

Star in The House of Mirrors: Contrasting Images of Carmen Miranda in Brazil and the United States¹

Bianca Freire-Medeiros

By contrasting the ambivalent interpretations and appropriations of Carmen Miranda's image in both the United States and Brazil, this article examines the aesthetic and political implications of Miranda's emergence as an international celebrity in the construction and dissemination of a certain Brazilian identity within Brazil and worldwide.

It's time for
the dark skinned people
to show their value.
I want to see Uncle Sam
playing tambourine
for everyone to play samba

Assis Valente's 'Brazil Is a Tambourine', performed by Carmen Miranda

More than just 'another South American singer', Carmen Miranda (1909-1955)² became part of American popular culture by transforming Brazilian music melodically, visually and choreographically. Going against a long established tradition which assumed that musical interpretations were to be primarily centered on vocal resources, Miranda presented herself as a totality, voice *and* body.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that Miranda was a post-modern artist *avant la lettre*, a pioneer in the use of visual resources as a part of her persona as a celebrity, giving to her performance a *mise-en-scène* comparable to that of contemporary rock stars. She was what Jacques Dalcroze, in a different but comparable context, named 'music made visible'.³ In her last interview before going to the United States, Miranda demonstrated how conscious she was of the role played by visual elements on the elaboration of her persona. She re-invented the traditional *baiana* costume – a white *saia rodada* (wide round skirt) and a *bata* (gypsy-style blouse) topped with *balangandãs* (blue and white or red and white beads representing Afro-Brazilian deities such as Oshun, Iemanjá or Oxalá) – introducing it as an icon of Brazil worldwide:

It was given to me the great opportunity and the great honor of being the interpreter of Brazilian things. This will be the first important chance for our samba. That's why I'll employ all my efforts so that everything works out, and that Brazil's popular music conquers North America, which would be the way for its victory worldwide ... And I'm bringing along six keen *baianas*, six costumes representing the people of Bonfim (Bahia) ... I'm doing all that I can to turn our music and the *baiana* into a success in that land.⁴

The aim of this article is to create at least a provisional sense of the aesthetic and political implications of Carmen Miranda's emergence as an international celebrity in the representation of Brazil worldwide. Though the main focus here will be on her film roles, including *That Night in Rio*,⁵

attention is also paid to her career as a whole. In so far as they illustrate ambivalent interpretations and appropriations of her image in both the United States and Brazil, elements of her personal and public lives are also discussed.

In his reflections on the nature of stardom in contemporary Western culture, P. David Marshall calls attention to the affinity between the discursive power of the celebrity system, the emergence of democratic ideals and the consolidation of the capitalist order.⁶ The contemporary use of the term *celebrity*, 'the condition of being much extolled or talked about; fame, notoriety', disrupts any prior religious or mystic connotation which the term had previously 'embod[ied] the ambiguity of the public forms of subjectivity under capitalism'.⁷ At once venerated and denigrated, celebrities live with the never-ending anxiety between *authenticity* and *fabrication*: on one hand, she or he enacts the ultimate democratic dream – a modest origin followed by hard work, discovery and fame; on the other hand, the celebrity is accused by conservatives and Marxist critics, such as Adorno and Horkheimer, of being a site of false values, the epitome of a perverse consumer society.

Miranda's trajectory as an international star is probably one of the best examples of the tension between the genuine and the fabricated within the celebrity-making machinery. Both her private as well as her public lives were chronicled in terms of paradoxes: how could an epidermically white artist of Portuguese origin become the first important Brazilian performer to incorporate elements of Afro-Brazilian culture? How could someone apparently embody the totality of South and Central America despite wearing the specifically regional costume of a *baiana*? How could she so successfully sing in Portuguese for the United States public, which has typically not accepted other languages in its popular culture? How were these paradoxes interpreted in Brazil and in the United States?

