

Amabilis Singers 2018 Report for the AGM of the Arts Council

Our mixed choir of 60-70 members has had a busy and fulfilling year as we continue to expand our musical horizons under the direction of our Artistic Director, Ramona Luengen.

Auditions are held twice a year and we have recently begun to offer opportunities for choral scholars.

We again had two full-day retreats this year in January and September. These retreats provide an opportunity to delve into our music at greater depth than our usual weekly rehearsal allows.

In April we performed Johannes Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, one of the great choral masterpieces of all time. A piano virtuoso himself Brahms transformed the orchestral accompaniment into a version for two pianos at one keyboard. This was the version we performed with our wonderful pianist Ingrid Verseveldt joined by Jane Coop, one of Canada's most prominent and distinguished artists. Performed to a sold-out house the concert was a great success.

We are now rehearsing for our Christmas concert *Hope/Peace/Love @ Christmas*. Our programme will feature Jan Sandstroms's stunningly evocative re-working of the well-known carol *Es is ein Ros' entsprungen*, Kevin Memley's exquisite setting of *There is No Rose of Such Virtue*, Elaine Hagenberg's tender *Sweetest Music*, *Softly Stealing*, Ian Crawford's exuberant *Sussex Carol*, and a striking new *O Nata Lux* by the young American composer Matt Wetmore. In addition to beautiful music there will be favourite carols and boisterous sing-alongs.

Due to the success of last year's Christmas concert we are offering both an afternoon and an evening concert this year.

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