



Classical Festival features violins, opera panorama

By CLEVE TWITCHELL and BRITT STAFF

Gifted young violinists, an opera program and panoramic photography are among the highlights of the 2006 Britt Classical Festival at the Britt Gardens in Jacksonville. Also look for "Exotic Tales," a family concert and a tribute to George Gershwin and Leonard Bernstein.

Peter Bay, music director and conductor, and the

Britt Festival Orchestra opens the season Friday, Aug. 4, with the "Exotic Tales" program. It begins with "Scheherazade," described as "the haunting storytelling of the beautiful temptress Scheherazade, portrayed by the concertmaster's solo violin, give patrons a glimpse of 1,001 nights in a sultan's harem."

Jon Nakamatsu will be featured soloist for the

Saint-Saëns Piano Concerto No. 2 and the orchestra will also play the Dance of the Seven Veils by Richard Strauss. The 8 p.m. concert will be preceded by a champagne picnic at 6 p.m.

One of the young violin soloists appears on Saturday night, Aug. 5. Sarah Chang will perform Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons." Chang began studying the violin at age 4 and was immediately enrolled at Juilliard. By age 8, she had performed with the New York Philharmonic and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Now 25, she is considered one of the world's great performers. Also on the program is Saint Saens' Symphony No. 3, "Organ Symphony."

The second weekend begins Friday, Aug. 11, with another gifted young violinist, Hilary Hahn. At 26, she is a Grammy Award-winning recording artist and a compelling artist on the international scene.

She and the orchestra will offer Dvorak's Violin Concerto. The orchestra will also play Mozart's Symphony No. 35, "Haffner," and Shostakovich's Symphony No. 9.

On Saturday, Aug. 12, the Britt hill will be filled with the sound of singing as four vocalists join the orchestra for an evening of "Opera's Greatest Hits." Arias, duets and quartets will spotlight some favorite moments from the operatic stage and the Britt Orchestra will perform opera overtures to round out the evening. The vocalists are Mela Dailey, soprano; Emily Golden, mezzo-soprano; tenor TBA and Wayne Tigges, bass-baritone.

A new kind of soloist will be featured on Friday, Aug. 18. Photochoreographer James Westwater brings his panoramic photography to Britt as he joins with the orchestra in a concert featuring this unique art form. Three giant screens will be suspended over the orchestra and Westwater will choreograph his images to the performance of the music, specifically Vaughn Williams' "Serenade to Music" and Copland's "Appalachian Spring Suite." The orchestra will also play excerpts from Tchaikovsky's "Swan Lake" and Wagner's Siegfried's Rhine Journey from "Götterdämmerung."

Britt presents the annual Family Concert on Saturday, Aug. 19. The Magic Circle Mime Company returns for a special Mozart's 250th Birthday Party. A program full of fun and musical adventure will be preceded by a birthday party on the hill complete with birthday cake and balloons. "Wolfie," the birthday boy, will be on hand to greet admirers.



Back Porch BBQ

We have more than just BBQ!

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