Myths of origin play a central role in the cultural and political controversy around Miranda. There are basically two stories about her origins. The first constructs the beginning of her career according to the myth of the self-made celebrity. The story starts in 1909 with an eight-month-old Maria do Carmo migrating from Portugal to Brazil with her lower middle-class family and highlights her teenage years in Lapa, a poor district in downtown Rio peopled mainly by Afro-Brazilian singers and composers. The Bohemian influence of these years is seen as properly balanced by a strict Catholic education.

Commenting on the childhood pictures of the artist, Brazilian journalist Cassio Barsante observes that 'she always had something special, a careless spontaneity, and a naughty way of enjoying life', and that, along with what is said to have been a restless personality, might be seen as a sign of her 'natural' call to stardom.⁸ Along the same lines, Simone de Sá argues that Miranda was a performer rather than an actress.⁹ If acting supposes dramaticity, the careful construction of a role, insertion into a plot and rehearsal, then Miranda never truly acted. Most of the choreography she performed in her films was self-invented; directors encouraged her to move and gesticulate as she pleased. In order to secure this spontaneity, Miranda argued she needed her old trusted band and imposed, as one of her conditions on accepting American producer Lee Shubert's contract to perform on Broadway, the hiring of her group of five musicians, the so-called *Bando da Lua*. Composed of middle-class light-skinned young Brazilian men, the band was said to always give Miranda the necessary musical and emotional support. Aloysio de Oliveira, leader of the *Bando da Lua*, remembers that she refused to play solely with American musicians and that even on stage presentations, there was never a script: 'Carmen only felt good saying things that would come to her mind spontaneously'.¹⁰

For Martha Gil-Monteiro, no other singer before Miranda delivered as much audacity and humour. It was not so much a matter of technical skills or of an extraordinary voice, but of *originality*. Working with the most influential musicians and composers in the country, Miranda brought the samba, still marginalised among Brazil's socially dominant white elites as belonging to Afro-Brazilian communities, into the most sophisticated, and privileged ballrooms. She also appropriated the image of the *baiana* and projected it as a Brazilian national symbol. These Afro-Brazilian women, part of the Carioca scene since Imperial times, were known for selling their *acarajés* (an Afro-Brazilian dish) and providing color to the carnival parades. She adopted their identity and placed it in dialogue with the Carioca landscape. Her first *baiana* costume, not by chance, had an image of the Sugar Loaf stamped on a white skirt. In this and similar ways, Carmen Miranda was to have a

significant influence in promoting a much more multi-ethnic image of Brazilian national identity than had previously been the case.

According to this version, therefore, before departing to the United States in 1939, Miranda was already a celebrity whose persona was created by her and not by any political machinery. It was particularly her gestures and facial expressions, the movement of her arms and hands to the rhythm of the music, and her extravagant outfits that were responsible, not only for constructing her image but also for her long-lasting success. It was Miranda's *charisma* that ultimately enchanted American audiences and brought her to Hollywood.

There is also a different version of Miranda's ascendance to fame. This second origin myth does not go back to her childhood but starts in 1939 with Lee Shubert 'discovering' Miranda at the *Casino da Urca* and bringing her to the United States. While the first myth emphasizes Miranda's career as a singer in Brazil, this one focuses mainly on her years in Hollywood as the star of the 'banana movies' cycle. Here, the credit for Miranda's success is solidly located in a complex array of political interests.

For those who subscribe to the idea of Miranda as a fabricated star, she was indeed a double-fake: first, as a product of the populist policies of the *Estado Novo* of the Brazilian President, Getúlio Vargas; second, as an instrument of President Roosevelt's policy of Pan Americanism. It is important to keep in mind that President Vargas was a central figure on the elaboration of a certain Brazilian identity with strong nationalist colours. Vargas was a protagonist in the political scene for over two decades: he ruled as dictator (1930-1934), congressionally elected president (1934-1937), and again as dictator (1937-1945), served as a senator (1946-1951) and was popularly elected president in the early fifties (1951-1954). The Vargas years saw the reorganisation of the armed forces, the economy, international trade, and foreign relations. In 1937 *Estado Novo* was implemented, with media censorship, banning of political parties and dissolving of all legislative bodies. The regime's propaganda touted state paternalism and protection and depicted Vargas as the benefactor of the working classes. In this context, samba became accepted as a national signature and racial fusion was seen as a positive of Brazilian culture and society.

