

# SEVERA - O fado de um fado

Ana Barros | soprano – Bruno Belthoise | piano

With the collaboration of Miguel Amaral | Portuguese guitar

1. **Rua do Capelão (novo fado da Severa)** – Lyrics by Júlio Dantas and Music by Frederico de Freitas – Arr. Sérgio Azevedo 4:08
2. **A Mulher da Meia Noite** - Lyrics by Pereira Coelho and Music by Jaime Silva (filho) – Arr. Carlos Azevedo 4:48
3. **Fado da Severa** – César das Neves' songbook – Arr. Carlos Marecos 4:09
4. **Fado n.º 6** –Music by Alexandre Rey Colaço – piano solo 4:15
5. **Fado Português** – Lyrics by José Régio and Music by Alain Oulman – Arr. Carlos Marecos 5:41
6. **Choradinho (Fado da Desgraçada)** – César das Neves' songbook – Arr. Carlos Marecos 2:33
7. **Fado de Cascaes** – César das Neves' songbook – Arr. Sérgio Azevedo 2:43
8. **Onde estás tu, Mouraria** – Lyrics and Music by João Nobre - Arr. Carlos Azevedo 3 :16
9. **Fado n.º 7** – Music by Alexandre Rey Colaço – piano solo 1 :05
10. **Fado de cada um** - Lyrics by Silva Tavares and Music by Frederico de Freitas – Arr. Carlos Marecos 4:29
11. **Fado de Vimioso** – César das Neves' songbook - Arr. Carlos Azevedo 4:32
12. **Fado Corrido** – César das Neves' songbook - Arr. Sérgio Azevedo 3:04
13. **Canto da suicida** – César das Neves' songbook - Arr. Carlos Marecos 5 :33
14. **Transfiguração** - Music by Miguel Amaral - Guitarra Portuguesa 5:40
15. **Fado Burnay** – Music by Eduardo Burnay – piano solo 3:29
16. **Maria Severa** – Lyrics by José Galhardo and Music by Raul Ferrão - Arr. Carlos Azevedo 4:32
17. **Estranha forma de vida** – Lyrics by Amália Rodrigues and Music by Alfredo Marceneiro - Arr. Bruno Belthoise 4 :53

# About this project...

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## Maria Severa, a primordial myth

Much of the information known about the life of Maria Severa (1820-1846) was added posthumously by way of an oral tradition, which consolidated its mythology over the decades that followed her death. The lack of direct documentary evidence, coupled with the lack of iconographic records produced when Severa was alive, strengthened the symbolic efficiency of her myth – inspiring literary creation, poetic repertoire, *operettas*, constant quotes in theatre and films –, which consolidated, throughout the twentieth century, in the thin border between erudite and popular art.

In *Severa – o Fado de um Fado*, Ana Barros and Bruno Belthoise celebrate the myth in the XXI century, by calling composers Sérgio Azevedo, Carlos Marecos and Carlos Azevedo to work with traditional Fado arrangements for voice and piano.

Beyond the tribute to a living tradition, Ana Barros and Bruno Belthoise invite us to enter a primordial myth of the nineteenth-century origins of Fado music, which we revisit today, in light of its Art. Calling to a mythology that ontologically integrates part of the urban music of Lisbon, *Severa – o Fado de um Fado* is also a testimony of multi-artistic identity of Fado itself, which has long climbed the boundaries of the allegedly exclusive popular domain.

Sara Pereira  
Director of Museu do Fado

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## **Operatic fado** by João Braga

The *Worker Fado* was already known, it was lacking the equivalent in classical music. On the other hand, I always liked to be challenged, so when soprano Ana Barros invited me to attend, in a room in ESML, to a rehearsal of her work on Fado, in general, and Severa, in particular, I promptly accepted, given the quality of the singer and musicians – both performers and arrangers, almost composers –, which I could attest later during rehearsals. Moreover, Fado is going through a very interesting period – which I wouldn't necessarily call revolutionary but, at least, of huge turmoil –, with the approach of artists coming from some other areas, in this case other *arias*, moved by what appears to be an attempt of understanding and – after that understanding is achieved – integrating the effervescent moment to which I refer to.

