

## Jorge Bolet in Latin America (\*excluding Cuba)

In *El Caribe* (12.11.1981), Lamela Geler stated that Jorge visited Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) in the early 1950s and played in the Teatro Olimpia, under the auspices of Sociedad Pro Arte. Now he gives a second recital in Santo Domingo. She goes on to state:

'Conocido mayormente en Europa y los Estados Unidos, ya que sus incursiones en América Latina han sido escasas, su repertorio está constituido por el total del material importante y difícil escrito para el piano.'

(Known mostly in Europe and the United States, **since his forays into Latin America have been few**, his repertoire is made up of all the important and difficult material written for the piano.)

### 1946

After his discharge in September 1946, Bolet began to tour Mexico, Central America, the West Indies and South America. The tour began on 22 September 1946 and would keep him busy until mid-December. He had been flown back from Japan at the request of Columbia Concerts. He also gave frequent performances in Havana - solo recitals and concertos with the Havana Philharmonic. MusicalAmerica noted that Bolet was again on tour in Mexico and Cuba in February 1947.

For example, on 6 February 1947, as reported in Cuba papers, he gave recitals in Ciudad Trujillo (present day Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic). This seemingly contradicts the statement in *El Caribe* above. *La Gaceta* (11.2.47, Tampa, Fl.) reports that this was Jorge's Dominican Republic début, on 29 January.

### 1950

Fresh from an engagement (3 concerts) in Caracas, Venezuela - mostly likely in the Teatro Municipal, arranged by the Asociación Venezolana de Conciertos; he had flown back on February 14. Jorge performed Rachmaninoff 3 with Howard Mitchell in Constitution Hall, Washington DC on Wednesday 15 February 1950.

## 1953

Early in the new year, Bolet had been on tour in Central America/Caribbean. A passenger manifest shows that he arrived in San Juan, Puerto Rico on 7 February 1953 on Pan Am World Airways flight 204 from Caracas, Venezuela (Maiquetia, the airport south-east of the city); his ultimate destination was San Francisco.

Hemerografía musical venezolana del siglo XX (February, 1953) states that Jorge had performed two concerts in the Teatro Municipal [Tuesday 3 and Friday 6] in honour of José Martí (b.1853), who is considered a Cuban national hero because of his role in the liberation of his country from Spain. Tuesday was a recital of Beethoven [Andante Favori ?], Brahms [Intermezzo Op.119 No. 3 in C, Rhapsody Op.118 No. 4 in E flat], Liszt's Sonata & Mephisto Waltz, Chopin [7 Preludes & Ballade No. 3 in A flat] and Rachmaninoff; on Friday 6th, with conductor Ángel Sauce (1911-1995) and the Orquesta Sinfónica Venezuela he performed the Schumann concerto and the Paganini Variations of Rachmaninoff; Beethoven's Prometheus overture and Debussy's Suite Iberia made up the rest [Revista Nacional de Cultura, March-April 1953: Vol 14 Issue 97].

The Cuban author Alejo Carpentier (1904-1980) wrote a review in *El Nacional* 10 February 1953.

## 1955

A report in *The New York Times*, 26 May, 1955 informs us that 'Jorge Bolet, pianist, leaves today by air to play a series of eighteen concerts in Brazil and Argentina'.

30 May 1955: Teatro Municipal in Rio de Janeiro

Recitals were then given in the Teatro Cultura Artística, São Paulo on 31 May/1 June. Other destinations in Brazil included Porto Alegre.

In Argentina, Jorge appeared first in Buenos Aires. The Asociación Wagneriana had organised his recital at 9:45pm on Monday 6 June at the Teatro Broadway,

Rosario, Córdoba, Tucumán?

In *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (Mainz) Vol 118/3 (March 1957), Curt B.M. Weißstein under 'Musik in Buenos Aires' records - of the 1955 season - that the Asociación Wagneriana 'once again did great honours with its own quartet. We also met the likeable local pianist Ofelia Carman and her young Italian colleague Maria Tipo. The Havana-born pianist Jorge Bolet, on the other hand, had less contact with the Wagneriana audience.' It is noted that a special event left its mark in the season (1955): the return of the Argentine composer, and conductor Juan José Castro (1895-1968), 'who spent many years in voluntary exile, and has since achieved world fame'.