For critics such as Allen Woll,¹¹ it is no coincidence that Miranda's ascendance to celebrity status in the United States happened exactly at the same time that Roosevelt resumed the old 'Good Neighbor Policy' formula and requested that Hollywood participate in the fight against the Nazi threat. In this reading of events, if the 'Brazilian Bombshell' became the highest-paid entertainer in Hollywood in 1942 (a time when Latin American artists were usually underpaid) it was primarily because she represented a strategic link between South and North Americans, impersonating all the Rositas and Carmelitas who, according to the United States imagination, peopled every piece of land south of the Rio Bravo.

However, Brazilian music critic, José Ramos Tinhorão,¹² reminds us that long before becoming part of Roosevelt's agenda, Miranda had been on President Getúlio Vargas' list of 'strategic partners'. Vargas had relied heavily on the emergent cultural industry for promoting his policy of national cohesion. Brazilian cinema, as well as a new generation of singers willing to thematise 'Brazilian topics', were seen as the perfect media to spread the ideology of the new government. Increasingly aware of Miranda's national and international success (she was already a big star in Argentina and Uruguay), Vargas saw in her an ideal vehicle: 'The Itamaraty [Brazilian Office for Foreign Affairs] should turn itself into a school of Carmen Mirandas'.¹³ Vargas was to count on Miranda to sell an image of Brazil as a land of racial democracy, coffee and joy.¹⁴

Did Carmen Miranda, as well as other singers, consciously help in the dissemination of the Vargas's hidden agenda, that is, an appreciation for Brazil and its idiosyncrasies, but also one with serious signs of fascism? Miranda had been a successful artist singing nationalist themes which exalted the country and its people well before Vargas's *Estado Novo*. Yet it is also true that her career was favored by his policy of translating what were originally 'black' samba and other Afro-Brazilian cultural manifestations into forms acceptable by white audiences worldwide. To have the President's appreciation, however, was unfortunately not sufficient to protect Miranda from those who thought that Brazil ought to present a 'whiter' image for world consumption. The editorial of one of the most important newspapers of the period sums up this position: 'There are many people

infuriated with this. Is it, that Brazil becomes famous in the United States, with a Portuguese singing Nigger sambas in completely bad taste?'¹⁵

The first time Miranda returned to Rio after her success on Broadway, she was received by thousands of proud fans but also by others who accused her of becoming 'Americanized'. Arriving in Rio, she immediately assumed a defensive attitude: 'I am 100% Brazilian. And the first useful thing that I'll do in Rio is to sing for the 'Casa das Meninas' (House of Girls), offering my support to the great social assistance initiative promoted by Mrs. Vargas'.¹⁶ But this charity presentation at the *Casino da Urca* turned out to be a complete disaster: she stepped on to the stage and, in English, greeted the public, the elite of Vargas' government, and sang *South American Way*. Not a single sound of applause followed. Two composer friends seized the opportunity and came up with '*Disseram que Voltei Americanizada*' ('They said that I came back Americanized'), a dazzling *chorinho*¹⁷ which Miranda sang at her second and last performance in Rio. The audience loved it and applauded with great enthusiasm. Yet the cold silence of that first night sank deeply into Miranda's heart and it would take her fourteen years to recover and face an audience in her country again.

Although most Brazilians were impressed by her success in the United States, the fact that Miranda's roles in Hollywood always evoked an image of Brazil as exotic, extravagant, and tropical was not seen favourably by the Brazilian elite. According to her critics, her characters were an allegory of the image the United States constructed of the Latin South: a region still in its childhood, in which passion prevailed over reason, and in need of guidance from the United States. As fast as Miranda's fame and success increased abroad, so also did the dissatisfaction of some in Brazil with the image of a carnivalised nation which she was popularizing internationally through her stage musicals and especially films.