Regarding this moment, many artists and works will be dropped along the way, especially those who recognize that this strange music is not for them; but there will be others whose works will remain, as will this Fado "elf", that touched them and made them feel like singers, in the way that knowledgeable audience recognize as such. Ana Barros, Bruno Belthoise, Carlos Marecos, Sérgio Azevedo and Carlos Azevedo are, in my view, in this last group. Fado in the voice and soul of Ana Barros is a different Fado, but it is still Fado, as it touches the sensitivity of those who hear it in a way they can't forget. Bruno Belthoise – after Alain Oulman, no one will ever be surprised again by the *coup de foudre* between the French and Fado – transmutes piano keys in Portuguese guitar strings. His music, either accompanying Ana's voice, or in sustained notes, or even in the dramatic atmosphere that he offers to the entire work – that manifests itself constantly in conventional Fado –, is felt here with greater intensity, as in music such as "Fado Português" or "Fado da Severa" (arrangement by Carlos Marecos) or the surprising "Onde Estás Tu, Mouraria?" and "Mulher da Meia-noite" (arrangement by Carlos Azevedo), "Rua do Capelão", "Fado Corrido" (arrangements by Sérgio Azevedo) and a delightfully unexpected "Canto da Suicida" (arrangements by Carlos Marecos for piano and guitar), with Miguel Amaral on Portuguese guitar, replying with excitement to the piano, and vice-versa.

In short, this approach to Fado of classical music should not only further broaden the horizons, it should also dissuade those who insist on keeping our song in completely dispensable bays of obsolescence.

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## **Our soul**

By João Almeida

Programming Deputy Director - Antena 2

Culture, especially musical, is certainly the most distinctive feature of a people, as a multiple reflection of their soul. In the Portuguese case, the most distinctive musical language is Fado, so unique that it sometimes makes us feel lonely amid the rest of the world, with the feeling that no one else but a born Portuguese can understand or fully feel. This abysmal difference compared to other genres (pop, rock, etc.) may explain the removal of some Portuguese public, as if it were too painful to be on our own. It turns out that the Fado, as it belongs to us alone, is known by the rest of the world exactly for that. Others fail to understand it as we do, but find it a genuine brand, an original character that first gets attention, then emotion. They may notice details that a Portuguese hardly senses, and, above all, they dare to mix it with other musical areas in search of something new, as a great cook looking for herbs and spices that will give a unique stamp to their plate. This is how I see this project, *Severa*, as a remarkable and original musical dish that justifies, once again, the support of the public Portuguese radio, Antena 2.

Bruno Belthoise is a French pianist with no familiar ties in Portugal. Chance, however, put him in contact with the Portuguese music, especially that of classical origins, and he saw in it a distinctive potential that only a look from outside would allow. He began rummaging through the legacy of composers such as Fernando Lopes-Graça, Armando José Fernandes, Luiz Costa and Francisco de Lacerda, and plunged into their world, recording it as few others have. In Paris and elsewhere in Europe, he started to ceaselessly spread the musical legacy of this hidden rectangle of land, so often overlooked or forgotten by the Portuguese themselves. Systematically, Bruno Belthoise followed the thread of the Portuguese musical culture. With this French musician, our own music was in the hands of excellent performers worldwide, including Portuguese artists that he challenged and mobilized for the cause of Portuguese music. There is a question that immediately comes to mind: why did he choose this discreet musical corner of ours? For what it has of unique and valuable, Bruno Belthoise answered, after scouting the very best that the Portuguese music has to offer.

The time for Fado is here then, not in its traditional version, which only a singer and a guitar could incarnate, but what it can borrow to the rest of the world, the bridges that allow it to launch to other musical genres and, therefore, to other public. Bruno Belthoise, in a new partnership with a great Portuguese interpreter, Ana Barros, keeps stepping new ground, pulling the thread that we Portuguese can hardly grasp, perhaps incapable of realizing that, at the end of the line, we would find our very own soul.

