**Impressions of Ottawa Brahms Choir Spring Concert 2018 ‘Une Célébration Française’, April 29,** **With guests, soprano Cara Gilbertson-Boese , and TOBI – the Ottawa Brass Initiative.**

Sunday afternoon on April 29, at 3 pm, the Ottawa Brahms Choir, under direction of Christopher Askwith, delighted the audience with an impressive selection of works of composers from Quebec and France, singing their best in the beautiful French language. We had prepared for this concert during the long winter months and also enjoyed during March an impressive workshop with Dr. James Wright, Professor of Music at Carleton University, at the beautiful Ferme Moore in Gatineau.

The first presentation, the cheerful French Canadian song ‘En roulant ma boule’ (arrangement by conductor Christopher Askwith), sung in alternate vocal parts, including soprano Cara Gilbertson-Boese, was well received with smiles. The first part of Cantate pour une joie –‘ Les Lions jaune’ by respected Pierre Mercure followed. We sang it with expression. I looked over to my young 7 year old grandson to see if the text would scare him, but no, he looked at us in amazement. The presentation of gorgeous ‘Cantique de Jean Racine’ by Gabriel Fauré brought us warm applause from the audience.

Cara Gilbertson-Boese with her gorgeous voice treated us to a memorable, moving recital of composers Claude Debussy ‘Noels des enfants qui n’ont plus de maisons’, Gabriel Fauré’s ‘Claire de lune’ and ‘Ici-bas’ , as well as ‘La reine de coeur’ by Francis Poulenc. Choir members and audience applauded with appreciation and enthusiasm.

The choir presented Charles Gounod’s Sérénade, followed by a much more positive final part of Pierre Mercure’s ‘Cantate pour une joie’.

At Entr’acte TOBI the Ottawa Brass Initiative presented beautifully works by Claude Debussy ‘La fille aux cheveux de lin’ , Maurice Ravel’s ‘Pavane pour une infant défunte, and Morten Lauridson’s ‘O Magnum Mysterium’. Response by our audience was with enthusiasm and warmth.

Our presentation in the second half included Donald Patriquin arrangement of ’Savory, Sage, Rosemary and Thyme’ in English, followed by ‘Chanson de Mai’ – Acadian/Cajun traditional. We received a special bravo from the audience when we sang the’ Oratorio de Noel ‘Tolite Hostias’ by Camille Saint-Saens. Beautiful composition ‘Chansons des roses ‘Dirait-on’ by Morten Lauridson and Reveci venir du printemps’ by Claude LeJeune concluded with great applause the afternoon of our presentations.

We welcomed warmly an appreciating audience – among them friends and family members - and delighted in refreshments and relaxation.

Many thanks to our many sponsors, the media who publish our announcements, and the many loyal volunteers who supported us, to our conductor and choir for a great effort to make this concert afternoon a success, and to the board for all the work during the season to prepare for this concert.

**This was her last concert: Our precious choir friend, the late Elisabeth Salm, who was the Board’s Secretary, is remembered with love and gratitude. We shall miss her and her beautiful soprano voice**.

GH , June 14, 2018