

Amabilis Singers Report for the 2017 AGM of the Arts Council of New Westminster

The Amabilis Singers were originally formed in 1980 as the Douglas College Community Choir before becoming an independent community choir in 1989. The choir's new name was taken from the Amabilis fir, a species indigenous to coastal forests and whose botanical name means "lovely".

Our choir is a mixed choir of approximately 60 members. We have performed music of all musical periods and styles and as a self-supporting community choir our aim is to foster and promote the love of choral music, singing and performance, primarily in the Burnaby/New Westminster area. We also like to have fun.

Our Artistic Director, Ramona Luengen, has continued to expand our musical boundaries with ever more challenging repertoire. In the spring of this year we were privileged to present the rarely-heard *Luminosity* by the British composer James Whitbourn as part of our program at Holy Rosary Cathedral in Vancouver. This 30-minute composition explores light, love and profound truths through the texts of great spiritual writers including St. John, St. Teresa of Avila, Julian of Norwich and St. Isaac of Ninevah. Whitbourn's combination of choir with western and Eastern instruments - organ, viola, tam-tam and tanpura - results in a radiant fusion of styles and traditions, made all the more remarkable in the stunning acoustic of Holy Rosary Cathedral. This part of the program was performed from the choir loft at the back of the cathedral. Our choir found this to be a truly amazing and profound experience and by all accounts so did the audience.

Amabilis Singers has continued to enjoy and value large and supportive audiences.

We are now rehearsing for our Christmas concert *A Christmas Gift* which celebrates both the joy and the tender beauty of the Christmas season. We look forward to sharing beautiful music, favourite carols and boisterous sing-alongs with our audience.

More information on the Amabilis Singers can be obtained from our website: www.AmabilisSingers.org