But a paradox also emerges here: was not this an image of Brazil as the kingdom of samba, joy and mulattos, an image built by various 'indigenous hands' during the 1930s and projected in several songs, considered 'truly Brazilian'? *Aquarela do Brasil*, the 'national hymn' composed by Ary Barroso and included in Disney's *Saludos Amigos* (1943), specifically exalted a country of coconut trees and *mães-pretas* (black mothers), and 'the land of samba and tambourine'. *Saludos Amigos*, it is important to remember, was produced by The Walt Disney Studios under Nelson Rockefeller's direct supervision. The film, which mixed live actors and animation, marked the debut of Joe Carioca, a swell and talkative parrot that was to become very popular among Brazilian audiences. Disney's and Rockefeller's intention was to come up with a product that combined entertainment and educational values, while at the same time presenting an image of Brazil that would praise the *Estado Novo*. Although Joe Carioca celebrated the Carioca *malandro* (crook), who is always willing to give up work to party, the film as a whole was seen by the Brazilian government as a positive portrayal of Brazil, not least because no black actors were invited to participate in it.¹⁸ The Brazilian stand at the New York World's Fair, built by highly revered Modernist architects, also evoked this image of a 'tropical paradise' combining green walls, tropical flowers and the smell of coffee. These images of Brazil presented in such artistic statements were never questioned internally; mostly the opposite, as they came to be known as 'authentic expressions' of the 'Brazilian soul'.

Feeling in some way in debt to the Brazilian public, Miranda was always justifying herself, explaining why she had to include rhythms other than the samba in her repertoire. In her last exclusive interview for a Brazilian radio station, she talked about her latest tour to Europe, emphasising the fact that she had only performed Brazilian songs and apologising for not including more Carnival numbers:

These Carnival songs ... that I like so much, neither the American nor the Italian public can understand them. I'd have to give too many explanations, everything too complicated, and there'd be no results.¹⁹

Miranda was certainly not the only star to be typecast and controlled by the studio systems. But the burden of trying to break through a thick cultural barrier made her case even more complicated. She was obliged to be the 'Brazilian Bombshell' twenty-four hours a day, going to parties dressed in costumes, and often even having the characters she played named 'Carmen'.

While Brazilians were debating whether Miranda was doing them a good or bad service, North American audiences were simply lapping up what she offered. It was a love-at-first-sight tale. The year was 1939 and the musical was *Streets of Paris*, a mix of comic sketches with songs from different parts of the world. Five songs in Portuguese, sprinkled with a few English words, were reserved for Brazil in the last six minutes before the interlude. The language and the rhythms were barely known by the North American audiences, but Miranda managed to be an immediate success: in seven days, her name jumped up from the fourth to the first place on the sign of the Broadhurst Theater and within a few weeks, her pay went from US\$750 to US\$1000 per week.²⁰ Within a year, Miranda had her flamboyant figure displayed on the main magazines of the time (*Life*, *Pic*, *Vogue*, *Esquire* and *Harper's Bazaar*) and was invited by President Roosevelt to participate in the celebration of his seventh anniversary as President. She made her debut in Hollywood shortly afterwards.

In February 1940, *Down Argentine Way*²¹ started shooting in New York, featuring Miranda in her first 20th Century Fox contract. The film also featured Betty Grable playing an American woman who falls for a wealthy racehorse owner, Don Ameche, while on vacation in Argentina. Despite the studio's investments in the film, it was severely criticised in Brazil and was totally banned in Argentina.²² The attacks, however, had no effect on Miranda's road to fame: innocently ignorant of the cultural particularities of every Latin American country, the North American public turned the film into a hit. Carmen Miranda became the first Latin American to inscribe her name, handprints, and footprints on the Walk of Fame in Hollywood, as well as the highest-paid actress in the world.²³

Still in 1940, Miranda began shooting her second American film, also directed by Irving Cummings. *That Night in Rio* was not only her first speaking role but, above all, her debut as the elected 'Ambadressess of Good Will'.²⁴ After the fiasco involving *Down Argentine Way*, Fox's concern to please South as well as North Americans led the studio to submit the script for *That Night in Rio* – based on the original screenplay entitled *Folies Bergères* – to the Brazilian Embassy, which did, indeed, censor a number of scenes that were deemed 'unconvincing'.²⁵ Fox also requested from the Information and Propaganda Department (responsible for the official propaganda in Vargas's dictatorship) photographs of Rio to insure a 'faithful' rendition of the sets.²⁶

