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Walt and El Grupo

By Unknown

Personally, I was unaware of
Walt Disney's visit to Chile.
It is not a well known topic.
Walt Disney was always
present in my life,
because it was he
who changed our lives.
When Disney comes, comes to Argentina,
there is something that is very natural
in human beings,
which is to ask why he is coming.
Why is he coming?
From the left side of the room,
a door like the one over there,
a person came in
walking on his hands!
Immediately, he put up his arms
like this and said,
"Hola chicos!"
I arrived at the Urca in 1941,
began practically on the same day
playing a cricket,
because I used to do acrobatics.
I was astonished when I arrived.
I came from a circus, arrived at a
casino... I didn't know where to look,
so much beauty, so much luxury,
so many things...
And the personalities that came
to the Grill, watching the shows.
Politicians, artists,
a lot of artists,
including a great personality
that caught all of our attention,
everyone in the cast got crazy.
"Here is Walt Disney.
Walt Disney is here watching the show!"
That evening, at the Urca Casino,
a banquet was given by
the Department of Press and Propaganda.
The Grill was decorated
with motifs from Fantasia.
A scene from Carnaval Carioca
was performed for Mr. Disney.

Sophistication, music, beautiful women,
and famous orchestras,
all the best.
It seemed like it had no end.
Talking about the Urca is really hard...
...really hard.
Telling you exactly
what Urca Casino was like.
A dream.
And then there is a plin plin plin plin
plin sound. Then they go home.
"I go, I go,
to home it's now I go...
I go, I go, I go..."
it's like that in the film, right?
Are they recording already?
At that time I was a little girl,
but people tell me
that when Disney arrived here,
it seemed he already had
an old friendship with my father.
And my father had already
been chosen
to dub Disney's first feature-length
animated film, which was Snow White.
My father said,
"Life likes those who like life."
This is the piano of
It was a rainy Monday in 1938.
AW Barroso sat at this piano
in order to compose a waltz,
As Trs Lgrimas (Three Tears),
began to play the keyboard,
and suddenly was interrupted
by an inspiration.
And there it was, complete and
At Radio Globe's auditorium,
Dad went there
and while he was listening to auditions
a man came and said, "Hey AW,
that's Walt Disney over there,
you need to show him your songs."
Then, he sat at the piano,
started to play,

and Walt Disney said,
"That is the music I want."
We cut out the photograph of Disney.
We put it on top of the radio where they
were going to broadcast his arrival.
We listened to the arrival of Disney
with Chas de Cruz announcing,
announcing that he was moving across the
river that we have here to the side.
And desperately, while we heard,
"He's arriving, he's arriving!"
We saw the silver plated fuselage
reflecting the sun of early spring.
Desperately we greeted Disney
thinking that he could see us.
We ran to see the evening papers
to read about the arrival of Disney.
And we saw it.
Disney on the steps of the plane
with a young boy next to him.
All of us who were enamored with Disney
envied that young boy.
Since Disney and the group
needed a place to work
they chose this room
to set up the studio.
This is the terrace
where the dance was held.
Do you remember
how long the presentation lasted?
Half an hour, half an hour.
Thirty minutes.
All of the Cartoonists were here.
All of the people taking pictures
were there in front.
There was a very pretty girl there.
This girl, do you remember this girl?
And this is you?
Yes.
In the newspaper,
I read that Tachuela Gramajo
did the solo for the malambo.
Oh yes.
Do you remember?

Me? Of course, how am I not going to remember? Yes, I remember everything! Disney got very excited during the malambo. He kept tapping me. Macanudo, Macanudo, Macanudo! He liked it. I was very fond of that guy. This caught my attention because he could not understand us, and we could not understand him, but I could tell he was very happy. We don't have any documentation on how Disney contacted my grandfather. But, based on the date, we think that it coincides with the time he had moved to Buenos Aires to work on the institute to teach dance. About 70% of the dances that are known as traditionals in our country, are the dances collected by Chazarreta. They raised us dancing, they raised us singing, so we lived the music. So it is impossible for me not to feel happy when I hear a chacarera, or not to want to dance when I hear it. For me personally, it motivates me because it is the positive side of my life. For example, my mother fell in love while dancing a zamba with a man from Simoca. And they got married. Later they traveled many roads together. He in politics, with the same intensity as Chazarreta. With the same repression that Argentina suffers in culture and in political activism. This is something very much mine, stories that are mine. One helps me to withstand the other.

