Clemson 'POPS' to mirror Boston

Annual spring concert on Lake Hartwell attracts the masses

BY JESSICA SIBLEY
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CLEMSON — The Boston Pops Esplanade hosts its most famous concerts for two distinct holidays.

Christmas and the Fourth of July.

The Clemson Pops concert fits snuggly in between the two this weekend, offering a musical fix to those who enjoy a wide array of jazzed up classics that sound especially enticing in the sweet spring sun.

The 11th annual POPS concert will sound off at 5 p.m. on this slated-to-be-gorgeous Sunday afternoon.

Each year, the various musical talents from Clemson University perform under the Madren Center's Owen Pavilion on the shores of Lake Hartwell.

In addition to the unique setting of the venue, audience members are encouraged to bring chairs, blankets and picnics to get comfortable on the lawn while tables are provided for pavilion seating.

"Come rain or shine, this is always a great way to celebrate the arrival of warm weather to Clemson. Lake Hartwell is an excellent backdrop for an afternoon of music where we showcase our outstanding student ensembles," said Rick Goodstein, the head of the Department of Performing Arts.

The show in its entirety will highlight the university's symphony orchestra, the feel-good sound of the steel band, the soulful beats of the jazz ensemble and the symphonic band.

The eclectic concert will be rounded out by two separate, but equally stunning, a cappella groups. One female and one male group will heave their voices in perfect medley, sure to leave audience members with goosebumps.

As part of the fun, the jazz ensemble will be decked out in the trademark orange canvas hi-top sneakers while performing the Pink Panther Theme, a well-known favorite.

"It's one of the jazz's most memorable tunes," said jazz ensemble director Tim Hurlburt.

Made mainstream by Susan Boyle's rendition, the Les Miserable song, "I Dreamed a Dream," will be tackled by the symphony orchestra during their performance as well.

As an added bonus, sophomore Erika Newlands will be singing alongside the band.

"Erika has tremendous energy and certainly knows how to 'sell' a song. She gets completely into character and presents a vocally compelling performance," said Andrew Levin, conductor of the symphony orchestra.

Matthew Morris, Keowee Key resident, said he's attended the concert since its inception 10 years ago.

"It has the perfect atmosphere for a perfect afternoon," he said. "The fact that you can bring some nice things to eat and drink really adds to the fun. People will bring fancy place settings and really go all out. The music is phenomenal and for those who aren't familiar with the musical talent that Clemson has to offer, coming out for this show will put it best."

All proceeds will go toward the Performing Arts scholarship fund at Clemson.

Tickets are $25 for pavilion seating and $10 for lawn seating. Visit www.clemson.edu/brooks or call (864) 656-7787 for more information or to purchase tickets.

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The Clemson POPS concert will kick off at 5 p.m. Sunday at the Madren Center Pavilion that overlooks Lake Hartwell. The symphonic band, along with many others will take the stage; people are welcome to bring picnic meals.

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