

Tour Yuri Honing Trio South America 2005



We usually joke about our national airline company KLM. Despite their good reputation it is one of the few airlines we try to avoid . Most of their planes are pretty old. The seats are put together so close that we (reasonably tall men but for dutch standards average height) cannot sit in a normal way without our knees jamming into the chair in front of us. At the moment the people in front put their seat back there is absolutely no way we can sit. The flight entertainment system is an old tv screen in the middle of the pathway which is either too faraway to see or too close so you get a stiff neck of looking up.

But we were lucky this time, at least that is what we thought. We were flying in one of their new boeings 777. Indeed more legroom, better seats and a personal screen with a great personal entertainment system! But what is that smell...? Didn't they clean the toilets yet? There is a penetrant stinging smell of urine. We were sitting in the back of the plane which might explain it. But when i asked a steward he told me that there was nothing they could do. Since they bought the plane this smell was in the system from front to back. We might even consider us lucky because in the beginning this machine couldn't cool the airco under 30 degrees celcius. Oops. Luckily the flight is only 12 hours to brazil.

The meals are still of the renowned bad KLM quality but this time the portions are even smaller and probably sponsored. The lunch we get is an uncle Benz sweet and sour chicken and dinner is a cheese sandwich with either a promotional new Lays chips or an ola icecream. When we get of the plane after 12 hours we are starving.

So happy to be back in brazil! Since our first tour, last september when we spent 2 days in brazil I have been looking forward to going back. In fact I have been looking forward to visit brazil since i made some brazilian friends and had a brazilian girlfriend during my studies at the conservatory in the hague some 20 years ago. This time we will also visit rio de janeiro, city of seduction, and some other cities.

That night after arrival we have a late night dinner at our favourite Italian restaurant

close to our hotel in Sao Paolo. this is a weird place, the walls of this neon lighted restaurant are filled with soccer jerseys from famous Italian football teams. Their food seems to come from a garden next to a nuclear plant prepared by a giant cook. The tomato salad has slices of tomato bigger than compact discs. The palm hearts are the size of a large fist, the ravioli are as big as a CD booklet. The portions are huge and each easily feed an average family. Being so hungry that night I even finished my two 500 grams contra fillets. I love this place.

The next day we take a bus to Rio. The luxurious bus with first class seats meanders us through the beautiful hilly landscape of Brazil. I dream of Rio, the beach life, the seductive Brazilian women, the vibrant alive atmosphere with samba schools on every streetcorner. Our hotel will be somewhere in between Copacabana beach and Ipanema beach. What a life!



Unfortunately we did not see Rio in all its splendor. We had 3 days of rain; that makes even Rio look like a desolate English beach resort in autumn. No people on the beaches or boulevard. We did go swimming one afternoon in the ocean which was surprisingly warm. It was great to bodysurf in these big ocean waves.

The 3rd day we finally had our first radio show and concert. We played in

a famous radio studio where people like Villa Lobos and Tom Jobim recorded. We had a live intermission. 2 young girls accompany us during our time in Brazil. They take care of all the legal paperwork. For the concerts and radio performances we need all kind of permissions with stamps. It seems to be their first time, they are so nervous that they didn't sleep for days.

After a rainy version of Rio we leave for Campinas a relatively small town one hour from Sao Paulo. We couldn't find it in our lonely planet guide and when we arrived we found out why. When we asked our busdriver what were the things to see in Campinas he couldn't think of a single thing. Campinas seems to be one of those relatively new towns with no real centre and no history. Our hotel though is very good, with a nice pool, sauna and fitness I finally have some time to workout. We do our concert at a nice cultural centre. The concert is part of a small festival and is sold out. We do one of our nicest concerts in a long time. We play well, communicate with each other and the audience and even make jokes. The fun after being together for more than 15 years is that we still surprise each other, that every concert is different and that we still develop and grow. I guess this must also be the quality of a good relationship, something I am finally starting to realize now.

After the concert we are invited by the organiser to see the other shows. He puts us at a table next to the stage, brings us nice food and many caparinha's in increasing bigger glasses. The world looks very pretty after a few of those. We see concerts of local bands, singers and musicians. Brazilian musicians have an incredible collective feel when they play together. It sounds like they are one instrument. European musicians are much more individually orientated. Each has its own quality but I am always impressed by this collective musicianship.

