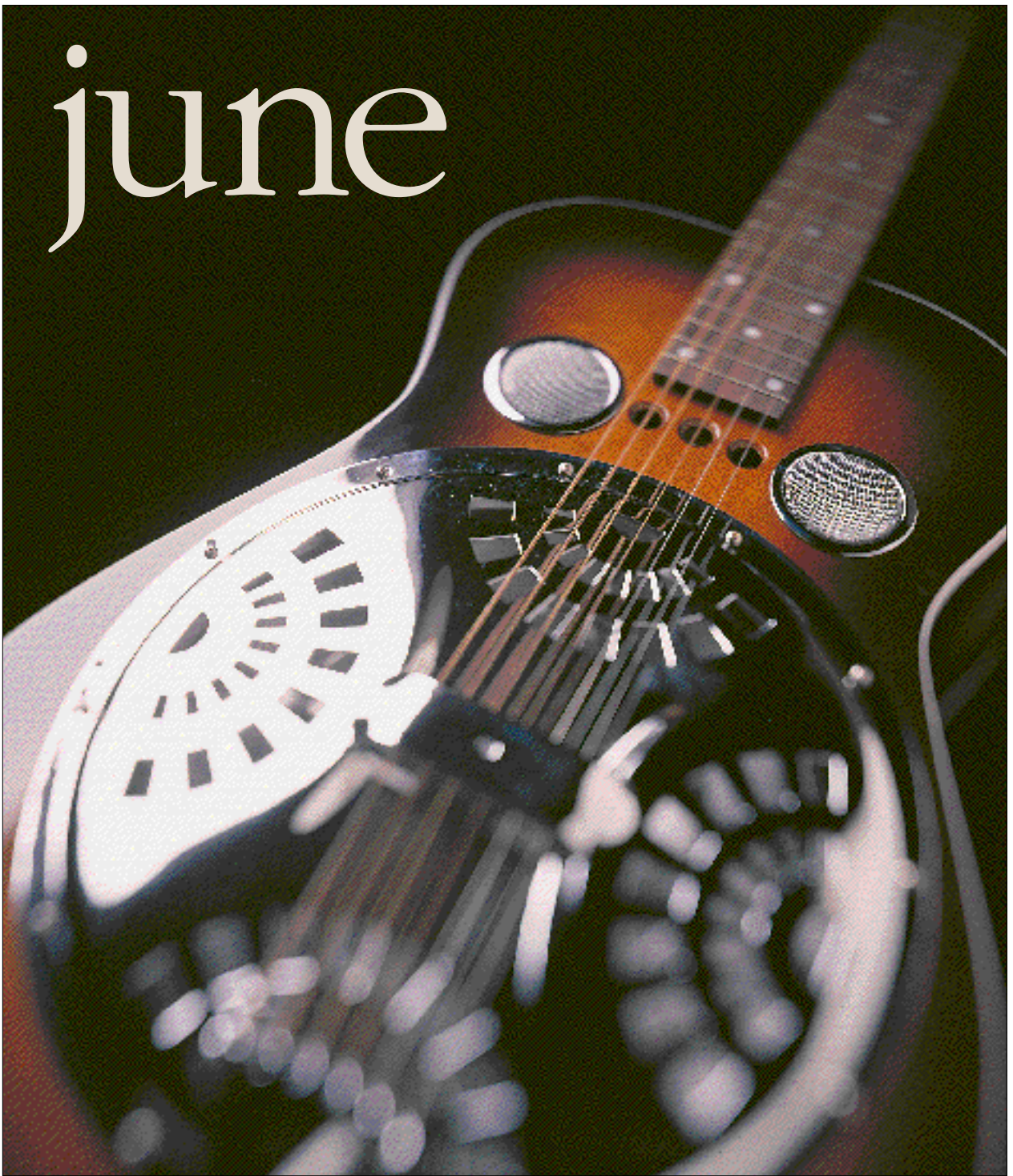


june



Mark Wagoner

“We are the music makers and the dreamers of dreams.”

