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[Press Room](#)



Photos of Les Arts Florissants are available for download in the [press room](#).

**CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS
LES ARTS FLORISSANTS IN A SEMI-STAGED PRODUCTION OF
PURCELL'S *DIDO AND AENEAS* AND CHARPENTIER'S *ACTÉON*
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 9**

A pre-performance talk is planned for all concert ticketholders

Berkeley, September 29, 2017 — Cal Performances welcomes back France's pre-eminent early music ensemble, **Les Arts Florissants**, for one night only in a semi-staged production of Henry Purcell's timeless *Dido and Aeneas* and Marc-Antoine Charpentier's pastorale *Actéon*, on Thursday November 9 at 8pm in Zellerbach Hall. Directed from the harpsichord by William Christie, the vocal and instrumental ensemble is widely praised for reviving Baroque opera by combining rigorous musicological insight with a modern dramatic sense.

Bringing together *Dido and Aeneas* and *Actéon* on the same program is an idea dear to William Christie. These chamber operas, which count among the most remarkable examples of the genre, are an excellent complement to one another: *Actéon* is likely part of a group of works presented in England at the end of the 17th century and could well have supplied the young Purcell with a direct source of inspiration for his *Dido and Aeneas*. By associating the Franco-Italian elements of Charpentier's writing with the style of the budding British school, the "Orpheus Britannicus" (as Purcell was known) was able to raise English opera to the summit of elegance and eloquence.

Both works on the program involve supernatural powers meddling in mortal affairs, in a marriage of narrative, song, dance, and music. *Dido and Aeneas*, composed in 1689, is based on Virgil's love story of the Trojan hero Aeneas and the Carthaginian queen Dido, which turns tragic with her subsequent suicide when he leaves to fulfill his destiny as founder of Rome. Charpentier's *Actéon* (1684) is a retelling of the Greek myth from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, in which a hapless hunter meets a tragic fate after he is caught glimpsing the bathing goddess Diana—in her anger, the goddess turns him into a stag, and he is pursued and torn apart by his own hounds. Both operas are presented in semi-staged productions directed by Sophie Daneman.

A pre-performance talk, free to all ticketholders, is planned in the hall with musicologist Victor Gavenda at 7pm.

Ticket Information

Tickets for *Les Arts Florissants* on Thursday, November 9 at 8pm in Zellerbach Hall range from \$48–\$86 (prices subject to change). Half-price tickets are available for UC Berkeley students. Tickets are available through the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, at (510) 642-9988, at calperformances.org, and at the door. For more information about discounts, go to calperformances.org/discounts.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Thursday, November 9, 8pm

Zellerbach Hall
Bancroft Way at Dana Street
UC Berkeley campus

Early Music

Les Arts Florissants

William Christie, *music director and harpsichord*

Sophie Daneman, *stage director*

Program:

Purcell/*Dido and Aeneas*

Charpentier/*Actéon*

Tickets: \$48–\$86 (prices subject to change)

Residency Activities

Pre-performance Talk

Zellerbach Hall

Thursday, November 9, 7pm

Musicologist Victor Gavenda gives a pre-performance talk free to all ticket holders.