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| ***MARIA MENDES & KAREL BOEHLEE***  ***Close To Me***  ***Bio***  *“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*  **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 her newest album “Close to Me” she explores a completely different genre - the *Fado* from her native Portugal. The results of this unique adaption are surprising and refreshing and greatly engaging.  "It is not Fado, but a symphonic Jazz approach to Fado", is how singer-songwriter Maria Mendes describes the music on this new project featuring the multi Grammy award winning Dutch symphonic orchestra **Metropole Orkest** and the famous American Jazz pianist and producer **John Beasley** (who worked with a variety of American stars such as Miles Davis, Dianne Reeves, and Herbie Hancock).  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. Together with the Dutch Jazz pianist **Karel Boehlee**, with whom she has been actively collaborating for these last 10 years, they reimagine these songs and revive 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.   * *“A jazz singer of the highest order. Her poise is as impressive as her power” DOWNBEAT, USA* * *“Nothing here disappoints! Graceful vocalist” JAZZTIMES, USA* * *“It's a profoundly affecting album, one that sweeps you up in its passionate embrace and never lets go. [...] Mendes's soul-stirring voice unfailingly pierces the heart” JAZZWISE, UK* * *“Mendes’ voice and improvisation are paramount art” NRC, NL* * *“Longing, love, nostalgia are the themes, performed with a voice that is unsurpassed in purity and variability” JAZZ ’N’ MORE, CH* * *“Portuguese jazz singer Maria Mendes comes up with a Fado album of superlatives” JAZZTHING*   *Maria Mendes’s Background*  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.  ***Line Up***  Maria Mendes (vocals)  Karel Boehlee (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>  ***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.” |