— *Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*

*summer symphonies
and carolina classics ...*

inConcert

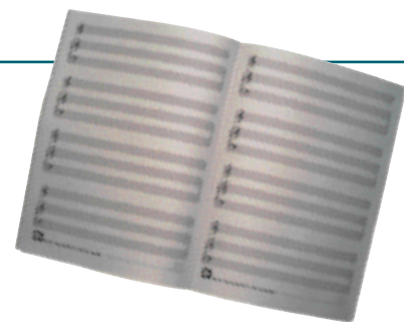


Brevard Music Center

Mentor and maestro: Boston Pops conductor and Brevard Music Center alumnus Keith Lockhart will attend the Brevard Music Festival (June 17-August 6) this summer to work with students, perform with his chamber ensemble, Innuendo, and conduct a symphonic concert.

*You don't have to look far these days
to enjoy North Carolina's
rich musical heritage.*

by Miriam Sauls



Karen Wells, performing arts director of the N. C. Arts Council, has it right when she says: "There's music around every corner now, something for everyone."

Remember the days when an outing to a concert meant coats and ties and silk and satin? No more. You can have your classical music and your shorts and sandals, too. Or if it's jazz, blues, folk, opera, bluegrass, or gospel music you like, there's plenty of that as well.

While professional orchestras still bring listeners to the larger cities, more and more towns have their own community orchestras. And more and more musicians are taking their music out of the concert halls and into the parks and city squares and schools. "The lines are more and more blurred between the traditional divisions in the music world," says Wells. "Classically trained musicians play popular music or even ragtime or jazz and blues."

The North Carolina Symphony, formed in 1932, performs at its home in Raleigh's Memorial Auditorium and goes on the road to communities across the state. There are seven other professional orchestras in Asheville, Winston-Salem, Salisbury, Charlotte, Hickory, Greensboro, and Rocky Mount.

Besides sharing their musical excellence in concert settings, these orchestras have innovative outreach programs. The North Carolina Symphony has one of the most extensive educational programs of any orchestra in the country, giving 60 to 65 concerts to schoolchildren each year.

Members of the Winston-Salem Piedmont Triad Symphony work with local elementary school teachers to introduce everything from fractions (using whole, half, and quarter notes) to sentence structure and sound waves. The Charlotte Symphony collaborates with Friendship Missionary Baptist Church for a special Martin Luther King Day celebration each year.

The state also has two outstanding chamber orchestras: the Carolina Chamber Symphony in Winston-Salem and Mallarme Chamber Players in Durham. The Ciompi Quartet, a professional string quartet of musicians and educators at Duke University, offers concerts, workshops, and master classes within our state and also tours

nationally and internationally. The New Century Saxophone Quartet, a classical chamber music ensemble made up of alumni from the N.C. School of the Arts, also stays busy touring the nation and the world.

New music

Plenty of music is being written in North Carolina. Pulitzer Prize winner Robert Ward of Durham composed a very moving new work, "Cherish Your Land," for the recent opening of the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences. Mark Scarce of Hickory recently created the opera *Kitty Hawk* for the National Opera Company as well as a new work for the Ciompi Quartet to play for the Carolina Ballet. Singer-songwriters abound, too, such as Mojo Collins, Bruce Piephoff, and Billy Jonas.

It's obvious that opera has found a home here. There are no fewer than seven professional opera companies, including two in Raleigh — The Opera Company of North Carolina and the National Opera Company. The others are Durham's Triangle Opera, Greensboro Opera, Piedmont Opera in Winston-Salem, Opera Carolina in Charlotte, and the newest, Asheville Lyric Opera.

Wells also notes that jazz is in the air just about everywhere. "It seems like there's jazz every night of the week now," she says.

The North Carolina Jazz Repertory Orchestra, founded to preserve jazz through concerts and educational programs, is one of the finest ensembles in the country. The popular Gregg Gelb Swing Band focuses on the classic swing jazz era. Ed Paolantonio, master of jazz improvisation, composes, arranges, and performs jazz around the state with his trio.

