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| www**Maria Mendes & John Beasley**  ***Close To Me in DUO***  ***Bio***  ***Maria Mendes****’s talents have been praised by musical legends such as Quincy Jones and Hermeto Pascoal. She is a Jazz singer in heart and soul. However, for this new project/third album “Close to Me”, together with the famous American jazz pianist and producer* ***John Beasley*** *and the four times Grammy winner, the* ***Metropole Orkest****, she explores a completely different genre - the Fado from her native Portugal. The results of this unique adaption are surprising and refreshing and thoroughly engaging.*  *Like the blues, fado is a music of both longing and joy, or as Portuguese say, saudade. By tapping into her roots, Mendes was able to find the freedom to write an adventurous love letter to her homeland. With Beasley, they’ve reimagined and revived fado’s sorrowful sound through hauntingly serenades, jaunty jazz meditations and crisp melismatic scatting. On this bold project, you hear two genres infusing each other creating a new blend – a new musical appetite that stirs your soul.*  John Beasley was one of Miles Davis' last pianists. He is a well stablished Jazz pianist and producer, several times nominated for Grammys and Emmys not only for his solo career but as well for his renowned orchestra Monk’estra. For these recent years, he works actively with Herbie Hancock as the musical director for the UNESCO International Jazz Day and the Thelonious Monk Jazz Institute’s galas. Currently he is Dianne Reeves’s producer and pianist.  With enthusiastic reviews from international critics who consider her one of the most stablished young voices of the European Jazz scene, Maria Mendes has studied in New York, Brussels, Rotterdam and Porto. The Rotterdam based, half Portuguese/Brazilian vocalist, has won several international jazz awards and sold out international tours in prestigious venues/festivals such as: North Sea and Montreux Jazz Festivals, Concertgebouw, Casa da Música and in New York city at the world’s famous Blue Note Jazz Club (marking the debut of a Portuguese artist at this legendary jazz club).  ***Line Up***  Maria Mendes (vocals)  John Beasley (piano & keys)  ***Listen/Watch***  **SPOTIFY:** <https://open.spotify.com/album/2MZFFsthciHX1LA2mQUwSH>  **YOUTUBE:** *BARCO NEGRO:*<https://youtu.be/3zOz5cNxBI4> \\ *E SE NÃO FOR FADO:* <https://youtu.be/k6eVRBckTko> \\ *TUDO ISTO É FADO (live):* [*https://youtu.be/ui038lK\_RWo*](https://youtu.be/ui038lK_RWo)\\*VERDES ANOS (live):* <https://youtu.be/SV1PGC5glHs>  ***International Press***  **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’ voice and improvisation are paramount art ” NRC  “You hear the merging of Fado in all elegantly swirling notes, while the music gets wings through Mendes’ great sense of timing and well-dosed scat ” DE VOLKSKRANT  “Mendes immediately profiles herself as a strong jazz singer. Intimacy and beauty from the first track” JAZZISM  “What Mendes express with her voice is art and a real treat for the heart and ears. Impressive!” DRAAI OM JE OREN  “Her vocalically shows it all, really perfect” JAZZZINE.NL  **GERMANY:**  “Portuguese jazz singer Maria Mendes comes up with a Fado album of superlatives” JAZZTHING  Maria Mendes can do the simple perfect: inspiring, ethereal vocal art” KULTKOMPLOTT  **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***  **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.”  **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.”  ***Relevant Shows***  **2019**: NETHERLANDS: Bimhuis, Amsterdam sold out\\ Tivoli Vredenburg, Tilburg \\ Lantaren Venster, Rotterdam sold out \\ Paradox, Tilburg \\ AINSI, Maastricht sold out  PORTUGAL: Casa da Música, Porto sold out \\ Teatro São Luiz, Lisboa |
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