

Barnum celebrates 20 years at the top

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but also the 12-year-old Sinfonia chamber orchestra and the larger Philharmonic ensemble.

This year, he added the Mississauga Youth Orchestra (MYO) to his repertoire.

"That's been a whole new ball game," he said. "They're a wonderful young group, full of enthusiasm. I love seeing the sense of accomplishment they get from working hard."

May 13-16, the MYO is hosting a youth festival at the LAC that will bring together 350 musicians from across Ontario.

"I'd love to be able to have the LAC full of artistic events like this all the time," said Barnum. "But economics dictates that can't always happen."

Barnum said funding is the biggest challenge the Symphony faces.

"Bar none, the problem is always money," said Barnum. "Funding is going down. People would rather fund flower shows before performing arts."

Barnum said this financial insecurity holds the Symphony back.

"We always have big plans and ideas," he said. "I'd like to expand the pop series, and the size of the Sinfonia so we can play the big symphonies of Hayden and Mozart. And we're always interested in trying new compositions. We have the talented players to do it, we just don't have the funds."

Mississauga needs to put more effort into developing its arts scene, said Barnum.

In addition to his multiple roles in Mississauga, Barnum is also the musical director of the Georgian Bay Symphony.