The North Carolina Central Jazz Band, led by Repertory Orchestra member Ira Wiggins, recently played at the White House, and was such a hit that the band was invited back three weeks later. Jazz divas Nnenna Freelon, Lois Deloatch Dawson, and Eve Cornelious, who perform with the Chip Crawford Group, are not to be missed if they are singing anywhere in driving distance.

Regional blues

There's a strong blues presence, too. Guitarist-singer

and blues scholar Scott Ainslie shares his love of regional blues styles, including Mississippi Delta blues and North Carolina's ragtime-influenced Piedmont blues. Jazz and blues vocalist Willie Atkinson brings to the stage his soulful interpretation of blues history, and Mike "Lightnin'" Wells plays regional-style blues in performance and educational programs. Skeeter Brandon and HWY 61 is an authentic four-piece band

doing its part to keep the blues alive.

Piedmont blues guitarist Etta Baker can be found performing around the state. For her mastery of the music and her significant contributions to our cultural heritage, Baker has received both the N.C. Folk Heritage Award and the National Heritage Fellowship Award. John Dee Holeman, who plays in the Durham tradition with his own touches of urban blues, jazz, and rhythm

TuningUp

Summer brings music outdoors across North Carolina. Here's a look at some of the many festivals on the schedule.

North Carolina Symphony Summerfest Concert Series

Lakeside in Regency Park, Cary
Saturdays June 3-July 8 and a special July 4 program

The N.C. Symphony has many engagements scheduled across the state. Other outdoor dates include Tryon Palace, June 12; Morehead City, June 13; Lake Benson Park, Garner, July 3; and Chetola Resort, Blowing Rock, July 21. (919) 733-2750

Brevard Music Festival

Brevard, June 17-August 6
In its 64th season, the festival includes 70 performances ranging from classical symphony and pops to Broadway musicals and grand opera in an open-sided auditorium surrounded by the Blue Ridge Mountains. (800) 405-8338

Deep Water Theater and Ocracoke Opry

Ocracoke Island, June 20-August 31
Molasses Creek performs its high-energy folk-fusion music on the screen porch of Deep Water Theater on Tuesdays and Thursdays, the Opry on Wednesdays. (252) 928-4280

Eastern Music Festival

Greensboro, June 24-August 5
Internationally acclaimed classical music festival on the campus of Guilford College offers a six-week professional concert series with students, faculty, and guest artists of world renown. (877) 833-6753

State Singing Convention

Benson, June 23-25
The oldest Southern gospel convention, featuring amateur duets, trios, quartets, choirs, and family groups. (919) 894-6051

Singing on the Mountain

Linville, June 25
The 76th annual Singing on the Mountain features traditional and contemporary gospel music in a meadow at the base of Grandfather Mountain. (828) 733-2013

Summer Arts Festival 2000

Manteo, June 27-August 12
The Roanoke Island Institute of North Carolina School of the Arts presents many musical events at Festival Park. (252) 475-1506

An Appalachian Summer Festival

Boone, July 1-29
Performers include Arlo Guthrie, the Broyhill Chamber Ensemble, North Carolina Symphony, Duke Ellington Orchestra, Pinchas Zukerman, Preservation Hall Jazz Band, and Kenny Rogers. (800) 841-2787

Jazz and Blues Festival 2000

Morehead City, July 7-8
Sponsored by the Coastal Jazz Society, linking jazz styles with a panorama of blues. (252) 247-7778

Bull Durham Blues Festival

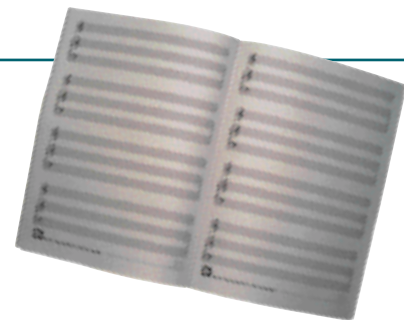
Durham, September 8-9
The state's largest celebration of blues music, featuring local, regional, and nationally acclaimed performers. Presented by St. Joseph's Historic Foundation, which recently won the "Keeping the Blues Alive" Award. (800) 845-9835

and blues and in addition is a buckdancer, has also won both of those heritage awards.

