

Cellists' Corner

Brief Career Details of Important Cellists

prepared by David Johnstone from public information

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SPECIAL FEATURE on Guatamala cellist

EDUARDO ORTIZ LARA

A truly special moment, as I prepare this for 18th June 2020! The Guatamalan maestro of cello playing celebrates a wonderful 102 years old birthday today, and still is well and strong! I am delighted for the opportunity to share some details on his long and glorious career, duly crediting our Facebook cello friend Ricardo Del Carmen Fortuny for his invaluable help in compiling this information.

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Born in June 1918 in 'Ciudad de Guatemal' (Guatamala City)., Eduardo Ortiz Lara studied principally with Heinrich Joachim (1910-2002; cellist in the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, principal cello NYC Symphony Orchestra under Bernstein, principal Baltimore Symphony and also in City Centre Opera Orchestra).

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From 1942 until 1990 Ortiz Lara was the principal cello of the Orquesta Sinfonica Nacional de Guatemala y head profesor of the Conservatorio Nacional de Musica de Guatemala. As a grand teacher he has formed more than 35 of the most important cellists from this country, incluso numerous professional orchestral performers from orchestras from both Guatamala and other countries (for example, in Mexico).

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The maestro Adolfo Odnoposoff (the last teaching assistant to Casals) always said that the school of cellists passing through Ortiz Lara's hands was very solid. In fact, his son Sergio (no longer alive) was also a cellist, as is his grand-daughter Mónica, now a member of the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Guatamala and an excellent teacher herself!

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Nobody more than Ortiz Lara formed so many competent cellists in Central America, and undoubtedly also one of the most respected in all Latin America (documented alongside Arnaldo Fuentes {Chile} as being such an important pedagogue). This is also reflected in that Ricardo Del Carmen Fortuny gave him the dedication of his book “Breve Reseña Historica del Violoncello” (‘A Brief Historical Review of the Cello’).

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Celebrating his 102 years today, our Guatamala friend continues to be of divine health - many happy returns sir, and Bravo!!



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