Castro's operas in particular became very popular; *La zapatera prodigiosa* was removed from the Teatro Colón bill after nearly 10 seasons in 1958 for political reasons, while *Proserpina y el extranjero*, staged at La Scala in Milan, won the 1st Verdi Prize in 1952 [Polish Music Library, digital library maintained by PWM, Polskie Wydawnictwo Muzyczne]

Gap between 1955 -1974: he must have performed there!

## 1974

In late 1974, Jorge was one of the judges on the Concurso Latinoamericano de Piano Teresa Carreño in Caracas, Venezuela. He made a number of concert appearances in Caracas.

## 1975

19 and 21 September 1975: Rachmaninoff 's Paganini Variations, with OSESP (Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo) & Gerard Devos, Teatro Municipal de São Paulo, Brazil.

Friday/Monday 26 and 29 September: Teatro Coliseo, Buenos Aires

## 1977

14 March: Teatro Tapia, San Juan, Puerto Rico

4 July: Palacio de Bellas Artes, Mexico City

5 or 11 July: Teatro Degollado, Guadalajara

8 July: Mexico City

November 1977 (?): Teatro Tapia, San Juan, PR

## 1978

6 July: Sala Cecilia Meireles, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

8 July: Campos do Jordão, Brazil

10 July: Casa de Manchete, São Paulo

12 July: Teatro Cultura Artística, São Paulo

On Thursday 13 July, he flew to Buenos Aires, Argentina (but neither *Clarín* nor *La Nación* mentions a recital in that city in July).

12 November: Mexico City (piano falls off stage)

## 1979

10 July: Teatro Solís, Montevideo, Uruguay

21 July: Teatro Colón, Buenos Aires, his only recital in this fabled theatre.

## 1980

26 May: Teatro Nacional, Panamá City, Panamá

12 June: Teatro Nacional, San José, Costa Rica

*Heterofonía 70*, México (July-September 1980) mentions that JB performed Liszt 1 and the Hungarian Fantasy in Mexico City with the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional under Guatemalan conductor and composer Jorge Sarmientos

## 1981

June, 1981: Mexico City with Enrique Diemecke and the Orquesta Filarmónica de le UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)

8 October 1981: Teatro Degollado, Guadalajara (Jalisco) in Mexico with conductor Hugo Jan Huss (but listed as Thursday 15th in *El Informador*).

Friday 20 November: Teatro Nacional, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

In *El Caribe* (12.11.1981), Lamela Geler stated that Jorge visited Santo Domingo in the early 1950s and played in the Teatro Olimpia, under the auspices of Sociedad Pro Arte. Now he gives a second recital in Santo Domingo.

## 1982

Jorge's itinerary states that 1-15 June 1982 had been reserved for Mexico.

12 June 1982, Teatro Solís, Montevideo (with conductor Isaac Karabtchevsky)

13 November: Orquesta Sinfónica de Puerto Rico under John Barnett in the Sala René Marqués of the Centro de Bellas Artes, San Juan.

## 1983

14 and 16 June, 1983 in the Teatro Municipal, Santiago de Chile, with Juan Pablo Izquierdo and the Orquesta Filarmónica de Santiago.

29 July: Cine-Teatro Embaixador, Gramado (Rio Grande do Sul), Brazil

31 July: Orquestra Sinfonica de Porto Alegre (a city 126km away), presumably under Eleazar de Carvalho,

## 1984

An article in Chilean newspaper *El Mercurio* (17.3.84) led with "there is a great probability that Claudio Arrau will come to Chile this year" and "the great Cuban American pianist Jorge Bolet will play Liszt's two concertos" (May 1984).

May (?): Santiago de Chile, Chile

May 1984 there was a tour (?) of South America (as stated by JB on BBC Radio 4's Desert Island Discs in March 1985 when discussing the thousand of miles travelling he does every year).

Sometime in 1984 (perhaps in May?) Jorge made his only appearance in Peru, giving a recital in a bank, Banco Continental whose principal offices are located in San Isidro, Lima.

11 June 1984 (as reported in *Cidade de Santos*), Jorge played Rachmaninoff's second concerto with the Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado/ Eleazar de Carvalho in the Teatro Cultura Artística, São Paulo, Brazil.