Edgecombe County native George Higgs is one of the finest musicians performing in the Piedmont blues tradition. He coaxes powerful rhythms from a small mouth harp but loves the guitar as well as the harmonica. Blues guitarist and buckdancer Algia Mae Hinton has performed at the National Folk Festival and Carnegie Hall.

Then there's gospel. The Badgett Sisters sing spirituals, hymns, and gospel songs in the jubilee style, a form of unaccompanied, close-harmony singing. Their group is one of the few bringing the tradition into the new century. For their powerful message and singing style, the Badgett Sisters have won the N.C. Folk Heritage Award, as have The Branchettes, who have been singing together for nearly 25 years. Their style and repertory have their roots in the congregational hymn singing of earlier generations of African Americans.

While they are constantly in demand for revivals and gospel anniversaries, The Branchettes can also be found singing in



Martion White



Mark Wagoner

Above: Summer serenades: The 67-year-old North Carolina Symphony's seven outdoor summer concerts, Summerfest 2000, begins on June 3 and concludes July 8.

Left: Measure to measure: Practice makes perfect for this orchestra at the Eastern Music Festival at Guilford College in Greensboro.

local hospitals and nursing homes. The Wilson Brothers, Folk Heritage Award-winning gospel singers, are among the finest country gospel musicians in the mountains of North Carolina.

Bluegrass legends

Our exploration into the world of music in North Carolina wouldn't be complete without a generous mention of bluegrass music. This foot-stomping, high-spirited music, modern offspring of traditional or old-time music, has drawn some spectacular talent from North Carolina, including Earl Scruggs and Arthur Smith.

Scruggs and partner Lester Flatt introduced the bluegrass sound to the world through their theme music for the television show "The Beverly Hillbillies" and the movie *Bonnie and Clyde*. "My music came up from the soil of North Carolina and I have been blessed that people in all parts of the world enjoy it," says Scruggs.

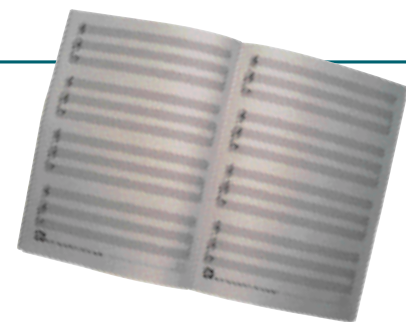
Arthur Smith and his Carolina Crackerjacks pioneered the variety show format for television and for more than 30 years brought their down-home, fun-loving style right into living rooms from WBTV in Charlotte. Smith, composer of more than 500 songs, is perhaps best known for his "Feudin' Banjos," later known as "Dueling Banjos" from the movie *Deliverance*. His "Guitar Boogie" is a standard for aspiring guitarists.

There's a wealth of bluegrass musicians playing in the state today. Many towns have their local favorite groups that play at outdoor festivals and pig pickings. And many clubs and bars have a stage for bluegrass performers.

Two of the most widely known groups are the Shady Grove Band and Molasses Creek. The Shady Grove Band, based in Chapel Hill, shares the power and fun of music while instilling appreciation of our state's musical heritage. Molasses Creek, based on Ocracoke Island, is a rollicking trio that takes its audience on a whirlwind journey with

every performance. Their love of both traditional and progressive bluegrass music is contagious.

This tour only scratches the surface of North Carolina's teeming music scene. Look in any newspaper or entertainment publication and you're sure to find a "Pickin' in the Park" or "Alive after Five" or "Music on Main" just a short drive away.



Freelance writer Miriam Sauls is employed by the N.C. Arts Council.



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