We travel back to Sao Paulo for our last concert in Brazil. We do a combination of a workshop and a concert at Catholic university for a group of music students. After a

short concert we answer questions from the audience and play with some of the students. After the show we have one last meal at our favourite Italian restaurant and one final caiparinha. The day after we will fly to Chili. Leaving at 6 in the morning and spend the whole day in planes and on airports. Not my favourite part but a good moment to work on my diary, evaluate the tour and talk about future projects. We are more than friends and musicians, we also run a business and a record company. Always working and improving on all levels. Luckily we now have Sophie working for us. She works for the foundation and the record company. Because of her we are able to do more and better work. It really puts our organisation in a higher gear.

Finally we were very lucky on our flight to Puerto Montt. After our arrival in Santiago we were lucky enough to be able to change our flight to Puerto Montt to a flight that would leave straight away. When the travel agency books a flight they always leave enough room to change planes in case of delay but since we got through customs quickly we could catch a flight earlier. In Puerto Montt the festival organiser Millary was already waiting for us. She took us to our hotel O'Grimm, a charming hotel in the middle of the city. Puerto Montt is a very special place. Since it lies in the south of Chili the climate and atmosphere is comparable to Norway. It is financially dependent on the salmon trade and is the main entrance to Patagonia, so many travelers pass by. The people are friendly and warmhearted and most of them are clearly descendants of native Indians. Only the young people seem to be bored and frustrated. When Joost and I walked through the streets we were cursed at in English, I guess they presumed we were American considering the kind of insults we received.

The concert in the local theatre was great, the people responded very well. People told us they were crying, thought our music was mystical, and that our music was not about jazz but about life itself. We couldn't wish for better critics. These are just the things that concern us as well. The other bands at the festival seemed to be mainly concerned to impress the audience with their virtuosity, which they clearly had. But after a few minutes it all becomes a blur. Millary, the very friendly and skilled organiser of the festival, told us that they had never heard music like this. They were intrigued. Later that night we played on an odd jam session with some very friendly local musicians. I never thought I would ever be caught into playing 'the Chicken' (a piece by bass virtuoso Jaco Pastorius) on a bass guitar. Never say never.

The next day our flight will only leave at night which gives us a free day in Puerto Montt. Felix, the very friendly owner of the O'Grimm hotel rents us a car and we decide to drive to one of the beautiful volcanos in the area. It's a lovely drive along a huge lake and up a dirt road to a ski center on the slopes of the volcano. Although Puerto Montt usually is one of the rainiest places in the world we are extremely lucky to have a beautiful sunny day which makes the views on and from the volcano even more spectacular. I might have said this before and may start to sound like a broken record but we do have the most beautiful job in the world.



La Paz, Bolivia. This is one of my favourite cities in the world, so far. It's not the beauty of the buildings nor any interesting museums that make La Paz so beautiful. For me it is the beauty and kindness of the people and the spectacular situated city. La Paz airport is situated at 4000 m at the virge of a canyon, La Paz city is built on the hills of the canyon at a height of 3500 m, the highest capital in the world. It is truly another world. That combined with influences of the altitude on your body which makes you feel permantly slightly high makes the experience of this town unforgettable. I really want to come back here to spent a holiday. Three days is much too short.

last year we also played here, and coming back to this town brings back good memories, and some bad ones. The first day I got so sick of the altitude that i had to use an oxygen mask after the concert, i took a huge pill that night provided by the hotel and was alright the next day. This time I already took some ibuprofen before we landed and took 1 pill each three hours for the first days. I did feel quite a bit better.

That night we played a concert at the house of the ambassador. and the next day we had a workshop and a concert at the Teatro Municipal. The rest of the time we spent walking around the city looking for gifts for our families. We are having trouble checking in now because we have too much lugage. Poncho's, leatherbags, panflutes and many other souvenirs.

our last concert is in Santa Cruz, a fast growing bolivian city. We fly from La Paz to Santa Cruz with the natiolan airline Aero Boliviano. The 727-100 is probably 40 years old and has not been changed since than. It's interior is in its original state. It takes a long time before the aeroplane makes enough speed to take off. It accelerates like an old truck. I am always happy to arrive save and sound on such flights.

we arrive late in the afternoon and will leave early in the morning so no time for sightseeing or for enjoying our nice hotel with swimmingpool. The concert in a modern theatre is sold out. The audience is very receptive and the applaude generously. I am sure that most people never heard music like this but they listen with an open mind. After the concert many people come to us to meet and greet, take pictures and

ask for autographs. One boy has a very special request, he asks me to tell his girlfriend (or at least the girl he is with) that he is really in love with her. He said that she liked the concert so much and was so crazy about us that she would definitely believe me. I didn't really want to do it, told him he should say this himself but he wouldn't let go so i finally gave in. I am not sure that she was amused. I am not much of a counselor, i guess.

This was our second South America tour. What a beautiful place, people and atmosphere. I really hope we will come back soon.

Tony