

Pianist Andre Watts is among this year's guests at the Brevard Music Festival, performing Aug. 5.

Brevard offers cool summer escape

76th festival features top names in classical music

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With sweltering temperatures buffeting the Upstate, fans of classical music may find this an ideal time to escape to the Brevard Music Festival, nestled amid the Blue Ridge Mountains.

The North Carolina festival is celebrating its 76th year of opera, chamber music and orchestral performances featuring such well-known classical music figures as pianists Ilya Yakushev and Andre Watts.

Works to be performed over the coming weeks range from Grieg's Piano Concerto (featuring Watts) to Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5, Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf" and a full staging of Gilbert & Sullivan's "HMS Pinafore."

The seven-week festival, offering more than 80 events, continues to be led by jet-setting conductor Keith Lockhart, a Furman University grad who has served as artistic director since 2007 while also conducting the Boston Pops and BBC Concert Orchestra.

See BREVARD, Page 2D

YOU CAN GO

What: The Brevard Summer Institute & Festival
When: Running through Aug. 5
Where: Brevard, N.C.
Information: 828-862-2105 or www.brevardmusic.org