The credits which introduce the film are presented in a colourful layout surrounded by stars, musical notes, mountains and palm trees. The audience already knows what to expect: romance and music in a tropical paradise. The opening scene, again the establishing shot of Rio, creates a scenario with yet more mountains, palm trees and fireworks. Dancers holding little torches open up the way for the multicoloured presence of Miranda singing in Portuguese, '*Chica, Chica, Boom, Chic*'. The background consists of a pinkish sky, with houses of colonial architecture and, of course, more palm trees in the foreground. All these references to a 'traditional' and 'exotic' environment from the opening scene, however, are counterbalanced with other images of extravagant houses, well-dressed people, and traveling shots over the floor of a busy stock market. 'It is an elegant Rio, well-dressed, with luxurious places, with our music', celebrated Brazilian journalist, Gilberto Souto, who was working as a technical advisor for 20th Century Fox.²⁷

That Night in Rio is yet another comedy employing the old cliché of mistaken identities. Don Ameche plays both Baron Manoel Duarte, a rich Brazilian who owns an airline company, and Larry Martin, an American artist living in Rio. Alice Faye is the Baroness, an American living in an unhappy marriage where everyone knows that her husband's favourite occupation is 'the lovely senhoritas'. The over-sexed South American male is a trope fully explored in another Hollywood classic, *Latin Lovers*.²⁸ As for Miranda, she plays the now stereotypical role that would be offered to her from then on: a happy, exotic, talkative, naive but seductive woman, prone to fits of jealousy.

In contrast to *Flying Down to Rio*,²⁹ which had several scenes shot on location, *That Night in Rio* does not rely on images of actual landscapes to construct the city's atmosphere but rather on Miranda's body movements and singing. More than a geographical space, the city is conceived as a landscape of gestures, beats and colours. The games of indecipherable words and rhythms that Miranda exudes are as important as the painted Sugar Loaf or the artificial palm trees in transporting the audience's imagination to Rio. Aloysio de Oliveira recalls in his memoirs that he adapted '*Chica*,

Chica, Boom, Chic', originally composed as a rumba by Harry Warren and Mack Gordon, into a *marchinha* precisely to give a touch of a supposed veritable 'Brazilianness' to the film.³⁰

Miranda's body works, in fact, as a 'contact zone',

a space of colonial encounters where peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict.³¹

It is through Miranda's *baiana* outfit, extravagant jewelry, her gestures and the rhythm of her tunes that the film introduces a distinctive representation which would become a recurring theme in later pictures, namely, Rio as a locus for the metaphorical encounter of Europeans, collective Latin Americans, and Africans. It is not a space in which these ethnicities are exposed in their actual essence (a musical number, with black actors, was cut out at the request of the Brazilian Embassy), but a place where these identities mingle in an artificial balance.

In this sense, *That Night in Rio* echoes the racial anxieties which were present in the official discourse about Rio produced not only in the United States but in Brazil as well. 'There is much more about Brazil than dancing Niggers, Niggers in carnival, religious institutions and *bricabraque*' according to the main director of the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (CIAA) headquarters in Rio.³² A document from the Brazilian Office for Foreign Relations followed the same line:

Nowadays the Department of Information and Press refuses to authorize films showing black people, afraid that the United States could get a wrong picture that the number of blacks is larger than the number of white people³³.

Rio was to be celebrated not as a land of blacks, whites or native Brazilians (always invisible in Hollywood's images of Rio for that matter), but as the land of racial democracy, as the paradise of *hybridity* that Miranda so deeply embodied.

