



music
in the
vineyards

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Music in the Vineyards Celebrates 20 Years

NAPA VALLEY, Calif., – This August, the sounds of stringed instruments, a Steinway piano, and clinking wine glasses will fill barrel rooms and wine caves up and down the Napa Valley as *Music in the Vineyards* celebrates its 20th Anniversary season. The chamber music festival, known for its concerts in atmospheric venues with wine at intermission, is reaching a higher octave this summer, expanding its festival footprint with more concerts, new venues, and highly acclaimed musicians from all over the world.

This season, running August 1-24, kicks off in the rustic and reclaimed red barn at Frog’s Leap Winery, where concert goers will sit among steel wine tanks while experiencing the first in a series of three concerts tracing the evolution of the Romantic style. Artist highlights for the opening weekend include the acclaimed Escher String Quartet, cellist Kenneth Olsen and pianist Jeffrey Sykes, performing works by Brahms, Mendelssohn, Webern, Dvořák and others from the Romantic period.



Frog’s Leap Vineyards Photo by Chick Harrity

All of the winery venues chosen for the festival are intentionally intimate, with seating capacities between 65-200 so both the audience and musicians can experience chamber music in the space it was written for. Founded in 1995 by the late Gail Adams with her son Michael Adams and daughter-in-law Daria Adams, both professional musicians, their vision for *Music in the Vineyards* was to create a place where musicians could come to remember why they make music.

“When we first dreamed up *Music in the Vineyards*, we wanted it to be a relaxed but intense experience - a place where hard work on the art and craft of music making and listening was made easier by being surrounded by life’s luxuries - the wine, the food, the beauty of the land,” said Daria Adams. “I feel very proud to say we have achieved that.”



Clos Pegase Photo by Chick Harrity

The opening weekend continues with celebratory festival gala *Midsummer Mystique* on Saturday, August 2 at 5:30 p.m. at Clos Pegase, the only venue to have hosted concerts every year since the festival's inception. Original Clos Pegase owner Jan Schrem's passion for the arts and love of music was evident in his generosity towards the festival, and even under the winery's new ownership, the partnership between Clos Pegase and *Music in the Vineyards* continues. The gala will feature a sparkling wine and hors d'oeuvres reception,

a program of Pachelbel, Mozart and Mendelssohn in the dramatic Cave Theatre leading to a gourmet dinner on the cypress-lined courtyard followed by a luxury live auction and a performance by Trio Voronezh with their electrifying virtuosity on Russian folk instruments.

"Reaching the 20 year milestone makes me realize how much we have grown from our early days, and I can remember our first season like it was yesterday," said Michael Adams. "After all these years, I am proudest that the festival has achieved such a high level of artistic accomplishment."

A pinnacle of the season will take place on Saturday, August 9 at Silverado Vineyards, where patrons will hear the world-renowned soprano **Dawn Upshaw** debut new arrangements of two works by composer **Maria Schneider** from their recent three Grammy award-winning CD, *Winter Morning Walks*. Maria has created these arrangements especially for MITV's twentieth anniversary and will introduce them during the concert.



Silverado Vineyards Photo by Chick Harrity

Silverado Vineyards hosts three concerts each year and is seen as the home of MITV. Ron Miller and his late wife, Diane Disney Miller, founded Silverado, and the festival's 20th season is dedicated to her memory. "Diane, like me, was a pianist with a passion for classical music," said Barbara Sawchuck, Event Manager at Silverado Vineyards. "This year will mark the first year of the festival she so adored in which she has not played a direct role. Yet she is here, we feel her every day and honor her with our on-going support of a cause that mattered so deeply to her."

Sawchuck describes the festival as a gift, and the concerts as uplifting and inspiring. “From the moment the first note is played during rehearsal to the final bow, we are collectively moved and universally enthralled,” said Sawchuck. “The energy in the winery changes, the mood is elevated, and our overall awareness is peaked. It’s remarkable.”



Violinists Axel Strauss and Daria Adams at *Robert Mondavi Winery*
Photo by Chick Harrity

Violinist Axel Strauss, a returning favorite who has been a part of the festival since 2002, will be among the musicians performing at the Silverado Vineyards concerts on August 9, 10, and 11. “This amazing festival has deservedly become one of the cultural highlights in the valley, and it is a privilege to have been part of it for all these years,” said Strauss. “The combination of playing with great musicians in fantastic locations in one of the most beautiful spots on earth makes for a stunning experience every year.”

New this season is a *Three by Three* concert series running simultaneously at three different venues on three successive nights: August 15-17. For the first time, patrons can hear the same program in different spaces, each specifically chosen for its unique intimacy. After the final concert on Sunday, August 17, concert attendees can **Meet the Musicians** outdoors at Raymond Vineyards for a casual get together with dinner, wine and lively conversation about the *Three by Three* concert series.

On Wednesday, August 20 at Markham Vineyards, Pianist William Wolfram reunites with violinist Frank Almond in selections from their CD “A Violin’s Life” celebrating the rich history of Frank’s “Lipinski” Stradivarius. “The festival has a unique feel to it and it starts from the top,” said Wolfram, a long-time festival musician who has known the Adams for many years. “Michael and Daria pick wonderful musicians who are not always the obvious choice, and that is a big departure from most other festivals.”

The final weekend of festivities showcases a beautiful new venue, HALL St. Helena, celebrating its opening year of the redesigned visitor center and tasting room. Kathryn and Craig Hall, long-time supporters of *Music in the Vineyards*, are excited to combine celebratory forces for a concert on Saturday, August 23. Attendees can hear works by Haydn and Bernstein, and will also have the opportunity to take in original works of modern art and sculptures from the Halls' personal collection.

A closing night celebration including dinner and wine will take place on Sunday, August 24 at Meadowood Resort’s croquet lawn, where patrons will join the Adams to mark the end of their 20th season, and the beginning of the next twenty years.

“Twenty years is an impressive number, and yet for *Music in the Vineyards* it seems so surprisingly young; one wonders how this area ever did without a chamber music festival like this,” said violinist Aaron Boyd of the Escher String Quartet. “This suggests to me that the festival has woven itself so naturally into the fabric of Napa Valley. 20 years is only the beginning.”



The Escher String Quartet at *Silverado Vineyards*
Photo by Chick Harrity

Tickets for *Music in the Vineyards*' evening concerts cost \$50 through July 1, \$55 after July 2, and are on sale now. Tickets for the Dawn Upshaw concert at Silverado Vineyards are \$100 and \$150. The festival also offers free open rehearsals on Thursdays, a *Midsummer Mystique* gala (\$225), a *Meet the Musicians* event at *Raymond Vineyards* (\$50), and a closing night celebration at *Meadowood Napa Valley* (\$140). For tickets or more information, call 707.258.5559, e-mail info@musicinthevineyards.org, or visit www.musicinthevineyards.org.

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