

LUCIA BRANCO (1897 - 1973)



Lucia Branco was born in São Paulo. She studied with Prof. J. Wancolle at the São Paulo Conservatoire of Music and Drama, where she won 1st prize and gold medal won in a competition.

With a scholarship from Pensionato Artístico de São Paulo, she went to Europe in 1919, studying in Brussels with Arthur De Greef, who had been a student of Liszt. In August 1921, performing to a highly specialized panel and competing with dozens of other candidates, she was awarded the *degré supérieur* with distinction ("avec le plus grande distinction") from the jury for her exams on the piano and related subjects.

After a concert tour in Europe, she returned to Brazil where she went on to give many recitals, earning great acclaim.

In 1927, on the invitation of the president of Brazil, Washington Luiz, she settled in Rio de Janeiro to work as one of the piano teachers at the National Institute of Music.

In August 1944 she was appointed a federal inspector by the Ministry of Education at the Brazilian Conservatoire.

She gave her last public concert in a programme given in tribute to Chopin on Roquette Pinto radio station.

In 1970, Sala Cecilia Meireles, a concert hall in Rio de Janeiro, unveiled a commemorative plaque in her name, and on 15 September 1970 pianist Nelson Freire played a concert in homage to her at Teatro Municipal.

She retired from public life in 1971 for health reasons, but had the satisfaction of seeing a whole host of former students make their names in Brazil and abroad, including Jacques Klein, Nelson Freire, Arthur Moreira Lima, Tom Jobim and Luizinho Eça.

With an ebullient artistic nature, Lucia Branco was driven by the noble mission of guiding young Brazilian musicians, and dedicated herself to this task, body and soul, for 42 years.