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## **Ana Barros – soprano How to sing Fado...?**

How to sing Fado without distorting the style and, at the same time, without losing what is intrinsically part of my being, of my voice...?

This could well be the title of a thesis, but it is not! This has always been the big question in my head all these years when, on a somewhat regular basis, I was involved in Fado projects, along with my activity as opera singer. The Fado exists in my life since I can remember; my mother (also a singer) always sang a lot at home and, as such, it became so ordinary, that I thought I could not appreciate its greatness...

This project has, somehow, cut the prejudices entrenched in a far too traditionalist way to see Fado. Our idea as creators of the project is not to forget the tradition, but rather exalt it; not to invent a new Fado, but to give colour to the Fado that already exists. We want to wear it with modern "clothes", but not lose its essence, this essence that makes us vibrate, shake and cry when hearing it.

Because of my maternal inheritance, I am able, even as opera singer, to give the "Fado colour", make those "little twists and turns," the "trills" (that our voice can also produce!) and impregnate the entire text of the emotional charge that Fado needs.

It is not always easy! The voices that were very worked on are clearer and the "purists" of Fado refuse to acknowledge them. In fact, I think that's where my bias was born in regards to my way of

singing it. Thus, in this project, I tried to find a compromise between my Fado voice and my lyric voice so that the technique is safeguarded, but assuring the Fado roots are there.

Above all, this is a project made of love for music, for words, for history of Fado... and of course, made with a lot of emotion.

## **Bruno Belthoise – piano**

It was always through the piano that I fell in love with languages, forms and new lands to explore. Contemporary creation and multiple "landscapes" that are offered by today's composers are, for me in particular, the richness that became indispensable in my creative search – as a performer and for the deeper understanding of masterpieces of the past. The piano, in addition to the imposing image it projects, with its ceremonial and impressive repertoire, is still a wonderful tool to attempt further travelling.

I am intimately connected to Portugal and its composers for almost twenty years now. By studying the works discovered in Lisbon, I intuitively felt that my piano would, one day, replace the tradition and would plunge in a modern, even cheeky, way in the Fado world. It is not trivial to shake old habits, dropping on the intricacies of collective memory traces also impregnated of dark red intensity of Portuguese Fado and the unique phrasing of the Portuguese guitar...

Today, this exciting musical adventure takes the path of a re-creation, a new colour to see Fado, an adventure related to the sound of love of a people, the strength and fragility of the symbolic Maria Severa.

And it was at the piano that this journey began for me...

## **Carlos Marecos - composer**

### **Revisiting**

It's been a few years now that my writing repeatedly refers to traditional Portuguese music. These references are sometimes subtle, emerging from the different musical material I work with, but the traditional Portuguese music itself has often been the main source of inspiration, leading me to writing pieces as *Sanfins* (1999), *Caminho ao Céu* (2003) or, more recently, *Terras por de trás dos Montes* (2011). But, in addition to these works, for many years, I've been regularly harmonizing and orchestrating Portuguese folk melodies from the collections of Fernando Lopes-Graça, Michel Giacometti and José Alberto Sardinha. In this case, the melodies are, in general, left in its pure state; the harmonization and instrumentation is where the influence of techniques of our time is felt the most. It's always a challenge to conciliate a simple folk tune with a recent writing and composers such as Fernando Lopes-Graça, Béla Bartók, Luciano Berio and Witold Lutosławski, although in different styles, are a reference for me in this field.

From my traditional Portuguese music harmonizations, a couple of cycles are noteworthy, such as *Sete canções populares portuguesas* (1995), *Sete canções e quatro danças populares portuguesas* (1996), *Canções populares portuguesas* (1999) [Lopes-Graça Award, 1999 edition], *Canções populares religiosas* (2001) and *Três canções alentejanas de Natal* (2011). In these popular cycles, there was an approach close to Fado on several melodies, but their presence, though important, was somewhat sporadic.