'Along with range, incomprehension, and pain', writes Mary Louise Pratt about the contact zones of the colonial encounters, 'there were exhilarating moments of wonder and revelation, mutual understanding, and new wisdom ... the joys of the contact zone'³⁴. With her body working as a contact zone, Miranda came to be what Gilles Deleuze has called a 'mediator'. More than a passive bridge, the mediator is the one who promotes 'relations of mutual resonance and exchange' among different cultural traditions.³⁵ Even before going to the United States, the Brazilian Bombshell was already a *mediator* between two worlds; she was the 'White Queen' of a rhythm whose roots were black and poor. She was the one to place the samba in a delicate equilibrium between the celebration of racial harmony and the ideal of whitening.

In the United States, Miranda was a fundamental player in the birth of a new kind of musical, one rich in extravagantly flamboyant numbers, swaying hips, kitschy and sexy costumes, and over-the-top props.³⁶ She was a glaring cartoon, a comic symbol of *pan-latinidad*, embodying camp well before the concept was invented. The example which comes immediately to mind is obviously the banana scene in *The Gang's All Here*.³⁷ Wearing a gigantic tutti-frutti hat, Miranda is transformed into some sort of fertility goddess. Through her character, Latin America as a whole becomes a paradise with endless material and symbolic goods to be consumed by North Americans.

But if Miranda's persona sustained ancient stereotypes about Latin Americans, and women in general, supporting racist and sexist fantasies, alternatively, her extravagant performances and the way she parodied her own characters also revealed and denounced these very stereotypes as such. Similarly, in her excesses of adornment and the 'irrational' temper of her characters, there was also an element of insurrection and self-sufficiency which counteracted male dominance. In Brazil, Miranda had always been seen as a woman ahead of her time: she took care of her own career, drove cars, smoked, laughed out loud and swore at a time when the common belief was that women were born destined to become subordinate, disciplined housewives. This kind of 'revolutionary attitude' overflows and

effuses through her filmic presence. And as Shari Roberts argues, the image of Latinos as 'primitive' beings, incapable of learning English and always ready to act on their instincts and impulses, was taken to such an absurd paroxysm that it became difficult to take these elements seriously.³⁸

It is hard to disagree with Robert Stam when he states that the ethnicity of the Miranda persona was 'submerged, invisible, dissolved into that of a generic Latina'.³⁹ An outcome of the intermixture of races herself, Miranda was constantly paired against blondes – Betty Grable, Alice Faye, Vivian Blaine – who, especially in war time, were seen as the epitome of North American feminine identity. Miranda even tried to adapt to this pattern of beauty by the end of her career: dying her hair blonde, taking off her hats, undergoing a nose job that almost killed her – in other words, reinventing herself and denying her 'tropical image'.

In 1949, when her contract with Fox came to an end, Miranda attempted a flight of her own, producing *Copacabana*,⁴⁰ a romantic comedy with Groucho Marx. Although in black and white, the film gave Miranda the chance to wear her hair down and play a double character, one blonde and one of the usual 'Carmen' kind. The film was not a big hit and Miranda was forced to submit to studio control once more, making three more films. The price for refusing to continue to be limited to the 'tropical character' would simply be not to work, an option taken a generation later by another Latin American star, Rita Moreno.⁴¹

In 1948, Ary Barroso, the author of *Aquarela do Brazil*, wanted to make Carmen Miranda a citizen of Rio de Janeiro, an honour given to those who despite not being born in Rio were considered to be fundamental to its history and culture. But the city council turned down the request saying that she denigrated the image of the country. It would take twenty-nine years until this position was officially reviewed. In 1997 the mayor of Rio paid her homage and posthumously presented her with a prestigious badge of honour. Finally, Carmen Miranda was being elevated to the category of national symbol, just as the Tropicália Movement tried to do with her image in the 1960s. '[The] movement ... appropriated her as one of its principal signs', explains Brazilian artist Caetano Veloso to the *New York Times*, 'capitalizing on the discomfort that her name and the evocation of her gestures could create ... We had discovered that she was both our caricature and our X-ray, and we began to take notice of her destiny'.⁴²

Celebrations around Miranda's name in Brazil were a form of post-mortem acknowledgment that she had arrived in Hollywood taking with her an image of Rio (and of Brazil, for that matter) that, at first, was legitimized by her Brazilian compatriots – her *baiana* costumes, her dance steps and hand movements, her platform shoes, and her carnivalized attitude. These were exactly the signs of a 'Brazilianism' that had been invented in the 1930s and that were already present in films such as *A Voz do Carnaval*⁴³ and *Banana da Terra*.⁴⁴ What Miranda did was to reappropriate these signs and establish a dialogue between them and North American popular culture, in the same way she had established a dialogue between the Carioca urban culture and the elements of the Afro-Brazilian tradition.

