

innocentia maria mendes

Short Biography

Portuguese jazz vocalist Maria Mendes returns with her second album *Innocentia*, a sophisticated set featuring new takes on old favourites, exquisite adaptations of classical pieces and original, deeply personal songs.

Debut *Along the Road* wooed fans and critics worldwide with Maria Mendes' impressive powers of interpretation and the magical mood she conjured in CD and live in her performances at the Blue Note Jazz Club NY; Montreux Jazz Festival; SESC Pompéia São Paulo and Casa da Música Porto, to name a few.

Together with her band of Dutch all-stars, she continues to join the dots between Western giants such as Carmen McRae, and the freer, percussive style of Hermeto Pascoal. Virtuoso clarinetist **Anat Cohen** (winner of the Dutch prize Paul Acket Award 2013) is a welcome addition with her lyrical, wistful lines. Whether it's standards such as 'Smile', a poignant Sting song or the exotic rhythm of 'Bachianas Brasileiras Nr 5', there is a loose and playful approach to each arrangement.

Innocentia clearly reflects Maria Mendes' musical language and ability to blend elements of the Portuguese and Brazilian poetry and musical landscapes with exciting moments of improvisation. Mendes is now an accomplished composer and bandleader, but it is as a performer that she truly excels, moving the listener ... stirring the soul. Press play, catch her in concert and prepare to be quietly stunned.

Concert Line up: Maria Mendes (vocals), Steven Kamperman (clarinets), Karel Boehlee (piano), Jasper Somsen (acoustic bass), Jasper van Hulten (drums)

CD Line up: Maria Mendes (vocals), Anat Cohen (clarinets), Karel Boehlee (piano), Clemens van der Feen (acoustic bass), Jasper van Hulten (drums)

Press quotes

- "... with her clear voice and her own style the perfect vocal jazz album has arrived" TELEGRAPH (Netherlands)
- "Sultry, perfectly timed Bossa Jazz" NRC (Netherlands)
- "Mendes immediately profiles herself as a strong jazz singer. Intimacy and beauty from the first track" JAZZISM (Netherlands)
- "What Mendes express with her voice is art and a real treat for the heart and ears. Impressive!" DRAAI OM JE OREN (Netherlands)
- "Her vocalically shows it all, really perfect" JAZZZINE.NL (Netherlands)
- "Maria Mendes singing charms anyone" JAZZ À FIT (France)
- "Magical voice and virtuoso vocal improvisations. Sensitive" DFB MUSICA MAERZ (Germany)
- "No focus on trends. Sophisticated voice and high class band" OHRENSCHMAUCH (Germany)
- "Mendes makes clear she has absolutely nothing to prove" ALL ABOUT JAZZ (USA)
- "Gently beautiful. Excellent album" SERAI MUSIC MAGAZINE (Japan)
- 4 1/2**** JAZZISM (Netherlands)
- 5***** O GLOBO (Brazil)

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Jazz legends quotes

- “I see a promising shining future for this young talented singer” QUINCY JONES (USA)
- “Beautiful singing and great scat” HERMETO PASCOAL (Brazil)
- “An album sung from the heart” SHEILA JORDAN (USA)
- “Maria Mendes singing is wonderful” DORI CAYMMI (Brazil)
- “I hope her crystal-clear voice and her precise diction will conquer your hearts like it did mine” DAVID LINX (Belgium)
- “Her crystal-clear voice, perfect tuning and smoothness are unique” ROSA PASSOS (Brazil)

Significant awards

- Montreux Jazz Voice Competition Award, SWITZERLAND | 2010 (president of the jury was jazz legend Quincy Jones)
- Best Improvisation Award at the Jazz Voices International competition, LITHUANIA | 2010
- Best Jazz Vocalist Award at the Jazz Voices International competition, LITHUANIA | 2010
- Best Jazz Vocalist Award at the Nederlands Jazz Vocalisten Concours, HOLLAND | 2009
- Prix du Port Award, HOLLAND | 2009
- Brussels Young Jazz Singers Competition Award, BELGIUM | 2008

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