder
Robs his tired limbs of rest
As gnats and flies buzz furiously around.

Presto

Alas, his fears were justified
The Heavens thunder and roar and with hail
Cut the head off the wheat and damages the grain.

AUTUMN

Allegro

Celebrates the peasant, with songs and dances,
The pleasure of a bountiful harvest.
And fired up by Bacchus' liquor,
many end their revelry in sleep.

Adagio molto

Everyone is made to forget their cares and to sing and
dance
By the air which is tempered with pleasure
And (by) the season that invites so many, many
Out of their sweetest slumber to fine enjoyment

Allegro

The hunters emerge at the new dawn,
And with horns and dogs and guns depart upon their
hunting
The beast flees and they follow its trail;
Terrified and tired of the great noise
Of guns and dogs, the beast, wounded, threatens
Languidly to flee, but harried, dies.

WINTER

Allegro non molto

To tremble from cold in the icy snow,
In the harsh breath of a horrid wind;
To run, stamping one's feet every moment,
Our teeth chattering in the extreme cold

Largo

Before the fire to pass peaceful,
Contented days while the rain outside pours down.

Allegro

We tread the icy path slowly and cautiously,
for fear of tripping and falling.
Then turn abruptly, slip, crash on the ground and,
rising, hasten on across the ice lest it cracks up.
We feel the chill north winds course through the home
despite the locked and bolted doors...
this is winter, which nonetheless
brings its own delights.

Artist Biographies

Les Arts Florissants

William Christie, Founder and Musical Director

Paul Agnew, Musical Co-director

An ensemble of singers and instrumentalists specialized in the performance of Baroque music on period instruments, Les Arts Florissants are renowned the world over. Founded in 1979 by the Franco-American harpsichordist and conductor William Christie, the Ensemble, named for a short opera by Marc-Antoine Charpentier, has played a pioneering role in the revival of a Baroque repertoire that had long been neglected (including the rediscovery of countless treasures in the collections of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France). Today that repertoire is widely performed and admired: not only French music from the reign of Louis XIV, but also more generally European music of the 17th and 18th centuries. Since 2007, the Ensemble is also conducted by the British tenor Paul Agnew, who was appointed Musical Co-director of Les Arts Florissants in 2019.

Each season Les Arts Florissants give around 100 concerts and opera performances in France—at the Philharmonie de Paris, where they are artists in residence, the Théâtre de Caen, the Opéra Comique, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, the Château de Versailles, as well as at numerous festivals—and are an active ambassador for French culture abroad, being regularly invited to New York, London, Edinburgh, Brussels, Vienna, Salzburg, Madrid, Barcelona, Moscow and elsewhere.

Since the 1987 production of Lully's *Atys* at the Opéra Comique in Paris, which was triumphantly revived in May 2011, it has been on the opera stage that Les Arts Florissants have enjoyed their greatest successes. Notable productions include works by Rameau (*Les Indes galantes*, *Hippolyte et Aricie*, *Les Boréades*, *Les Paladins*, *Platée*), Lully and Charpentier (*Médée*, *David et Jonathas*, *Les Arts florissants*, *Armide*), Handel (*Orlando*, *Acis and Galatea*, *Semele*, *Alcina*, *Serse*, *Hercules*, *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*), Purcell (*King Arthur*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *The Fairy Queen*), Mozart (*The Magic Flute*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), Monteverdi (his opera trilogy), but also by composers who are less frequently played, such as Landi (*Il Sant'Alessio*), Cesti (*Il Tito*), Campra (*Les Fêtes vénitiennes*) and Hérold (*Zampa*).

For their theater productions, Les Arts Florissants have called on the talents of some of the greatest stage directors, including Jean-Marie Villégier, Robert Carsen, Adrian Noble, Andrei Serban, Luc Bondy, Deborah Warner, David McVicar, Claus Guth and Jérôme Deschamps and Macha Makeïeff, as well as on renowned choreographers such as Béatrice Massin, Ana Yepes, Jirí Kylián, Blanca Li, Trisha Brown, Robyn Orlin, José Montalvo, Françoise Denieau, Dominique Hervieu and Mourad Merzouki.

Les Arts Florissants enjoy an equally high profile in the concert hall, as illustrated by their many acclaimed concert or semi-staged performances of operas and oratorios (Rameau's *Zoroastre*, *Anacréon* and *Les Fêtes d'Hébé*, Charpentier's *Actéon* and *La Descente d'Orphée aux Enfers*, Campra's *Idoménée* and Mozart's *Idomeneo*, Montéclair's *Jephté*, Rossi's *L'Orfeo* and Handel's *Giulio Cesare* with Cecilia Bartoli as well as his *Messiah*, *Theodora*, *Susanna*, *Jephtha* and *Belshazzar*), their secular and sacred chamber-music programs (petits motets by Lully and Charpentier, madrigals by Monteverdi and Gesualdo, court airs by Lambert, hymns by Purcell, among others) and their approach to large-scale works (particularly the grands motets by Rameau, Mondonville, Campra and Charpentier, as well as Handel's *Messiah* and J.S. Bach's *Matthew's* and *John's Passion*).

The Ensemble has produced an impressive discography: nearly 100 recordings (CD and DVD) and its own collection in collaboration with *harmonia mundi* directed by William Christie and Paul Agnew.