Notes

¹ I would like to extend my thanks to the anonymous peer-reviewers and the editorial collective at *Limina* for their advice and comments, including some bibliographical references, which, unfortunately, could not be incorporated in the article such as: D. Davis, 'To Be or Not to Be Brazilian: Carmen Miranda's Quest For Fame and 'Authenticity' in the United States' in Ingrid E. Fey and Karen Racine (eds), *Strange Pilgrimages: Exile, Travel, and National Identity in Latin America, 1800-*

1990s, Scholarly Resources, Wilmington, Delaware, 2000. I am also thankful to Anthony D. King, my PhD advisor, for his generosity.

² Miranda was born in Marco de Canavezes, a little town in Portugal, in 1909. Before she was one year old, she moved to Rio de Janeiro along with her family. She died on 5 August 1955, in her mansion in Beverly Hills. For an interesting analysis of her private and public lives, see Martha Gil-Monteiro, *Brazilian Bombshell: The Biography of Carmen Miranda*. Donald I. Fine, New York, 1989, as well as the documentary *Bananas is my Business* (dir. and prod. Helena Solberg), Brazil-UK-USA, 1994.

³ Jacques Dalcroze, *Rhythm, Music and Education*, The Dalcroze Society, London, 1992, p.3.

⁴ Quoted by Abel Cardoso Júnior, *Carmen Miranda, A Cantora do Brasil*. São Paulo: Edição particular do autor, Cardoso Jr., 1978, p.140. This and all the following quotations were translated by Bianca Freire-Medeiros from the original in Portuguese, unless otherwise stated.

⁵ *That Night in Rio* (dir. Irving Cummings, prod. Fred Kohlmar and Darryl F. Zanuck), USA, 1941.

⁶ P. David Marshall, *Celebrity and Power: Fame in Contemporary Culture*, Minnesota University Press, Minneapolis, 1997.

⁷ Marshall, p.4

⁸ Cássio E. Barsante, *Carmen Miranda*, ELFOS Editora, Rio de Janeiro, 1994, p.33.

⁹ Simone Pereira de Sá, 'Baiana Internacional: O Brasil de Carmen Miranda e as Lentes de Hollywood', PhD Dissertation, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, 1997.

¹⁰ Aloysio de Oliveira, *De Banda pra Lua*, Editora Record, Rio de Janeiro, 1984, p.36.

¹¹ Allen Woll, *The Latin Image in American Film*. University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1977.

¹² José Ramos Tinhorão, *O samba agora vai: a farsa da música popular brasileira no exterior*, Caminho da Música, São Paulo, 1969.

¹³ Quoted in *Jornal do Brasil*, July 30, 1995.

¹⁴ Ana Rita Mendonça, *Carmen Miranda Foi a Washington*, Record, Rio de Janeiro, 1999.

¹⁵ *Folha da Tarde*, August 1940, p.22.

¹⁶ *O Globo*, July 1940, p.3.

¹⁷ The musical genre, *chorinho* (literally, little cry), had already been created in Rio by the 1870s. It was originally played by an ensemble consisting of flute, two guitars and a *cavaquinho*. Later, the great chorinho flutist, Alfredo Rocha Viana (alias Pixinguinha, 1898-1973), incorporated native percussion instruments (*ganza*, *pandeiro*, *reco-reco*, etc.) into his instrumental ensemble. After the turn of the century, new instruments (bandolin, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, etc.) joined the *chorinho* format.

¹⁸ Mendonça, p.33.

¹⁹ Quoted in *Revista Manchete*, August 17, 1985, p.21.

