**Maria Mendes**

***Close To Me***

***Biografie***

Kristalhelder, sierlijk, lyrisch en veelzijdig zijn omschrijvingen van Portugese jazzzangeres Maria Mendes. Om haar als fadozangers te omschrijven doe je haar tekort. Haar invloeden komen uit klassieke muziek, jazz, fado en latin maar Maria Mendes is jazz-zangeres, in hart en nieren. Voor haar nieuwe album Close To Me ze ging de studio in met haar eigen kwartet, het **Metropole Orkest** en de Amerikaanse toetsenist en producer **John Beasley**, die werkte met een keur aan Amerikaanse sterren zoals Miles Davis, Dianne Reeves, en Herbie Hancock. Op dit album verkende ze de fado uit haar moederland, en gaf dat een geheel eigen bewerking. Het resultaat is verrassend, verfrissend en het smaakt naar meer.  Zelf noemt ze het ‘een symfonische jazz-benadering van fado’. Mendes trad op in de prestigieuze New Yorkse jazzclub Blue Note, Montreux en North Sea Jazz Festivals en wordt geroemd door grootheden als Quincy Jones en Hermeto Pascoal.

***Press Quotes***

**USA:**

“A jazz singer of the highest order. Her poise is as impressive as her power” DOWNBEAT

“Nothing here disappoints! Graceful vocalist” JAZZTIMES

“Priming need not be provided to understand the beauty of Close To Me” ALL ABOUT JAZZ

**NETHERLANDS:**

"Mendes’ stem en improvisatiekunst staan voorop” - NRC (live recensie)

"In alle elegant dwarrelende noten hoor je de saudade van de fado terug, terwijl de muziek vleugels krijgt door Mendes’ geweldige gevoel voor timing en goed gedoseerde scat-vocalen” - VOLKSKRANT

“Zangnootjes als paardenbloemzaadjes maar de zang van Maria Mendes landt altijd weer, met een heldere precisie en souplesse.” - NRC

“Maria Mendes is van wereldklasse. Een fantastische allround zangeres ook nog een geweldige jazz kan zingen, hoor je op deze cd vooral als ze uitpakt in scattvocals" - JAZZFLITZ

**GERMANY:**

“Portuguese jazz singer Maria Mendes comes up with a Fado album of superlatives” JAZZTHING

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**UK:**

“Crystal clear voice, strong and confident (…) has the courage to make the classic Fado sound absolutely contemporary and of the moment” JAZZVIEWS

**SWITZERLAND:**

“Longing, love, nostalgia are the themes, performed with a voice that is unsurpassed in purity and variability” JAZZ ’N’ MORE

**AUSTRIA:**

“Mendes is one of the most promising voices of the European jazz scene” CONCERTO MAG

**BELGIUM:**

“Breathtaking. A dazzling version of a versatile ode to Fado” JAZZHALO

**FRANCE:**

“Maria Mendes singing charms anyone” JAZZ À FIT

**JAPAN:**

“Gently beautiful. Excellent album” SERAI MUSIC MAGAZINE

**BRAZIL:** 5\*\*\*\*\* O GLOBO

***Quotes by the Team***

**METROPOLE ORKEST:** "As Metropole Orkest we are always looking to combine music styles. This project intelligently combines Fado and Jazz in a well-balanced and vibrant manner. John Beasley’s charts are rich and his work on this recording can be compared to that of a great fashion designer. Maria, her incredible voice and her songs are his muse in creating a garment that fits perfectly and makes the Metropole Orkest shine.”

**JOHN BEASLEY:** “Fado music needs an impressionistic voice that can express the longing and loss in these stories of melancholy. Maria Mendes surprised me with her stunning timbre of voice. She also has the charisma and personality that is needed to connect the music to the words and context of the songs.

My heart opened up making this album “Close to Me” with Maria, her band and the voluptuous orchestral sounds from the Metropole Orkest. Maria gave me the license to reimagine these classic fado songs with modern jazz sensibilities. I was captivated by the story lines and my film-composing instinct kicked in leading me to score each song like a movie. And, with Maria’s soul-reaching voice, which is clear as a bell and can trigger a wide range of feelings, when you listen, you are left with how to handle the beauty and artistry of what you just experienced.

Listening back to the album, I hear how elastic and open minded the musicians were with our writing. They took what we wrote beyond our imagination.

With “Close to Me”, you hear two genres –fado and jazz– infusing each other creating a new blend –a new musical appetite that stirs your soul.”

***Line Up***

Maria Mendes (vocals, composer and arranger)

John Beasley (keys, producer, arranger/orchestrator, Metropole Orkest’s conductor)

Karel Boehlee (piano)

Jasper Somsen (acoustic bass)

Jasper van Hulten (drums/percussion)

Metropole Orkest (chamber orchestra line up)

Vincent Houdijk (vibraphone)

***Songs***

Tudo Isto é Fado (Amália Rodrigues)

Foi Deus (Amália Rodrigues)

Asas Fechadas (Amália Rodrigues) – feat. Metropole Orkest

Há Uma Música do Povo (Mariza) – feat. Metropole Orkest

E Se Não For Fado (Mafalda Arnauth)

Tempo Emotivo (Maria Mendes) – inspired by Carlos Paredes’s “Movimento Perpétuo”– feat. Vincent Houdijk

Verdes Anos (Carlos Paredes)

Fado da Invejosa (Maria Mendes) – feat. Metropole Orkest

Dança do Amor (Maria Mendes)

Hermeto’s Fado (Hermeto Pascoal)

Barco Negro (Amália Rodrigues) – feat. Metropole Orkest

***Relevant Collaborations***

**Metropole Orkest** | Chamber line up on Close to Me project & tour 2019-2021

**John Beasley** | Producer, pianist and Metropole Orkest’s conductor for Close to Me project & tour 2019-2021

**Brussels Jazz Orchestra** | Big Band on De Bijloke project 2017

**Andre Ceccareli** | Drummer on Innocentia tour 2017

**Anat Cohen** | Clarinetist on Innocentia project 2015

**Martin Fondse** | Arranger on Innocentia project 2015

**Steven Kamperman**, **Alex Simu** & **Ricardo Toscano** | Clarinetists on Innocentia tour 2015-2018

***Relevant Concerts***

**2019**: Bimhuis NETHERLANDS

Tivoli Vredenburg NETHERLANDS

Lantaren Venster NETHERLANDS

Paradox NETHERLANDS

AINSI NETHERLANDS

Casa da Música PORTUGAL

Teatro São Luiz PORTUGAL

**2018**: Handelsbeurs BELGIUM

Het Concertgebouw NETHERLANDS

**2017**: De Bijloke BELGIUM

Amersfoort Jazz Festival NETHERLANDS

**2016**: North Sea Jazz Festival NETHERLANDS

Sunside Paris FRANCE

Het Concertgebouw NETHERLANDS

**2015**: CCB Lisboa PORTUGAL

Casa da Música PORTUGAL

Lantaren Venster NETHERLANDS

**2014**: Blue Note Jazz Club New York USA

*Voor meer informatie*

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