It's in this context that this project of revisiting the classic repertoire from the Lisbon's Fado emerges as a fascinating opportunity to deepen the genre and contribute to a more personal view of it.

## **Sérgio Azevedo - composer**

### **Intuition or erudition**

I listen to and play Fado since I was a child, a young man, as my father is a skilled Portuguese guitar performer in the tradition of Coimbra, having accompanied great voices from the Lisbon's Fado. I learned to play the Portuguese guitar after learning piano and classical guitar, and I know well almost the entire repertoire of both Lisbon and Coimbra. I've already accomplished several orchestrations by demand of orchestras of Fado in Lisbon, the latest of which intended for Kátia Guerreiro, who were

played in Portugal and France, for Portuguese and foreign orchestras. In my concert works, I also often use material from traditional melodies, Portuguese or otherwise, a tradition that I know in some depth.

As a modern composer, and as an artist, I think that the classical versions of Fado, always enriched by the experience of those who accompany it, will win from being arranged and harmonized with modern techniques of contemporary classical language (as Berio indeed do in his "Folk Songs", or Fernando Lopes-Graça in his "Mornas Cabo-Verdianas"). Without this approach, it will not make much sense to work these beautiful melodies "scholarly", as I believe that, if the intention is to merely mimic the traditional accompaniments, the guitars will always be preferable and so will the intuitive approach of Fado musicians, who already do a great job for over a century and a half, at least. Popular melodies, such as Fado, are subject to very different musical visions, and I think that is where part of their richness and fascination over composers and arrangers lies, whether they come from popular, jazz or classical music.

For that reason, I was keen in having the opportunity to add my own vision to some of the most important fados of the classical repertoire of Lisbon.

## **Carlos Azevedo - composer**

### **Something different...**

Fado is a type of music that I fully enjoy and even had the opportunity to do some work in, as a pianist. Therefore, and having devoted part of my musical activity to the preparation of arrangements, in particular for Jazz Orchestra, it was with great pleasure, and a spirit of challenge, that I accepted to collaborate in this ambitious project.

Each of my arrangements for this project contained a specific language, and my inspiration came, above all, from each of the songs; as an arranger, the greatest challenge was to keep the original spirit of the song, as the interpreter always has a very personal way of singing. Regarding the writing for the piano, there was more improvisation around it, even if I did try to keep the traditional form in each of the themes, as I didn't want to recreate the specific colour of the classical instrumentation of Fado. Still, the sound of the Portuguese guitar was present in my inner hearing.

I hope that, through my musical career, I can bring something different to this project, with which these magnificent performers can identify.

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## **Ana Barros**

soprano

Ana Barros achieved her singing Diploma in 2001 at ESMAE, attending the classes of Rui Taveira and Fernanda Correia. Between 2003 and 2006, she was a member of the cast of Opera Studio from the Casa da Música, where she worked with Peter Harrison, Lorna Marshall and Jeff Cohen. On several occasions, Ana attended vocal technique and interpretation courses with some of the greatest masters of our time, such as Jill Feldman, Philip Langridge, Gundula Janovic, Jeff Cohen, Laura Sarti, Elisabete Matos...

In Portugal, she had the opportunity to sing under the direction of various conductors: José Luís Borges Coelho, Rui Massena, António Saiote, Manuel Ivo Cruz, Martin André, Christoph König, Giovanni Andreoli, Marc Tardue, among others, as well as performing in the best theatres of the country: Teatro Rivoli, Casa da Música, Coliseu do Porto, Fundação Gulbenkian, Teatro Nacional de São Carlos, Teatro São Luís, Teatro da Trindade, Culturgest.

