

MOSS  
ARTS  
CENTER

24/  
25



les arts florissants  
*vivaldi's four seasons at 300*  
théotime langlois de swarte, violon

Wednesday, April 2, 2025, 7:30 PM

Street and Davis Performance Hall, Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre

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les arts florissants  
*vivaldi's four seasons at 300*  
théotime langlois de swarte, violin

*This performance will last approximately 100 minutes,  
including one 15-minute intermission.*

**This performance is supported in part by a gift from Erv Blythe.  
Additional funding is provided by the  
Deborah L. Brown Center for the Arts Excellence Fund.**

# program

*Adoramus te*, SV 289  
(transcription)

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

Concerto for Strings and Basso  
Continuo, *Madrigalesco*, RV 129

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

- I. Adagio*
- II. Allegro*
- III. Adagio*
- IV. Without indication

*Bergamasca*

Marco Uccellini (1603-1680)

Concerto in D minor, RV 813

Vivaldi

- I. Allegro*
- II. Adagio*
- III. Allegro*
- IV. Adagio*
- V. Andante e piano*
- VI. Largo*
- VII. Allegro*

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)*

Vivaldi

- I. Allegro*
- II. Largo*
- III. Allegro*

Concerto no. 2 in G minor, op. 8,  
RV 315, *Summer (L'estate)*

Vivaldi

*I. Allegro non molto*

*II. Adagio*

*III. Presto*

## 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)*

Vivaldi

*I. Allegro*

*II. Adagio molto*

*III. Allegro*

Grave from Violin Concerto  
in B-flat Major, RV 370

Vivaldi

Concerto no. 4 in F minor, op. 8,  
RV 297, *Winter (L'inverno)*

Vivaldi

*I. Allegro non molto*

*II. Largo*

*III. Allegro*

North American management for Les Arts Florissants and Théotime Langlois de Swarte  
by David Rowe Artists. Learn more at [davidroweartists.com](http://davidroweartists.com).

Les Arts Florissants records exclusively for Harmonia Mundi  
Théotime Langlois de Swarte records exclusively for Harmonia Mundi

# 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 18<sup>th</sup>-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 18<sup>th</sup>-century musical Europe and inspired virtually all subsequent composers. His career also flourished in opera, particularly at the San Angelo theatre in Venice, but also in Mantua, Rome, and Vienna.

*The Four Seasons*, the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of which 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, [de Swarte] seeks to capture the drama characteristic of Venetian arts: expressive density, operatic and theatrical emotion, and jubilant energy.

The works complementing the *Seasons* on the 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 concluded with *Follia* and was 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. De Swarte has completed it here; a tribute from a young violinist to his illustrious elder.

# program notes, cont.

When published in 1725 nobody could imagine Vivaldi's op. 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 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

*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.

# sonnets, cont.

## 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.

# les arts florissants

**Théotime Langlois de Swarte**, *violin soloist*

## **Violin I**

Augusta McKay Lodge, *leader*

Valentine Pinardel

Christophe Robert

Magdalena Sypniewski

## **Violin II**

Roxana Rastegar

Yaoré Talibart

Jeffrey Girton

Alyssa Campbell

## **Viola**

Lucia Peralta

Nicolas Fromonteil

## **Cello**

Hanna Salzenstein

Magdalena Probe

## **Double Bass**

Alexandre Teyssonnière de Gramont

## **Harpsichord**

Benoît Hartoin

# biographies

## *les arts florissants*

**William Christie**, *founder and musical director*

**Paul Agnew**, *musical co-director*

An ensemble of singers and instrumentalists specializing in the performance of Baroque music on period instruments, Les Arts Florissants is 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 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> 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 gives around 100 concerts and opera performances in France — at the Philharmonie de Paris, where it is artist-in-residence; the Théâtre de Caen; the Opéra Comique; the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées; and the Château de Versailles, as well as at numerous festivals — and is 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 has enjoyed its greatest successes. Notable productions include works by Rameau (*Les Indes galantes*, *Hippolyte et Aricie*, *Les Boréades*, *Les Paladins*, and *Platée*), Lully and Charpentier (*Médée*, *David et Jonathas*, *Les Arts Florissants*, and *Armide*), Handel (*Orlando*, *Acis and Galatea*, *Semele*, *Alcina*, *Serse*, *Hercules*, *L'Allegro*, and *il Penseroso ed il Moderato*), Purcell (*King Arthur*, *Dido and Aeneas*, and *The Fairy Queen*), Mozart (*The Magic Flute* and *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), and 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*).

