

## MARIZA

"I lived in a traditional Lisbon neighbourhood and have always sung the fado –  
- I know what it is, I understand myself through it".

Mariza is a Mozambican whose soul was forged in the old Mouraria district of Lisbon. It was there that she first heard fado singers, lots of them - so many that their names and faces have merged into the mist of memory; but their "reminiscences live on in my singing".

The tributes to Fernando Maurício, Carlos do Carmo and Amália Rodrigues in *Transparente* (her latest album) therefore come as no surprise. Despite experimenting with other rhythmic forms, Mariza has always been involved in fado.

Her first album release in 2001 *Fado em mim (Fado in me)*, went quadruple platinum in Portugal and thrust her on to the international scene. The press had no hesitation in stating that "a star is born".

In 2002, at the Quebec Summer Festival, she received the First Award for Most Outstanding Performance. That same year she performed in New York's Central Park, the mythical Hollywood Bowl, the Womad Festival, and sold out the Belém Cultural Centre in Lisbon and the Purcell Room on London's South Bank.

After conquering British audiences with her performance on Jools Holland's legendary television show (as well as being distinguished by inclusion in the commemorative DVD), Mariza was awarded the BBC Radio 3 Award Best European World Music Artist in March 2003. She received the award from Michael Nyman, at Hackney's Ocean where silence was called to hear her sing. The previous night she had performed at the Union Chapel.

At the time her second album, *Fado Curvo (Curved Fado)* was launched – the title expressing that, fado, like fate, isn't a straight line... "The fado is not enclosed by limits". Mariza confirmed all expectations. German critics awarded her the Deutsche Schallplatten Kritik Award and the album reached number 6 on the Top Billboard of World Music. It was critically acclaimed in Portugal and went quadruple platinum despite the recession that had hit the market (a fall of 39% in just two years).

On a succession of tours in Europe and North America she sold out the Royal Festival Hall in London, the Alte Oper in Frankfurt, the Belém Cultural Centre in Lisbon and the Théâtre de La Ville in Paris. Foreign journalists in Portugal noted her "excellence in the spreading of Portuguese culture, in its most characteristic manifestation: the fado" and voted her Personality of the Year 2003.

In 2004, the year in which she launched her first DVD, which was recorded at the Union Chapel in London, she received the European Border Breakers Award at MIDEM and went on to participate in Unity, the official album of the Olympic Games, on which she sang the song *A Thousand Years* with Sting.

Mariza has performed concerts on four continents with notable success and full houses; the Walt Disney Concert Hall with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra; the Carnegie Hall in New York, the Alte Oper in Frankfurt, the Teatro Grec in Barcelona, the Albeniz Theatre in Madrid, the Royal Festival Hall in London or the Opera House in Sydney. 20 000 people applauded her enthusiastically at Rock in Rio in Lisbon and 30 000 in Aveiro, Portugal. She was the guest of honour at the Cairo International Song Festival before returning to Lisbon to perform for 22 000 people in Monsanto Park. She has also performed at the Chicago World Music Festival, the San Francisco Jazz Festival, the Macau Cultural Centre and at Moscow's House of Music.

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# Biography

2005 saw Mariza on a non-stop tour through Europe and USA (from New York's Carnegie Hall, to the Barbican in London).

Mariza's new album "Transparente"(Transparent), in which she reveals even more than in her earlier work, was released in more than 35 countries throughout Europe, Latin America or US, and represents "the turning of a page" for her. This is not to say that Mariza's passion for singing the words of poets has changed; she still makes them her own through the emotion of her interpretation.

The album was number 1 in Portugal, and conquered the Top 10 in Finland, Iceland and Holland. Portugal, France and Spain have since re-released *Transparente*, Finland and the UK soon to follow suit.

The Kingdom of Denmark chose Mariza as one of the international ambassadors for the work and the spirit of Hans Christian Andersen. Not for her fame in Portugal and abroad, but also because the fado, rather like the work of Hans Christian Andersen, has a certain poetic melancholy that makes its appeal universal.

Also she was invited to be a part of Live 8, performing at The Eden Project in Cornwall in the UK, under the banner of 'Africa Calling', alongside artists such as Peter Gabriel, Youssou N'Dour and Angélique Kidjo. It was an emotional day for Mariza, who was born in Mozambique, "It's an honour to perform at such an event, especially because it's so important to be solidary with a continent as Africa, where my roots are".

It was in September that Mariza gave the unforgettable concert in Lisbon with the Orchestra Sinfonietta de Lisboa to over 20 000 people. The concert was conducted by Brazilian producer Jaques Morelenbaum, who also produced *Transparente*.

In October Mariza was honoured with the International Career Prize by Amália Rodrigues Foundation, and was proud to be also nominated by the Portuguese Committee of UNICEF to become a National Ambassador, to collaborate, defend, promote and help UNICEF initiatives.