²⁰ Mendonça, p.40.

²¹ *Down Argentine Way* (dir. Irving Cummings, prod. Darryl F. Zanuck), USA, 1940.

²² In a report to the American Embassy in Buenos Aires, the Assistant Commercial Attaché gave the reasons why the film was banned in Argentina: 'Carmen Miranda, a Brazilian star, sings in Portuguese a Tin Pan Alley rumba ... which speaks of tangos and rumbas being played beneath a pampa moon. Henry Stephenson is cast as a rich race-horse owner with an atrocious adopted dialect. (...) Don Ameche does a rumba in Spanish with castanets and talks about orchids, as rare in Argentina as in New York. (...) When Betty Grable and Don Ameche arrive at the airport of Buenos Aires, they are met by a couple of silly looking gentlemen described as distributors of her father's products, a definite reflection on all U.S. distributors here. The Nicholas Brothers do a tap dance (...) and add to the Argentine the impression that all Yankees think they are Indians or Africans. (...) Everyone who portrays an Argentine in it from the first to the last is outrageously ridiculous in the opinion of Argentines (...)' (quoted by Gil-Monteiro, p.65).

²³ Mendonça, p.71.

²⁴ In an interview with *Modern Screen*, Miranda demonstrates her own comprehension of the role she had as a strategic link. Note that, as in the other periodicals of that time, her interview is phonetically reproduced in an attempt to highlight the exoticism of her speech: 'The moving pictures, the magazines that tell us about the moving pictures, they help beg to bring the good will we hope to accomplish between Nors' and Sous' America. And the exchange of travelers will help very much, too. Take myself for example - I have met the Nor's Americans in their homes, now I have work with them... I like them and maybe they like me and that is the way to make friends, between people and countries.' (as quoted by Gil-Monteiro, p.36).

²⁵ Barsante, p.21.

²⁶ Gil-Monteiro, p.89 and Barsante, p.44.

²⁷ Quoted by Mendonça, p.98.

²⁸ *Latin Lovers* (dir. Mervyn LeRoy, prod. Joe Pasternak), USA, 1953.

²⁹ *Flying Down to Rio* (dir. Thorton Freeland, prod. Lou Brock and Merian C. Cooper), USA, 1933.

³⁰ Oliveira, p.19.

³¹ Marie-Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. Routledge, London and New York, 1992, p.6.

³² Quoted by Mendonça, p. 89.

³³ Quoted by Mendonça, p. 89.

³⁴ Marie-Louise Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone", *ADFL Bulletin* vol. 100, 1991, pp.33-40.

³⁵ Gilles Deleuze, 'Mediators', in J Crary and S. Kwinter (eds.), *Incorporations*. Zone, New York, 1992.

³⁶ Robert Stam, *Tropical Multiculturalism: A Comparative History of Race in Brazilian Cinema and Culture*, Duke University Press, Durham and London, 1997.

³⁷ *The Gang's All Here* (dir. Busby Berkeley, prod. William LeBaron), USA, 1943.

³⁸ Shari Roberts, ' "The Lady in The Tutti-Frutti Hat": Carmen Miranda, a Spectacle of Ethnicity', *Cinema Journal* vol.32, no.3, 1993, pp. 3-23.

⁴⁹ Stam, p.88.

⁴⁰ *Copacabana* (dir. Alfred E. Green, prod. Sam Coslow), USA, 1947.

⁴¹ After winning the Oscar for her supporting role as Anita in *West Side Story*, Moreno spent seven years without working because every role she was offered was another 'Anita'. 'You had to be a very exaggerated caricaturesque person for the American movie people to pay attention to you', explains Moreno. *Banana Is My Business*.

⁴² Caetano Veloso, 'Pride and Shame', *The New York Times*, 1991.

⁴³ *A Voz do Carnaval* (dir. Adhemar Gonzaga and Humberto Mauro, prod. Adhemar Gonzaga), Brazil, 1933.

⁴⁴ *Banana da Terra* (dir. Rui Costa, prod. Alberto Byinton Jr., Wallace Downey), Brazil, 1939.