# biographies, cont.

For its theatre productions, Les Arts Florissants has 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 enjoys an equally high profile in the concert hall, as illustrated by its 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*; Mozart's *Idomeneo*; Montéclair's *Jephthé*; Rossi's *L'Orfeo*; and Handel's *Giulio Cesare* with Cecilia Bartoli, as well as his *Messiah*, *Theodora*, *Susanna*, *Jephtha*, and *Belshazzar*), its secular and sacred chamber music programs (petits motets by Lully and Charpentier, madrigals by Monteverdi and Gesualdo, court airs by Lambert, and hymns by Purcell, among others), and its 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 Christie and Agnew.

In recent years, Les Arts Florissants has 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 master classes in Thiré (Vendée, Pays de la Loire) comes to complete this panel of programs, with short working sessions led by Christie and Agnew to help young professionals improve their skills.

Les Arts Florissants also organizes numerous events aimed at building new audiences. Linked to each year's concert program, the events are designed for both amateur musicians and non-musicians, adults as much as children.

In 2012 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 Christie at Thiré, in the Vendée. In addition to the festival, Les Arts Florissants is 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 became 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 its 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.

# biographies, cont.

Recognition has come in the form of major awards, including the 2022 Diapason D'or of the Year for de Swarte's 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.

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 performs Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* with them on North American tours in spring and fall 2025. He has also appeared in recital with 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 its debut North American tours in 2023-2024 included Montreal, Boston, Washington, Kansas City, Berkeley, Chicago, St. Paul, Louisville, New Orleans, Vancouver, and Ottawa.



Besides Christie, frequent recital collaborators include harpsichordist Justin Taylor and lute player Thomas Dunford, with whom de Swarte 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 marked the release of Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* to commemorate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the work's publication.

Alongside his instrumental work, de Swarte is emerging as a conductor. In 2023 he led performances at l'Opéra-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'Opéra-Comique to lead Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride* in November 2025.

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

*This is the first performance at the Moss Arts Center for de Swarte and Les Arts Florissants.*

# tell us what you think!



We'd love your feedback on this performance. If you complete the short survey, you can enter for a chance to win two tickets to Chucho Valdés and Irakere 50 on Saturday, May 10, 2025.

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*Please note, survey responses are anonymous. If you would like a response to your feedback, please email [mossartscenter@vt.edu](mailto:mossartscenter@vt.edu).*

## engagement events

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2

### **UNIVERSITY CLASS VISIT: SURVEY OF HISTORY OF WESTERN ART**

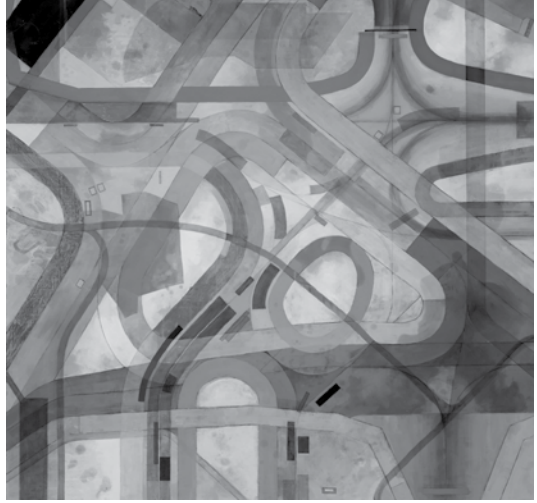
Violinist Théotime Langlois de Swarte examined the interplay between visual art, architecture, and music in Venice during the Baroque period with School of Visual Arts students.

