

THE 2016 INTERNATIONAL TRUMPET GUILD CONFERENCE, ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA

SPECIAL DAILY REPORT • COMPILED BY PETER WOOD

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Les Trompettes de Lyon: Concert

The French trumpet quintet *Les Trompettes de Lyon* presented a highly entertaining performance on the final evening of the conference. The Royal Ballroom was filled nearly to capacity to hear them perform in classical, pop, and jazz styles, all while singing, dancing, marching, and moving around the stage. While one of the trumpet players performed exclusively on the bass trumpet, the other four moved from trumpet to cornet, flugelhorn, bass trumpet, and piccolo trumpet as the show moved along quickly from one tune to the next. This variety of instruments provided a rich, fresh tone color that never became boring or stale.

The show opened with the *Triumphal March* from Verdi's *Aida* and quickly morphed into Khachaturian's *Saber Dance*. They quoted the classical and operatic repertoire all evening, including Ravel's *Bolero* and Strauss's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, among others. They used innovative props, including large posters of famous trumpet players and entertainers to whom they played tribute—Maurice André, Louis Armstrong, Boris Vian, and Bourvil. One of their routines involved using small rotating stools on which they stood, twirling and dancing around during *Bolero*, thus adding to the already quirky nature of Ravel's music itself.

The group managed to mix in some Beatles music in a fresh new way by blending seven different songs inside a typical chorale arrangement. They weaved in and out of the chorale and famous Beatles tunes by asking the audience to see if they could spot the compositional "mistakes" of the chorale, which

they fixed by mixing in the Beatles tunes. During this piece they also stood in a line and reached over at various points to play the valves of the next player in an impressive display of control and virtuosity.

Toward the end of the performance, *Les Trompettes de Lyon* pulled a few marches out of the proverbial hat, including Kenneth Alford's *Colonel Bogey March*. While many people have invented their own humorous lyrics to this popular march, the quintet added their own version, including the line "Trumpets, will get your ears so clean..." etc. One of the more entertaining pieces on the program was their rendition of the famous Spanish March *El Gato Montes*, which involved a large, oversized balloon that they kept afloat with their trumpet bells. They each took turns balancing the balloon while they played the tune and passed them (the melody and the balloon) around until the balloon met its demise by knife-point at the end of the piece.

The musicians of *Les Trompettes de Lyon*, Pierre Ballester, André Bonnici, Didier Chaffard, Jean-Luc Richard, and Ludovic Roux, have created a unique blend of high-level musicianship, physical comedy, singing, dancing, and entertaining arrangements. The audience enjoyed the performance greatly and gave the group an immediate, enthusiastic standing ovation with raucous applause. They delivered an encore and marched through the crowd while the audience clapped along to a thunderous, accelerating finish. (SH)



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