

Symphony conductor set to pass baton

By JULIA LE
Staff

His successor will be announced at the end of the season, the MSO's 40th campaign.

Barnum, who received the Laurie Pallett Patron of the Arts Award in 2007 for his long-standing contribution to the community, moved back to his hometown of Guelph last year.

He says he's looking forward to spending time with his aging father, freelancing and keeping up with other interests. He's a member of the Rotary Club in Guelph, a music director for the Georgian Bay Symphony (Owen Sound) and a guest conductor for many major orchestras across Canada.

Barnum says what he'll miss most about the MSO is the people — musicians and the audience — with whom he's become good friends.

"I'll certainly miss the opportunity to perform on the Living Arts (Centre) stage because it's a wonderful auditorium," he added.

Orchestras Mississauga president Paul Weston says Barnum will be missed.

"His planning and preparation, both as an administrator and conductor, set him apart from anyone else in his field, and without his dedication and commitment to symphonic music in Mississauga, I seriously doubt whether this organization would exist," he said. "John also benefits from a unique blend of skills in that he is a professional conductor who thoroughly under-

stands the challenges and demands of a community orchestra."

Weston added Barnum's experience and knowledge in the field are unmatched.

"Many people lean on him as a mentor as well," he said. "He sees himself as part of the orchestra and everyone is his friend."

"The city owes John for his work in putting the arts at the forefront and putting the city on the map as the greatest community orchestra in the country," Weston continued.

Barnum's friend, Timothy Whitehead, echoed those sentiments. He said Barnum's shoes will be hard to fill.

"The way he would introduce his pieces and the way he speaks to the audience is a very down-to-earth, friendly manner," said Whitehead,

who met Barnum 16 years ago when he joined the Mississauga Rotary Club. "He really wants the people to understand the piece that they're going to play."

Before Barnum hands over the baton, he'll conduct the *Voices of Christmas* concert on Dec. 17, *French Connection* next March 24, a special event with *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* on April 5 and *The Grand Finale* on May 5.

All concerts will be held at the Living Arts Centre.



John Barnum

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