



GENEVA GROUP INTERNATIONAL

JOÃO CARLOS MARTINS

The Brazilian pianist, João Carlos Martins, was a child prodigy, and began studying the piano with José Kliass at the age of eight. The following year, he won a competition sponsored by the Bach Society of Brazil. Soon thereafter, the legendary Alfred Cortot proclaimed: "With this kind of tone, with the ability of his fingers, he could become very important for the history of piano playing."

João Carlos Martins made his professional debut at Teresopolis in 1954. Other concerts followed in Brazilian cities. At the age of 18, he was among the first Latin Americans to be invited to participate in the prestigious Casals Music Festival in Puerto Rico. In 1960 he made his American debut at Carnegie Hall in New York, evoking superlatives for his "passionate subjectivity" from the critics. International attention grew in 1961 when, at 20, he gave a performance of the 48 Preludes and Fugues from Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier in his debut concert in Washington, D.C. Later he made a specialty of performing all of Bach's 48 preludes and fugues in 2 consecutive concerts. During the 1960's, he performed as a soloist with major orchestras throughout the USA (including orchestras in New York, Philadelphia, and Boston.) and Europe.

But at the height of his successes, in 1969, João Carlos Martins was knocked down during a soccer match, and hurt his arm to the point of a painful neuralgia, so that he had to stop playing piano. But in a surprising change of direction, he went into banking, managed a champion prizefighter, started a construction company, and became a multimillionaire in devalued Brazilian currency. An even more surprising development followed when, in 1981, he was appointed to the post of the Brazilian state secretary of culture; in this capacity, he exhibited an extraordinary knack for urban recovery in the direction of futuristic Americanization.

In the meantime, João Carlos Martins' neurological ailment subsided, and he returned to his career as a virtuoso pianist, but not to the exclusion of other activities. Between 1979 and 1998, he devoted himself to recording Bach's complete works for keyboard on the Concord Concerto and Labor Records labels. Following a recording session in Sofia in 1995, he was beaten senseless by two Bulgarian thugs. He received injuries to his skull and brain, causing the loss of use of his right arm. Therapy and biofeedback in the next few years brought back much movement. In 1996 he returned to the concert stage with an appearance at New York's Carnegie Hall. But an operation in early 2000 rendered his hand essentially useless. Instead of retiring completely from the piano, Martin turned to recording the complete repertoire for the left hand. The series began with a disc of Ravel's concerto, Camille Saint-Saëns' Etudes, and Brahms' transcription of the Bach Chaconne in June 2001.



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João Carlos Martins: Career Briefing

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| 1958 | Casals Festival |
| 1961 | Debut at Carnegie Hall followed by concerts until his injury |
| 1966 | The rupture of the ulnar nerve playing soccer at Central Park, NY |
| 1970 | Unable to play, abandons music and his career |
| 1978 | Comeback concert at Carnegie Hall |
| 1978/1985 | With determination, has a fantastic recovery and does the first half of the Bach Complete Keyboard Works recording |
| 1985 | LER, repetitive movement syndrome |
| 1985/1993 | Treatments |
| 1993 | Starts the second half of the Bach Complete Keyboard Works recordings plus concerts |
| 1995 | The mugging in Bulgaria, resulting in brain concussion; requires 8 months of treatment at the Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami |
| 1996 | Concert at Carnegie Hall, plus extensive touring |
| 1997/1998 | Finishes the Bach Complete Keyboard Works recordings |
| 1998 | The final atrophy from the right hand muscles |
| 1999/2000 | Begins career with left hand, Europe and Asia |
| 2002 | Tumor discovered in the left hand |
| 2003 | Documentary about his life, titled, "Martins' Passion," is winner of several film festivals |
| 2004 | The beginning of his career as conductor with concerts in Europe and Brazil |
| 2005/2006 | 100 concerts in Brazil; recording |
| 2007/2008 | Tour in Brazil; establishes Bachiana Youth Orchestra; works closely with environmental groups |



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Statement on Social Work

Besides the Bachiana Chamber Orchestra, João Carlos Martins has founded the Bachiana Youth Orchestra with students, most of them from the poor neighborhoods of São Paulo. Today, the Bachiana Youth Orchestra is playing in several places for children who never had the opportunity to listen to classical music. With support from the Bachiana Foundation, the youth program has already selected more than a thousand boys and girls who are interested in studying music. The Foundation is also starting a partnership with the Amazon Region Protected Areas (ARPA) organization, which is the most important environmental organization in protecting the Amazon region.