

PARIS COMBO

By: Mark Taylor
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I was first introduced to Paris Combo over a decade ago, and since then they've been a staple dinner party and chilled Sunday afternoon repertoire at my place. Although they've been touring the globe for over 20 years, this is the band's first performance in Brisbane.

The Parisian group have quite a following in Australia, driven by the popularity of their second album *Living room* and the sizeable crowd on a wet Monday night in QPAC's concert hall illustrated this. This tight quartet took to the stage for a 100 minute romp through their sophisticated catalogue of dance inducing hits. Front woman extraordinaire Belle du Berry engaged the audience with anecdotes of her past and was assisted in translations from Australian born pianist and trumpeter David Lewis. The depth and richness of sound created by the foursome is extraordinary, assisted by Lewis' skills in playing the concert grand and trumpet simultaneously. After a move from Australia to France in his early 20s to study at Paris Conservatoire he made a name for himself in the indie music scene.

Fans weren't disappointed with Paris Combo delivering on the best of their extensive back catalogue whilst also introducing some brilliant new pieces from their recently released album, *Tako Tsubo*. Lewis' extensive collection and expert use of trumpet mutes, Potzi's effortless caress of the guitar strings and François-François' high energy drumming and quintessential jazz vocals came together in a sophisticated, tempestuous mash up, channeling Edith Piaf, rumba and underground Latin music clubs.

The problem was, QPAC's Concert Hall is about as far removed from an underground indie music venue as one can get. I'd like to use the word *reveller*, but alas have to refer to my auditorium peers as concert goers. Belle de Berry did her very best to ignite some passion in the crowd and in Brisbane's defence, the sense of desire to flick back the chair cushion and dance in the aisles was palatable, but the venue is just not indicative of that response. The finale led to some orderly awkward choreography from some and a well-deserved enthusiastic and authentic response for an encore, which ended the night fittingly.

Paris Combo are an incredible music force channelling the passion, quirkiness and love of love that the French are adored for. The Concert hall is an incredible venue with a brilliant acoustic and a glorious grandiose. However, just because two things are brilliant doesn't mean they should be brought together. I sincerely hope it's not another 20 years before Paris Combo return to Brisbane, but next time to a venue that is allows the audience party like Parisian.

Source: <http://performing.artshub.com.au/news-article/reviews/performing-arts/mark-taylor/paris-combo-253425>