

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE
Department of Music presents

Arcangelo Corelli's Concerto Grosso
UCR String Ensemble

Frances Moore, *director*

Dr. Angela Brand, *guest conductor & harpsichord*

Florence Bayz Music Series

Dr. Amy Skjerseth, *coordinator*

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

12:00 – 12:50 P.M.

Music Rehearsal Hall, ARTS 157

PROGRAM

Concerto Grosso in G minor, Op. 6 No. 8 “Christmas Concerto”

Arcangelo Corelli
(1653-1713)

- I. Vivace-Grave
- II. Allegro
- III. Adagio-Allegro-Adagio
- IV. Vivace
- V. Allegro
- VI. Pastorale ad libitum: Largo

PROGRAM NOTE

Arcangelo Corelli’s *Concerto Grosso in G minor, Op. 6 No. 8*, known today as the “Christmas Concerto,” was completed around 1690 and published after his death in 1714. Corelli inscribed the score *Fatto per la notte di natale*—“made for the night of Christmas”—indicating it was written for a festive Christmas Eve service in Rome.

The piece follows the **concerto grosso** tradition, dividing the ensemble into a small group of featured players, the **concertino**, and a larger accompanying group, the **ripieno**. In this work, the concertino is led by **Violin Concertato 1 and 2**, whose intertwining, expressive lines create an elegant conversation that contrasts with the fuller sound of the ensemble.

Corelli’s writing for these paired solo violins was especially admired in his time for its balance of virtuosity and grace. The concerto’s final movement, the serene **Pastorale**, evokes the gentle rocking rhythms associated with shepherds’ music, a traditional Italian symbol of the Nativity.

ABOUT THE COMPOSER

Arcangelo Corelli (1653–1713) was a leading figure in the musical life of Baroque Rome. Renowned for his violin playing, he directed major ensembles and worked under influential patrons such as Cardinals Pamphili and Ottoboni. His students and followers carried his style across Europe, helping to spread his approach to violin technique and ensemble playing.

Although Corelli published only six collections of music, they became some of the most widely circulated instrumental works of the period. Their clear structure, expressive writing, and technical balance made them popular with both performers and listeners. Corelli's publications helped define the trio sonata and concerto grosso as important musical forms, and his influence can be heard in the work of composers like Handel and Geminiani.

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Concertino

Violin I – Shannon Liu

Violin II – Rueichi Tai

Violins

Elizabeth Lopez

Samantha Pacini-Carlin

Victoria Zamora

Frances Moore

SPECIAL THANKS

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