*Special thanks to the School of Visual Arts and Lauren DiSalvo*

## go deeper

Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* has permeated popular culture since its resurgence in 1947, thanks to violinist Louis Kaufman's recording of the work. Today we find excerpts in the most unexpected places, including the random elevator ride to the occasional call-holding soundtrack. The piece has also been reimagined for various genres, including jazz and electronic music. What might this composition from the 1700s tell about past and present listeners, and why does the piece still captivate audiences 300 years after its premiere?

# MOSS ARTS CENTER



## COMING SOON

### **SOVA Faculty Triennial *Assembly***

Thursday, April 10-Saturday, April 26

*All galleries*

The 2025 Faculty Triennial Exhibition will showcase works by Virginia Tech's School of Visual Arts (SOVA) faculty members, including adjunct faculty. Titled *Assembly*, this exhibition celebrates the creativity of the School of Visual Arts and will include a wide range of media, from traditional to digital, as well as sculpture, video, drawing, and painting.

Betsy Bannan, Sam Blanchard, Michael Borowski, Dongsoo Choi, Meaghan Dee, Dustin Dennis, Meredith Drum, Les Duffield, Jennifer L. Hand, Travis Head, Wonjung Jung, Amanda Kelly, Nate King, Amanda Lechner, Alexandra Leonetti, Mitch Miller, Hiromi Okumura, Amelia Salisbury, Robin Scully, Eric Standley, Chelsea Thompto, Thomas Tucker, Rachel Lin Weaver, and Shuang Wu

#### **Opening Reception**

Thursday, April 10, 4-6 PM

Moss Arts Center Grand Lobby

Free

Betsy Bannan; *Airside Choreography*; 2024; oil on panel; 36 x 36 inches



## PK-12 PROGRAMS AT THE MOSS ARTS CENTER

Each year, wildly enthusiastic students — from PK through 12<sup>th</sup> grade — fill our theatre for free matinee performances by artists from all over the world. They explore our visual arts galleries during school tours and create and learn during hands-on workshops with artists. For many students, visiting the Moss Arts Center is the first time they've ever been to a performing arts facility or gallery. Why do young people need access to the arts? Engaging in artistic activities offers a wide range of skills that they will use throughout their lives.

**Learn more at [bit.ly/moss-k12](https://bit.ly/moss-k12).**

# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Virginia Tech acknowledges that we live and work on the Tutelo/Monacan People's homeland, and we recognize their continued relationships with their lands and waterways. We further acknowledge that the Morrill Land-Grant College Act (1862) enabled the commonwealth of Virginia to finance and found Virginia Tech through the forced removal of Native Nations from their lands in California and other areas in the West.

# LABOR RECOGNITION

Virginia Tech acknowledges that its Blacksburg campus sits partly on land that was previously the site of the Smithfield and Solitude Plantations, owned by members of the Preston family. Between the 1770s and the 1860s, the Prestons and other local White families that owned parcels of what became Virginia Tech also owned hundreds of enslaved people. Enslaved Black people generated resources that financed Virginia Tech's predecessor institution, the Preston and Olin Institute, and they also worked on the construction of its building.



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Your gift to the Moss Arts Center helps to support access to the arts, student engagement, and cultural diversity.

Through gifts like yours, we have been able to expand opportunities for PK-12 students in our region, deepen relationships with academic partners, continue to offer \$10 tickets to performances for Virginia Tech students, and provide experiential learning opportunities for students.

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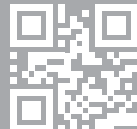
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### Y COMMUNITY GALLERY

We are proud to announce that the YMCA at Virginia Tech is opening a brand-new community art gallery in The Y Center at 1000 N. Main St., Blacksburg. We are extremely grateful to eARTh (by Diane Relf) for sponsorship of this new space and for the generous support of Shelter Alternatives and Bell Electric.

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Among the many volumes of books that will be available in our annual Book Fair there will be a collection of books of local origin, authors and interest. We'll have literally thousands of books, comics, graphic novels, vinyl and vintage collectibles for you to peruse at the very best prices around so get ready!



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