

LONDON FREE PRESS April 1, 2000

## **Contest assists orchestra**

**By Joseph Scott -- Free Press Reporter**

Using your imagination could win you tickets for life to Orchestra London as it begins a campaign to re-package one of its biggest shows.

As part of its fund-raising campaign, the orchestra is holding a contest to change the name of Sinfonia, one of its annual classical music series since 1974.

Starting Monday, new names for the Sinfonia series can be suggested at \$10 each.

John St. Croix, an orchestra board advisor, said the contest is part of the plan to pay off its debt of about \$380,000.

St. Croix, of London, said the winning name will bring its inventor four free tickets to every Orchestra London event for life. The decision will be announced June 9.

He said this is one of the ways the orchestra is opening up fund-raising efforts toward the community. Orchestra London needs to raise \$330,000 by May 31 to save itself from bankruptcy.

He said Sinfonia must be re-designed to attract new patrons, while at the same time keeping the ones it already has.

"In a speech recently, I asked the community what they wanted (out of the orchestra). Allowing the community to choose the name is the first step toward that, and doing so in a contest makes it fun," said St. Croix.

"The classic series must be re-packaged and re-formatted in the way people look at musicians. We won't change any of the (musical) notes . . . but it will be more fun," he added.

Suggestions for a new name, along with a \$10 donation for each name, can mailed in to the attention of the sales office at Orchestra London, 520 Wellington St., London, N6A 3R1, or dropped off at various media outlets.

For more information, call the Orchestra London sales office at 679-8778.