2005 came to a close with Mariza nominated for the Best European Artist in the category of World Music Award by BBC Radio 3.

Mariza declared that she is "deeply moved and happy that Portugal is once again featured in these Awards". She won the award for the first time in 2003.

Mariza began the year of 2006, with two memorable concerts at Sydney Opera House (where she will perform again in March 2007) and has been nominated for the 2006 Helpmann Awards under the category of Best International Contemporary Concert, by Live Performance Australia (LPA). The awards were established in 2001 to recognise, celebrate and promote the Australian live performance industry.

She was also honored with the prestigious *Comenda da Ordem do Infante D. Henrique* by the President of the Portuguese Republic.

This honorable achievement has the aim to distinguish personalities who have contributed to expand Portugal's culture, history and values around the world.

In May Mariza has received the Portuguese Golden Globe Award in the category of "Best Interpreter of the Year" for her last album "Transparente".

The Golden Globe Awards were created 11 years ago, in order to distinguish people from several areas like Music, Cinema, Sports or Theatre.

Mariza keeps on touring all over the world, from Los Angeles - two nights at Hollywood Bowl with the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, conducted by the prestigious maestro John Mauceri, to Asia where she performed for the first time in Malaysia, China and Thailand, being acclaim by public and critic.

And, as the page is turned, what songs does this transparent voice have in store for us, what paths still await this force of nature which never cease to seduce?

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## Biography

She has been experimenting with other musical connections, for instance with Flamenco, singing with Spanish star José Mercé the song *Há uma música do Povo*, from her new album. The poem, originally written by the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa, was translated by the renowned Spanish journalist Carlos Galilea.

However you can imagine that Mariza will never stray far from fado.

In October, Mariza was nominated for the third time for the BBC 3 Word Music Awards, in the category of Best European Act. She received the award for the first time in 2003.

On the beginning of November Mariza "Concerto em Lisboa" – triple platinum in Portugal, was worldwide released on both DVD and CD.

Recorded in 2005, 'Concerto em Lisboa' took place in the gardens of Torre de Belém a famous and beautiful neighborhood of Lisbon. With a magnificent view of the city and in the borders of Tejo River, Mariza's voice soared out over the orchestra Sinfonietta de Lisboa, conducted by Jaques Morelenbaum enrapturing the assembled audience. The setting was perfect for an evening that everyone who witnessed it will remember.

'Concerto em Lisboa' contains not only stunning "live" interpretations of the songs from 'Transparente' but also most of Mariza's well known songs from her first and second albums, re-arranged for orchestra. With this release, one is able to listen to such individual songs as: 'Medo'; 'Há uma música do Povo'; 'Meu Fado Meu'; 'Cavaleiro Monge'; 'Há Palavras Que Nos Beijam' and 'Ó Gente Da Minha Terra'; performances that will transport the listener to a timeless evening in Lisbon.

Also in November, right after two sold out concerts on both Lisboa and Porto mythical Coliseums; Mariza finally fulfilled that cherished ambition to play the Royal Albert Hall. She headlines at the hallowed London venue with a dazzling supporting cast of musicians included special guests Carlos do Carmo, Jaques Morelenbaum and Tito Paris.

In the beginning of 2007 Mariza was nominated for the Finnish awards Emma Gaala in the category of Best International Artist alongside artists such as Robbie Williams, Andrea Bocelli, Basshunter, Iron Maiden and Red Hot Chili Peppers.

Her international acknowledgement it's notable: she was the first Portuguese artist ever nominated for the most important music worldwide award which is the GRAMMY AWARD. Mariza was nominated for the 8th Annual Latin GRAMMY Award in the category of "Best Folk Album". "Concerto em Lisboa" was live recorded in 2005 and it's triple platinum in Portugal for both CD and DVD version.

Being one of the protagonists of the main director Carlos Saura new movie "Fados", Mariza is now preparing herself for the new album, which will be produced by **Javier Limón**. Who worked with among others Lagrimas Negras and Paco de Lucía. The release of Mariza's new album is scheduled for the first half of 2008.

But before, she gave a memorable concert at Walt Disney Concert Hall - LA in October, where the renowned architect Frank Gehry created a taverna inspired stage, just for Mariza to sing in.

As one poet wrote, fado makes its way in the world through the transparency of its lyrics, and these Mariza sings with all her heart, because it's in the work of poets that Mariza seeks the words which she can make her own within a traditional form of music which is undergoing constant renewal: "*fado is not limited... but it must be treated with the utmost care*".

In May 18<sup>th</sup> 2008, Mariza will be honoured with the *Vermeil Medal by de Parisian Academy of Artes, Sciences and Letters*. With this award Mariza will be one of the first Portuguese main personalities to receive such important distinction.