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[Christmas Brass from DSO](#)

By Christine Facciolo

There's nothing quite like the sound of brass at Christmastime. Those radiant tones can transform even the grouchiest Grinch into a merry elf.

In the Gold Ballroom of the Hotel DuPont Tuesday, December 12, a very appreciative and enthusiastic audience was treated to a variety of music courtesy of the [Delaware Symphony Orchestra](#)'s Brass Quintet.

The five talented musicians — Brian Kuszyk and Steven Skahill, trumpets; Karen Schubert horn; Richard Linn, trombone and Brian Brown, tuba — gave concertgoers a veritable smorgasbord of styles from Renaissance dances to Broadway show tunes and, of course, some sounds of the season.

The first half of the program featured three feisty dances by 16th Century composer Tielman Susato. This dance collection has become a perennial favorite with performers of Renaissance music, because its bald homophonic style makes it playable on just about anything. And that's good news for the brass ensemble, which as a recent phenomenon, has very little repertoire written exclusively for it.

Bach's stately *Contrapunctus 9* added a bit of gravitas to the mix.

The Romantic Russian style of Victor Ewald's *Quintet No. 1* was the most conventional work on the program. Ewald — a close associate of the more famous composers of the "Russian Five" — wrote four quintets considered to be the first original pieces written specifically for the modern brass quintet.

The musicians struck a delicate balance by both blending their distinctive timbres and highlighting their individual lines with the unique sounds of their instruments.

Lighter fare included selections from Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story* (*Maria, Tonight and America*) and Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite* (*March, Arabian Dance, Waltz and Trepak*).

The program concluded with the sounds of the season, including the traditional *Ding Dong Merrily on High, The First Nowell, Coventry Carol, Rejoice and Be Merry and Joy to the World*.

See www.delawaresymphony.org.