

CHARLOTTE

TASTE

Magazine for Tasteful Living

NASCAR'S
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Johnson's
Secret to
Happiness



Poolside Drinks
Summer Swimwear
California Wine
Hollywood Hotels
Lounging Around
Thrill of the Grill



AN APPALACHIAN SUMMER FESTIVAL

*“Art is a principle flowing out of God
through certain men and women,
by which they perceive and understand the beautiful.
Sculpture, architecture, pictures, and music
are the language of the Spirit.”*

– Elliott Daingerfield, American Artist (1859-1932)

I sipped a glass of vintage champagne in the parlor of what was once Mr. Daingerfield’s home, the Westglow, on Good Friday afternoon. At my request, Pianist Richard Pinson kindly played Rachmaninoff’s *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* on a 1918 style Steinway, reminiscent of models built during the time the artist’s Greek Revival studio was completed. There were traces of flurries in the unseasonably cold air, as nearby Grandfather Mountain became hidden in a spring snow storm. But this is Blowing Rock, high in the North Carolina Mountains, where the winds blow furiously at times, and one can sit and take in the grandeur – indeed the divinity – of the moment. This image, my mind’s fusion of art and nature in a moment in time, is simply a memory now, but one I shall long to recapture. Here’s how it happened.

With six years or so of covering the performing arts for CT, I’ll admit to an occasional irrational fear of running out of things to write about, especially when summer’s upon us and the traditional performing arts season comes to a close. Given the pessimists who would have us believe refined fine arts simply do not exist here, or anywhere close by, it’s somewhat forgivable. But I should know better

and ought to banish that silliness for good! I had been contemplating an enticing summer arts getaway but didn’t expect the search to blossom so quickly, I suppose. Stumbling upon *An Appalachian Summer Festival*, I silently snickered at those pessimists...

For practically the entire month of July, a stellar array of performing artists will be trekking to the North Carolina Mountains to share their talent. Performers probably look forward to these gigs, offering them glorious little escapes amidst such natural beauty. So should we.

The wonder of music and nature beckoning, it didn’t take long to throw some clothes in a suitcase (don’t forget the hiking boots), grab my husband, and hit Highway 321 to check it all out. I returned – sadly too soon – impressed with the dedication and professionalism of the festival organizers and downright giddy with the discovery of a nearby world-class resort.

Presented annually by Appalachian State University’s Office of Arts & Cultural Programs, *An Appalachian Summer* is attended by more than 25,000 people and has emerged as one of the nation’s most innovative and highly regarded regional, multidisciplinary arts festivals. Now entering its 23rd season, it’s committed to showcasing American talent, commissioning new works, and building new audiences for the fine arts. For many years, the festival has been named one of the “Top 20 Events in the Southeast” by the Southeast Tourism Society.

App Summer, as I heard the locals refer to it, is packed with music, dance and theater, visual arts exhibitions and events,

By Mary Anne Gauthier, Images courtesy of Westglow Resort and Spa



workshops for children and adults, as well as educational lectures and seminars. The staff has the benefit of operating from within a University setting, affording them a powerful vantage point. They do it with creativity, intelligence and lots of hard work, seeking always to create a program with broad appeal.

The Eastern Philharmonic Orchestra is the resident faculty ensemble of the nationally renowned Eastern Music Festival of Greensboro, where its members are brought together each summer from the leading symphony orchestras and faculty of music schools across the United States. The Orchestra will feature three outstanding talents during *App Summer 2007*.

Dame Evelyn Glennie, playing with the Orchestra on July 8th, is a Grammy Award-winning Scottish virtuoso percussionist and is regarded as the world's most in-demand solo percussionist. She has performed with virtually all of the world's finest orchestras and conductors in the most famous concert halls. Joining Dame Glennie that evening will be Conductor JoAnn Falletta who has been hailed by the *New York Times* as "one of the finest conductors of her generation." Effervescent and exuberant on the podium, she serves as the Music Director of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and the Virginia Symphony Orchestra, and as Artistic Advisor to the Honolulu Symphony. On July 22nd, with eleven-time Grammy nominee and the Eastern Philharmonic Orchestra's principal conductor, Gerard Schwarz, at the podium, Violinist Julia Fischer will please violin aficionados and symphony novices alike with her renowned talents. Her credits include performances with the New York Philharmonic at Lincoln Center as well as a 2003 Carnegie Hall debut that drew standing ovations.

A commendable highlight for the North Carolina Symphony will be its collaboration with The Hayes School of Music's Cannon Music Camp. Offering what has been called the most comprehensive course of musical instruction in the Southeast since 1969, the Camp offers a four-week, music-filled retreat for music students, complete with intensive college preparatory work in performance and music theory. On July 28th, the North Carolina Symphony will play side-by-side with the Camp orchestra. Such educational efforts, I have suggested many times before, represent the essence of ensuring a

lasting and rich legacy of classical music in America.

And there's much more...Shen Wei Dance Arts, a company having made its New York debut at the Lincoln Center Festival and recently invited to partner with Washington's Kennedy Center, will be featured on July 7th. The company was founded upon the fusion of dance, theater, Chinese opera, painting, sculpture and a unique hybridism of Western and Eastern cultures. *The Mystical Arts of Tibet: Sacred Music, Sacred Dance* will bring Loseling monks, robed in magnificent costumes and playing traditional Tibetan instruments, performing ancient temple music and dance for world healing to the stage on the 13th.

The following day, on what is sure to be a memorable event, members of the famed Marsalis family will celebrate New Orleans jazz. Veteran *App Summer* musicians, the Broyhill Chamber Ensemble, will play on several dates and Grammy Award winner Bruce Hornsby will play on the 21st. Appropriately, country and pop superstar Wynonna will headline the festival's grand finale with an Outdoor Fireworks Concert, sponsored in part by Westglow Resort and Spa.

And so we end where we began – at The Westglow – which will also be the venue on July 19th for the *Appalachian Summer* presentation of the sexy, sultry music of the internationally recognized Diva of Jazz and Blues, Lavay Smith and her Red Hot Skillet Lickers. On that evening, dinner will be served by Westglow's two resident Executive Chef's, Travis Sparks of the French Culinary Institute and Eban Carter of Johnson & Wales. In my all-too-short 24 hours at Westglow this spring, I had a sense that Travis' and Eban's creations would make Elliott Daingerfield himself smile, the culinary arts soaring at his dining table. Later in the fall, CT will bring you a complete travel feature on Westglow, and so I'll refrain from telling you all there is to tell. However, it's hard to imagine a more enchanting setting to experience "art at a higher altitude".

An Appalachian Summer Festival. 828.262.4046 or 800.841. ARTS. appsummer.org
Westglow Resort & Spa. 828.295.4463 or 800.562.0807.
westglow.com ■