



SOCIETY FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
Bringing the World's Best to Houston

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Portuguese Fado Singer Mariza Returns to Houston on Nov. 12

Presented by Society for the Performing Arts

HOUSTON (Oct. 14, 2009) – Society for the Performing Arts (SPA), bringing the world's best to Houston, presents the return of Portuguese fado singer **Mariza**, on Thursday, Nov. 12, at 8 p.m. in Jones Hall.

A superstar abroad, Mariza is known as the new face of fado, the Portuguese blues. With her stunning vocal range and unforgettable stage presence, Mariza returns to Houston for one night only performing hits from her latest Latin Grammy-nominated and triple platinum album *Terra*. The album is a cosmopolitan mixture of flamenco and morna (a genre of music from Cape Verde), as well as jazz and folk music, with a constant Portuguese sound. "Mariza has it all," says *The Times* of London, "charisma, a voice to die for and stunning looks."

Influenced by several different cultures, fado was born in the late 19th century as the music of lonely sailors and heartbroken lovers; it has flourished for more than a 100 years in the smoky tavernas of working class neighborhoods. It was in such a venue that Mariza first became enchanted with the genre. Though born in Mozambique to a Portuguese father and African mother, she moved with her family to Lisbon as a young child. Her family took over a small taverna in a neighborhood called Mouraria, an area with a long and rich association with fado's history. On the weekends, her father would employ fado musicians to entertain customers. "I fell in love with the sound of the Portuguese guitar coming up through the floor and I started to sing fado when I was 5 years old," Mariza recalls. Her first album, *Fado em Mim*, was recorded in 2001.

Although, Mariza has frequently been compared to Amalia Rodrigues, the legendary fadista of the 20th century, the 35-year-old singer continuously pushes the boundaries of the genre creating a style that is traditional and innovative. In addition to the 12-string Portuguese guitarra typical to fado, the music Mariza records and performs includes piano, flute, cello, various percussion instruments and classical guitar.

Mariza has performed on four continents to sold-out halls, including the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London and the Théâtre de la Ville in Paris. In 2004 she launched her first DVD and performed with Sting on the official album of the Olympic Games. Her second album, *Fado*

Curvo, reached number six on the Top Billboard of World Music and achieved double platinum in Portugal. On her third album, *Transperente*, she collaborated with Grammy Award-winning musician and producer Jaques Morelenbaum. Her album *Concerto Em Lisboa* was recorded in 2005 at Lisbon's Belém Tower.

Prior to Mariza's appearance, patrons may enjoy the H-E-B Performance Prelude by Guitar Houston's Edward Grigassy at 7 p.m. in the Jones Hall lobby, piano level. At 7:30 p.m. in the Jones Hall lobby, balcony level, patrons may attend the BMC Software Arts Talk by Elaine Kennedy, KUHF 88.7 FM host of the Afternoon Concert and Producer of Pulling Strings.

Part of SPA's International series, this event is generously sponsored by Houston PBS, Continental Airlines, H-E-B, The Brown Hand Center and BMC Software.

Tickets range from \$20-\$45 and can be purchased online at www.spahouston.org, by phone at 713-227-4SPA or at the courtyard level ticket office at Jones Hall located at 615 Louisiana St. Hours of operation: 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. Monday – Friday, and 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. on Saturday. For groups of 15 or more, call 713-632-8113.

About Society for the Performing Arts

Founded in 1966, Society for the Performing Arts (SPA) is the largest independent non-profit presenting organization in the Southwest. Since its inception, SPA has sponsored more than 800 performances of the world's finest music, dance and theater events, in adherence to the belief that the arts are fundamental to the overall enrichment and quality of life within the community. In addition to presenting artists, SPA seeks to provide a variety of learning experiences for adults and children through master classes, lectures and special student performances, as well as build relationships between the performing arts and other interests within the greater Houston area and throughout the state of Texas.

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