

Review of the January 28, 2012 Concert with Artist Lance Luce

by Ronald Stonehouse

Almost 20 years to the day, we have been deprived the many talents of Mr. Lance Luce. On this spring-like evening, in the midst of winter, we were entertained with an enormous variety of musical selections, arrangements, registrations, and styles of playing. I do not envy the job our president, Bob Dilworth, is faced with. He must decide what has to be eliminated from the above so that it will fit on one "Concert Memories" CD. Throughout the performance, we were not only entertained by the many various sounds of our organ but also educated a bit on some of the operations of the organ itself. Lance was there for us building rapport, not only during but before and after the concert.

The concert begins with an appropriate tune **On a Wonderful Day Like Today**. This was borrowed from a 1965 London musical *"The Roar of the Grease Paint-The Smell of the Crowd"*.

Tony awards for Best Musical and Best Score were given to the 1966 Broadway show *"Cabaret"* from which Lance gave us his beautiful rendition of a medley **Welcome and Theme from Cabaret**.

From 1904, featuring cymbals and drums, came a march, said to be one of the world's most popular, second only to "Stars and Stripes Forever," **Repasz Band March**. It was well received by the audience.

The first of three love songs came next. **My Funny Valentine** from *"Babes in Arms,"* a 1937 Broadway musical by Rodgers and Hart.

A medley of swing style songs followed. Duke Ellington wrote the music for the first in 1940, **Don't Get Around Much Anymore**. The second, also from *"Babes in Arms,"* was **The Lady Is a Tramp**. (not the Lady Gaga version) Beautifully transcribed on both.

Up next a change of style. A 'Pasodoble' is a march like music with a double step. For part one of this medley, the music most often played at bull fights in Madrid, **Espana Cani**, a Spanish gypsy dance. Part two was tango's most famous song **La Cumarista**. The audience loved them both.

Organ pizza parlor music followed with a medley of three novelty tunes with lots of percussions. **Little Red Monkey** was first. Number two was popularized in the 1950 movie, *"Two Weeks with Love"*. The song is a little older than that however; it was published in 1914 by Fields and Donovan. Sung by Carleton Carpenter and Debbie Reynolds in the movie it is **Abba Dabba Honeymoon**. Number three is from the 1967 movie *"The Jungle Book"* and is titled **Bare Necessities**.

For the second love song of the evening, Lance chose to show off some of the organ's softer sounds with a beautiful arrangement of **Secret Love**. This is from a 1953 movie *"Calamity Jane"* and sung by Doris Day.

Since the next song usually features violins, Lance thoughtfully decided to show off the wonderful strings on our Kimball. In 1904 Vittorio Monti wrote this traditional Hungarian folk dance **Czardas**.

The theme from the 1978 motion picture *"Ice Castles"* is the third love song for tonight. Written by Marvin Hamlisch, made famous by Melissa Manchester, given the Lance Luce touch and enjoyed by all, the lovely **Looking Through the Eyes of Love**.

The treats continue with some burlesque style playing. This medley starts with **Ain't Misbehavin'** from a 1929 musical revue *"Hot Chocolates"* by Thomas "Fats" Waller, Harry Brooks, and Andy Razaf. Louis

Armstrong made his Broadway debut playing trumpet solo on this song. The medley continues with **Makin' Whoopee**, a jazz/blues song popularized by Eddie Cantor in the 1928 musical "*Whoopee*".

From Lance's Radio City Music Hall days, the next medley featured some of his favorite tunes from "*Oliver*". Among those he played were **As Long As He Needs Me** and **Consider Yourself**.

Taking us into intermission was **Bugler's Holiday**, a 1954 Leroy Anderson tune.

On the Sunny Side of the Street warms us up for the second half. A third half would have been really great at this show!

In 1925 Bessie Smith, backed up by Louis Armstrong on cornet, recorded **St. Louis Blues** and it has become one of the most famous versions.

To feature some 'interesting sounds' on our organ, Lance played a song introduced in a 1947 musical called "*Finian's Rainbow*". That song was **How are things in Glocca Morra?**

Returning to a novelty tune written by Bernard Barnes in 1924 and featuring our piano, we were introduced to a **Dainty Miss**.

A lively march with bass drums, snare drums, and cymbals takes us back to the signature song from the musical play, "*The Music Man*". Written in 1957 by Meredith Wilson, **76 Trombones** was soon to become almost a full organ by our man Luce.

The chimes are brought out for the next two hymn medley. The first, **His Eye Is On The Sparrow**, and one of my favorites, **In The Garden**. The first hymn was written in 1905 by Civilla D. Martin and Charles H. Gabriel, two white song writers, whose hymn has become a staple of African-American worship services.

From the garden to the river, **Ol' Man River** that is. This 1927 "*Show Boat*" tune by Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein II was played as promised with both sets of Tubas and both sets of Trumpets.

Piano and other tuned percussions are brought into play in the next medley **Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue** (Has Anybody Seen My Girl) and **Ain't She Sweet?**

A Christian hymn based on a Swedish poem by Gustav Boberg in 1885 is played next. Our beautiful strings are used again for this wonderful arrangement of **How Great Thou Art**.

First recorded in 1951 by Jimmy Forrest, Lance breaks out our full range of reeds to bring down the house with **Night Train**.

The final medley of the evening are songs from "*Fiddler On The Roof*". It was a 1964 Broadway production by Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick. Included were **Theme From Fiddler On The Roof, Tradition, Sunrise Sunset, Matchmaker Matchmaker**, and **If I Were A Rich Man**.

A well deserved standing ovation brings on the final tune. It is from "*The Comedians*" and written by Dmitri Kabalevsky. The title, why don't you pick one, it has several: **Galloping Comedians**, or **Comedian's Gallop** or **Gallop of the Comedians**. See what I mean?

Well it's off to the stage for cookies, punch, meeting with friends and a final thank you to Lance. I sure hope we have him back long before 2032. Good night, my friends.