

FESTIVAL CENTRO AMERICANO DE CONTRABAJO – A LOOK BACK

Posted by Claus Freudenstein | Sep 12, 2017 | Bass, Bass

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3RD CENTRAL AMERICAN BASS FESTIVAL IN GUATEMALA AND MASTERCLASSES WITH CONCERT IN TEGUCIGALPA/HONDURAS – A TRIP INTO A MYSTERIOUS WORLD – BY CLAUS FREUDENSTEIN

It is August 8th 2017, when I start my trip to Guatemala and Honduras. I´m invited to perform and to teach at the [Central American Bass Festival](#) in Antigua/Guatemala and at the Conservatory of Tegucigalpa/Honduras.

Honestly... I am nervous to go on that trip. The media and the press about that countries is not the best one. In other words, its supposed to be very dangerous. Plus, I don´t know any of the organizers in person. But also I´m super excited to meet bass players there, to share my knowledge and experience and of course to learn about that beautiful countries that are more or less unknown and a big mystery for me.





ABOUT THE FESTIVAL

Bassist Jairo Campos and „Antigua viva“, a cultural organization in Antigua, are the organizers of the 3rd Central American Bass Festival in Antigua/Guatemala. The Conservatory of Tegucigalpa (on recommendation of Estrella Miressa Santos) is organizing the event in Honduras.

After a flying time of 14 hours and a trip that lasted in total 23 hours I arrived in Guatemala City on Tuesday at 10 pm. The airport looks quite scary in the dark and foggy night. But once on the ground and in the building it is friendly and I was very happy to see Jairo Campos at the doors to pick me up.

To get over my jet lag, I arrived two days before the festival. That gave me time to see the city, get in contact with people, check the bass, change to solo strings, practice and also to get acclimatized.

A very positive part of the festival was already on that point that I was booked 2 days ahead on the wonderful Hotel „San

Jorge". Beautiful rooms with an amazing garden and a great breakfast.

My teaching work starts on Friday and I`m very happy about the warm welcome I received from the students.

12 students signed in for my classes. And as our first concert is already on Saturday we have an intense work ahead of us.

So after everyone got single lessons we started the ensemble work on two of my compositions, „Bass-Hymn“ and „Bassisten Rock“. Plus the piece „Imagine“ from John Lennon that I arranged for Bass Ensemble.

As the concert place was not the same place like the rehearsal room, the basses had to be carried there. In Guatemala it` s possible to fit 13 basses in one van. Just use the top of the car and tie the basses to the roof.



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CONCERT AT CONVENTO CASA CONCEPCIÓN!

In the wonderful garden of Convento Casa Concepción in the old town of Antigua, the first concert of the 3rd Central American Bass Festival took place. Jairo Campos opened the concert with a solo piece that he composed and a version of the famous „Elephant“ (C. Saint Saens) for big Bass Ensemble.

After this I had the chance to talk to the audience and to explain a view things about our music. I was very happy to conduct the Guatemala premiere of my „Bass Hymn“. Performed by that wonderful ensemble. Also the other two songs turned out great and the audience could not get enough of the bass!

The same concert happened also on Sunday. Even two times! Jairo put it under the famous arch of Antigua to make as many people as possible see and hear the bass. A bass-mob:) Perfect! A Doublebass open air with 11 basses! What a great idea.

The second concert in a beautiful hotel called „Los Pasos“ included an arrangement of Andres Martin. „Nothing else matters“ by Metallica for 2 solo basses and orchestra. Therefore „Antigua Viva“ put together a chamber orchestra that played with me and Jairo. They also performed some more pieces to complete the evening. And of course again „Bass-Hymn“ , „Bassisten Rock“ and „Imagine“

4.30 am. The alarm is ringing... It´s raining hard but I have to get up to be in time at the airport to go on to Tonkontin/ Tegucigalpa. One of the most spectacular and dangerous

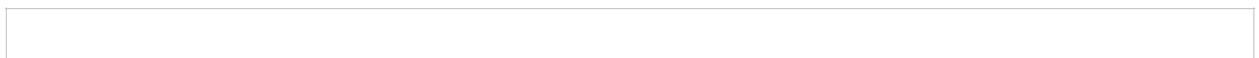
airports in the world. And really, if you see the runway from the planes window, it seems impossible to land there....

