This lecture explores the United States’ formative period in the late eighteenth century from the viewpoint of five distinguished Frenchmen who took refuge in America after fleeing the French Revolution. Their stories connect U.S. history to broader Atlantic currents, helping to reinterpret some of the more famous aspects of early American history from a more international perspective – from politics and cultural life in the nation’s capital to battles with Native Americans on the western frontier, from the Haitian Revolution to the Whiskey Rebellion to the Louisiana Purchase and beyond.