

# Famed tenor loves life in south Dufferin

By WES KELLER  
Freelance Reporter

Tenor Mark Dubois has performed "in every major city in the world" in his 37-year professional career, for audiences of as many as 45,000, but he still ranks the Orangeville/Hockley area as among the greatest of all places to be.

He doesn't say that to win popularity. The versatile soloist has already won that globally. Mr. Dubois has demonstrated his love for the area by choosing to live here, by supporting the community and the arts, by performing locally, and by nurturing a few gifted young

singers, among other things.

"This is God's country," he says. "Why do you need the city when you have an artistic community with an airport just 40 minutes away? We have got to celebrate what we have (here). And the youth programs are just incredible."

When he appears on the Theatre Orangeville stage on Saturday, Nov. 13, Mr. Dubois will bring with him the "Mark Dubois Studio Singers," the "very special" gifted kids he's training. Among those, his own son, age 7, seems headed for a professional vocal career in his father's footsteps — and, in fact — is

soon to make a professional appearance despite his tender age — and then there's the especially talented Julia Obermeyer, 17, whose name is bound to be famous one day, according to Mr. Dubois.

While touring, Mr. Dubois says he has to be selective when choosing his studio singers. "They have to be gifted." Given time constraints, he says he cannot work with more than about a dozen at any given time.

Although nurturing the singers to professional standards, Mr. Dubois isn't necessarily prescribing big-time professional careers — at least not without pointing out the price

of touring globally.

On a local and personal level, it's difficult to fathom how Mr. Dubois feels about his seven-year-old son's professional appearance at Roy Thomson Hall.

"There's a big difference between (appearing in front of) 400 at Orangeville and 3,600 at the Roy Thomson or 45,000 at the Olympic Stadium in Montreal."

And there's a big difference between appearing close to home and touring foreign cities. "It's weeks, months in other countries. It's coming home to a room after a show and finding no one there. All those people (crowding

around seeking autographs, and then you come home to an empty room.)"

He said the professional touring career is "not all glitz and glamour as some stars would make it out to be." Yet one senses that Mr. Dubois, in the balance, has enjoyed his 37-year career. And now, says he, "I'm riding the wave of giving back to the community."

Theatre Orangeville is the most important artistic centre around here. I just want to (use) what talents I have so people will benefit from it."

The Nov. 13 Dubois appearance is part of this year's Orangeville Concert Association's per-

formance season.

Last month, the association featured the Cecilia String Quartet. Coming up, there's Joe Sealy and the Jazzbirds in February, and the Elmer Iseler Singers in March.

Mr. Dubois will be in Orangeville for the Olympic Torch relay, and then he flies to Victoria to follow the torch. The events will be nationally televised.

On New Year's Eve, he's performing with the Victoria Symphony and its gala.

In Hockley, you might otherwise find him at the tiny United Church where he instructs his Studio Singers.



Photo DAN PELTON

THE ORANGEVILLE COMMUNITY BAND, along with others, played music and spoke words of tribute Sunday at the New Hope Community Church. It was the evening of the Remembrance Concert.



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