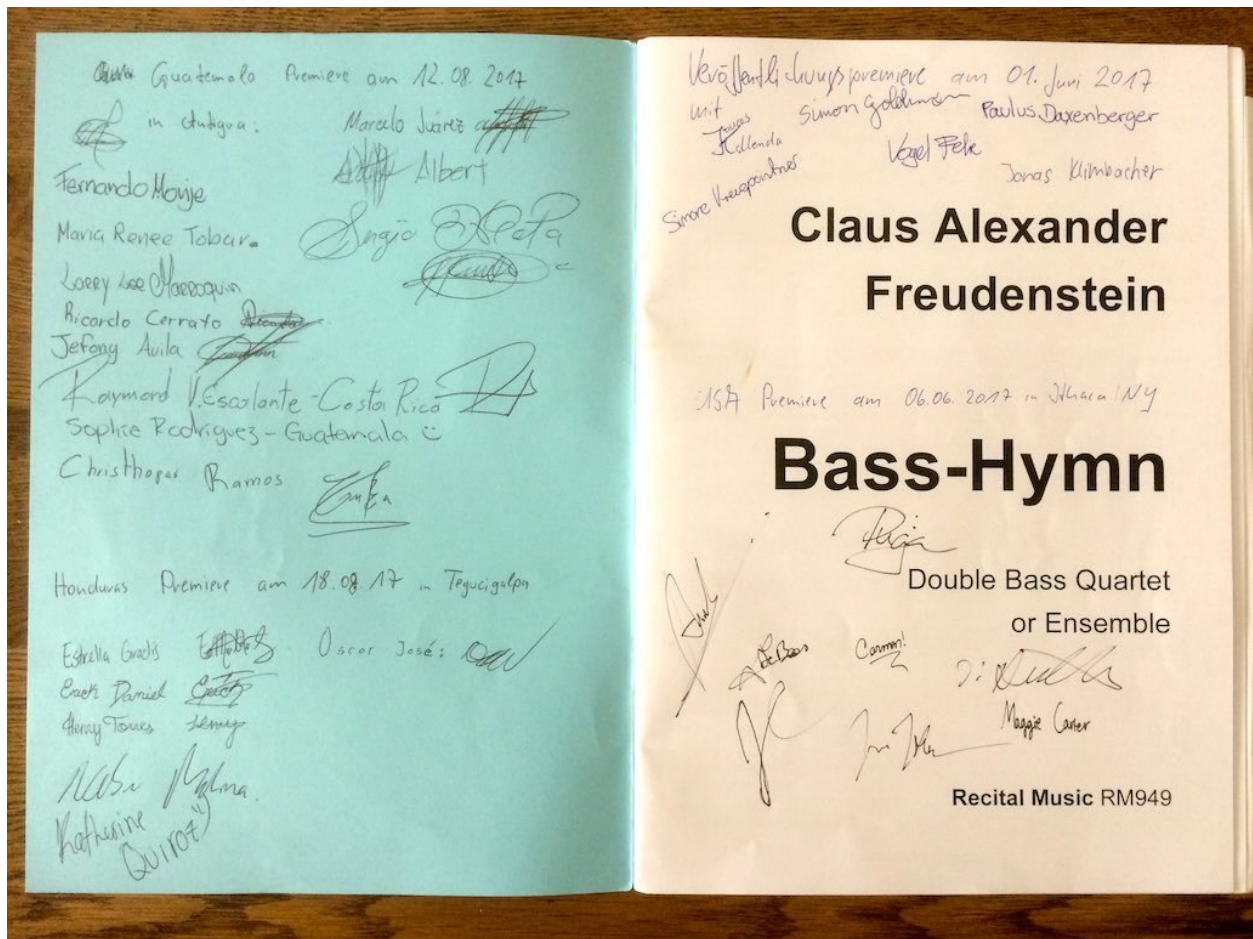
But we did... and after the great pilot landed the plane safely I got a warm welcome from representatives of the Conservatory.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Once at the school it is obvious that in Tegucigalpa the working conditions are very hard!

No windows in the rooms... several instruments are taught at the same time in one classroom, a terrible noise from the street comes in. And everything else in school is very noise. How can someone do an intonation exercise here??? That shocked me. But also I do admire the energy and bass love of the students to work here and to do their best. So of course I also did like that. And this energy pulled me and the seven students of the conservatory through that days and led us in a wonderful concert at the end of the week. Also here I had the opportunity to perform my compositions. So I could premiere „Bass-Hymn“ during one week in two countries.





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As a result of that trip I am astonished and overwhelmed by the warm welcome that I found in both of this countries/ festivals and I can only recommend everyone to go there. Especially teachers of classic music. All you will find is big love to music and people that treat you very well. And as Paul McCartney already sang many years ago: „Come together“ That guys need support and many of us can share their experiences on bass and in music where it is needed.

Learn more about Claus, his work with the Bassmonsters, and more [at his website](#), and [check out Claus on Contrabass Conversations](#) as well!