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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Orchestra's importance not a thing of the past

Regarding the letter, Institutions must adjust to changes in culture (April 4).

Although the Backstreet Boys, etc., are admittedly classified as culture, they are in actuality "pop culture," a notable but tiny part of culture. I also feel that constant bombardment of pop tunes over radio or television hardly classifies as "intellectual and aesthetic training." Pop culture does change with each generation and it is possible for pop culture to become culture, but true culture persists over hundreds of years.

I also must question why, if only the "previous generation" is interested in the culture relating to Orchestra London, thousands of children and teenagers are currently involved in the London Kiwanis Music Festival, upholding the music from this "retirement community" culture?

I am no longer directly involved as a performer in London's music community, but I still very much appreciate the ideals of the "previous generation," an appreciation developed through education and training.

I hate to consider what I would have missed playing only pop tunes in the Montcalm Wind Ensemble, rather than Kim Lundberg's Gateways. Unbelievably, this classical composition was written in 1998 for the aforementioned local secondary school wind ensemble, and I can't imagine that the composer came from far outside of London, since he visited the school on various occasions to work on his composition with the students.

Perhaps our lack of support for the arts detracts from the image London struggles for as "a place to be." Montreal, Vancouver, and Toronto are all thriving Canadian cities, with strongly supported arts and culture programs.

As Canadians, we tend to feel proud of our Canadian pop culture, Celine Dion and Alanis Morissette being fine examples. Why then, can't we be equally proud of our local talent, arts and culture, Orchestra London, for example.

Exciting and interesting new music accompanying changes in culture can also, strangely, be found in Orchestra London's music folders. The culture upheld by Orchestra London and London's other artistic endeavours is not "in the past." It is only our education regarding culture that has been left behind.

I'm really not ready to retire at 20, either.

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