Ana Barros shows a special interest for the contemporary music in Portuguese recording for the radio and disk. She did works using the creation of Amílcar Vasques-Dias, Nuno Corte-Real, Jean-François Lézé, Eugénio Amorim, Fernando Lapa, Fernando Valente, Carlos Azevedo, Pedro Faria Gomes, António Chagas Rosa, Sara Carvalho, Alexandre Delgado, among others. Ana Barros regularly performs in duo with pianist Isabel Sá and guitarist Augusto Pacheco, with whom she recorded the chamber music for guitar and voice of Fernando Lopes Graça.

Ana Barros has always had a close connection to the popular musical tradition of Fado. She recorded an album with the group Som Ibérico, led by guitarist Artur Caldeira. With Fatum Ensemble, she visited Mexico in 2013. Ana Barros now works with pianist Bruno Belthoise in the creation of the show *Severa – o Fado de um Fado*, a modern evocation of the great mythical figure of Fado, Maria Severa.

**Bruno Belthoise**

piano

Artist, writer and improviser, Bruno Belthoise is a winner of the Laurent-Vibert Foundation and received the Prix de la Fondation de France in 1988. He was given The executable Diploma in the École Normale de Musique de Paris in 1989 and was "Classical Revelation" ADAMI in 1997. Soloist and member of Trio Pangea, Bruno made the premiere of several works by composers such as Emmanuel Hieaux, Alexander Delgado, Vienne Bernard, Fernando Lapa, Sérgio Azevedo...

Invited to festivals in France and abroad, Bruno Belthoise performs a repertoire ranging from Bach to contemporary composers. His discography includes several CDs that reveal his path as creative interpreter. Fascinated by the art of storytelling, which he associates to his piano, Bruno produced many narrative concerts for young audiences and recorded several albums for the audio bookstore Frémeaux & Associates. Discoverer of music, the pianist shows the music of Portuguese composers, with recitals and conferences around the world. In his career, he has been supported by institutions such as the Fundação Gulbenkian, the Instituto Camões, the Ministério da Cultura Português and Antena 2.

**Miguel Amaral**

Portuguese guitar

Born in Porto, in 1982, Miguel Amaral began studying the piano with Madalena Leite de Castro at the age of 6, later studying Portuguese guitar with Samuel Cabral and José Fontes Rocha. In recent years, Miguel has dedicated himself to a solo career and started his studies with Pedro Caldeira Cabral. He also studied Analysis, Harmony and Counterpoint with Daniel Moreira and composition with Dimitris Andrikopoulos, and attended to a composition/orchestration masterclass at ESMAE, in the academic year of 2007/2008.

Of his most recent performances as a soloist, the recital at Casa da Música in 2009 stands out, and so does the recital at the Fundação Gulbenkian in October 2011, as part as the festival to celebrate the 25 years of Prémio Jovens Músicos, broadcast live by Antena2, where, in addition to his compositions, there were also debuts of Mário Laginha, Dimitris Andrikopoulos, Daniel Moreira and Igor C. Silva. In the year 2013, Miguel released "Chuva Oblíqua", his debut album, entirely dedicated to the soloist repertoire that he has been developing. In that same year, he also integrated the new Mário Laginha Trio, recording Terra Seca, in which he signs the piece "Fuga para um dia de sol". Since 2010, Miguel Amaral is part of the band that performs "Sombras" by Ricardo Pais, alongside musicians like Mário Laginha, Carlos Alves, Mário Franco and Paulo Faria de Carvalho.

## Credits

Recording: **September 2014 by Eric Harizanos (RDP), Grand Auditorium of ESML (Lisbon).**  
Artistic direction: **Carlos Marecos and João Pedro Mendes dos Santos**  
Direction of the capture of takes: **Cristina do Carmo (Antena 2)**  
Assembling and Mastering: **Rui Sampaio (Pure Sound)**  
Steinway Piano tuning and harmonization: **Fernando Rosado**  
Photos and graphic design: **Miguel Andresen**  
Other photos: **David Oliveira**  
Proofreading: **Hélder Granja**

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Post-production: **Filipe Chaves, Duarte Pereira Martins**

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