To have had a grandfather who truly
became the Patriarch of Folklore,
and a father who was repressed
and disappeared
by the military dictatorship...
One makes me shine
and helps me fight for the other.
I think that
a large percentage of Argentines,
I would estimate 90%
and that might be low,
believe in three urban myths,
as they are called today.
One is...
The little I know has to do with
Disney being frozen.
Well, about Disney,
I know that he was frozen...
Look, what I know about Disney
is that since I was young
I have always known he was frozen.
About being frozen, I know from high up
that they froze him because...
I know that he is frozen.
I can't give you more details.
Well, all of this is fantasy.
All the fantasy that we created
is part of the fantasy of Walt Disney.
No more, no less.
The announcements were very precise.
Disney is coming to do research
for a film with a gaucho theme.
...and an idea is born, a fantasy,
things that are very typical in humans.
Disney is a spy.
He is coming because he is a spy.
There were those that...
Sympathized with the Allies,
others with the Axis,
but it was talked about,
it wasn't something people fought over.
But it gave us a base on which to draw
comic strips about war adventures,
things like that. Right?

The cartoonist during that time
was very important.
And there were many jobs
because there were many newspapers
and magazines here.
Yes, they were at the house.
Yes, they were at the house, yes.
I still remember because they gave me
some drawings.
Most of all, I remember
the people who did voices.
And more than anything I was excited by
the one who talked like Donald Duck.
I do believe that a friendship remained
between them, because you see
that in absolutely
every document that exists
on Walt Disney's visit to Argentina,
right next to him is Ramn Columba.
Frankly, it was a surprising event,
in that kind of political climate,
to see Mr. Walt Disney in Santiago
with his colleagues,
with this big smile,
joking with everyone,
with a stupendous sense of humor.
The line of investigation I followed
was simply to sit
at the printing press of the time.
When Disney arrived it was not
treated as an official state visit.
And for this reason it focused
on contacting and interacting
with artists, intellectuals,
painters, and sculptors.
My father was a young man
when Walt Disney arrived in Chile.
He must have been twenty years old,
and immediately had a good relationship
with Walt Disney.
He thought my father was an interesting
young man since he was studying cinema
and producing some films
with his father.

This caused Walt Disney to tell him,
"Why don't you come
with me to see Santiago?
Accompany me on this trip,
we can talk about many things."
My father was touched by this friendship
or affection that Walt Disney
showed toward him.
Conversations, comments...
One of which
was what character to choose,
on behalf of Chile,
for this film they were making.
And a year after Walt had come to Chile,
my father found himself
in the offices of Walt Disney.
He received him as an acquaintance,
a friend from South America.
And, well, this is when he showed
my father the small surprise,
which was the letter the airplane
was carrying in the film.
As the camera zooms in to the interior.
Well, after World War II ended,
my father, trying to continue the work
he had left behind in the United States,
returned to Hollywood
to pursue those activities.
However, what he found
was a totally different panorama
than during the Second World War.
Things had changed.
The studios had changed their politics,
and because of this,
my father was forced
to go into a different field.
But, he kept these memories with him
and shared them with me
from time to time.
And he always approved of my dedication
to film, animation,
and anything related to it.
Did you see the movie, Saludos,
when it premiered here?

- Yes.

- Yes.

- Good!

- Fantastic! Really Good!

I did not like the pan about Argentina.

I did not like it.

It is just with a gaucho that
only does a couple of gags.

The truth is they really nail
the part about the gauchos
when they eat the barbecue with
the knife and all that. It's clever.

In the case of Chile,
the character was a little airplane,
and the only thing he did was carry
a letter for Mr. Jorge Delano.

And that was all.

So Pepo, an artist
who worked at Topaze magazine,
as a way to praise a Chilean character,
created "El Condorito" representing
the most typical things in our country.

It is the condor that appears
on our National Shield.

And it was also a clear response
to the little consideration
that Disney gave
our country in the film.