In recent years, Les Arts Florissants have launched several education programs for young musicians. The most emblematic is the Academy of Le Jardin des Voix: created in 2002, it is held every two years and has already brought a substantial number of new singers into the limelight. The Arts Flo Juniors program, launched in 2007, enables conservatory students to join the orchestra and chorus for the length of a production, from the first day of rehearsals up to the final performance. And then there is the partnership between William Christie, Les Arts Florissants and New York's Juilliard School of Music, which since 2007 has allowed a fruitful artistic exchange between the U.S. and France. Launched in 2021, a yearly program of masterclasses in Thiré (Vendée, Pays de la Loire) comes to complete this panel of programs with short working sessions led by William Christie and Paul Agnew, to help young professionals improve their skills.

Les Arts Florissants also organize numerous events aimed at building new audiences. Linked to each year's concert

program, they are designed for both amateur musicians and non-musicians, adults as much as children.

In 2012, William Christie and Les Arts Florissants created the festival Dans les Jardins de William Christie, in partnership with the Conseil départemental de la Vendée. An annual event, the festival brings together artists from Les Arts Florissants, pupils from the Juilliard School and finalists from Le Jardin des Voix for concerts and promenades musicales in the gardens created by William Christie at Thiré, in the Vendée. In addition to the festival, Les Arts Florissants are working with the endowment fund Les Jardins de Musique de William Christie towards the creation of a permanent cultural venue in Thiré. In 2017, following a decision by the French Ministry of Culture, Les Arts Florissants has been awarded the national label « Centre culturel de Rencontre », which distinguishes projects associating creation, patrimony and transmission. In 2018, Les Arts Florissants becomes the Foundation Les Arts Florissants – William Christie.

Les Arts Florissants receives financial support from the State — the Regional Direction of Cultural Affairs (DRAC), the Département de la Vendée and the Région Pays de la Loire. The Selz Foundation is their Principal Sponsor. Aline Foriel-Destezet and the American Friends of Les Arts Florissants are Major Sponsors. Les Arts Florissants has been ensemble in residence at the Philharmonie de Paris and is recognized as a “Heritage Site for Culture”.

Théotime Langlois de Swarte, violin

“Performances so special that I feel a changed man from listening” [*Gramophone*]; “A stunner by any standard” [*The Strad*]; and “Mesmerizing” [*The New Yorker*] – these represent common reactions upon encountering violinist **Théotime Langlois de Swarte** who is rapidly emerging as a much sought-after violin soloist (on both baroque and modern instruments), chamber musician, recitalist, and conductor.

Recognition has come in the form of major awards, including the 2022 “Diapason D’or of the year” for his recording of Vivaldi, Locatelli, and Leclair concertos (harmonia mundi), and the 2022 “Ambassador of the Year” award from the European Early Music Network (REMA), along with multiple additional recording awards and a February, 2022 cover story in *The Strad* magazine.

In solo appearances on both baroque and modern violin, de Swarte regularly offers concertos by all of the baroque masters, along with those of Haydn and Mozart. He has

appeared with Les Arts Florissants, Le Consort, Orchestre de l’Opera Royal, Holland Baroque, The Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, Les Ombres, and Orchestre National de Lorraine. His engagements have brought him to prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall, the Philharmonie de Paris, Vienna’s Musikverein, Hamburg’s Elbphilharmonie, Berlin’s Philharmonie, Los Angeles’ Walt Disney Hall, and the Shanghai National Art Center.

Théotime Langlois de Swarte studied at the Paris Conservatory under Michael Hentz, and became a regular member of **Les Arts Florissants** at William Christie’s invitation in 2014, while still a student. He has since appeared as soloist with the ensemble, and will perform Vivaldi’s “Four Seasons” with them on North American tours in spring and fall, 2025. He has also appeared in recital with William Christie, including a 2021 recording of sonatas by Leclair and Senaille (“Generations” on harmonia mundi).

As co-founder – with harpsichordist Justin Taylor – of the baroque ensemble **Le Consort**, de Swarte can be heard on numerous highly-acclaimed recordings including “Specchio Veneziano,” “Opus 1,” and “Philharmonica,” all on Alpha Classics. Le Consort has performed widely throughout Europe, and their debut North American tours in 23/24 included Montreal, Boston, Washington, Kansas City, Berkeley, Chicago, St. Paul, Louisville, New Orleans, Vancouver, and Ottawa.

Besides William Christie, frequent recital collaborators include harpsichordist Justin Taylor and lute player Thomas Dunford, with whom he recorded a much-praised album titled “The Mad Lover.” Another notable recording, “A Concert at the Time of Proust”, was made on the newly-restored Davidoff Stradivarius at the Philharmonie de Paris Museum. His most recent recording – “Antonio Vivaldi Concerti per una vita” (harmonia mundi) – has garnered wide acclaim, and early 2025 marks the release of Vivaldi’s “The Four Seasons” to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the work’s publication.

Alongside his instrumental work, de Swarte is emerging as a conductor. In 2023 he led performances at l’Opera Comique of Lully’s *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* (with Les Musiciens du Louvre at Marc Minkowski’s invitation) and Gretry’s *Zemire et Azor* (at Louis Langrée’s invitation). He returns to l’Opera Comique to lead Gluck’s *Iphigénie en Tauride* in November, 2025.

Théotime Langlois de Swarte is a laureate of the Banque Populaire Foundation. He plays a violin of Carlo Bergonzi (1733) on generous loan from an anonymous patron.

Les Arts Florissants

Théotime Langlois de Swarte, violin soloist

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Cello

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Théotime Langlois de Swarte records exclusively for Harmonia Mundi

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Annual donations to the Mondavi Center directly support our operating budget and are an essential source of revenue. Please join us in thanking our loyal donors whose philanthropic support ensures our future ability to bring great artists and speakers to our region and to provide nationally recognized arts education programs for students and teachers.

For more information on supporting the Mondavi Center, visit MondaviArts.org or call 530.752.7354. *This list reflects all gifts received as of February 10, 2025.*

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