Amalia Rodrigues & Don Byas – Encontro (1988)



01. Povo que Lavas no Rio (Pedro Homem de Mello/Joaquim Campos) 02. Solidao (Brito/Trindade/Ferreira) play 03. Estranha Forma de Vida (Amalia Rodrigues/Alfredo Duarte "Marceneiro") 04. Libertacao (David Mourao-Ferreira/Santos Moreira) 05. Cansaco (Fado Tango) (Luis Macedo/Joaquim Campos) 06. Rua do Capelao (Frederico de Freitas/Joao Alves Coelho) 07. Ai Mouraria (Amadeu do Vale/Frederico Valerio) 08. Nao e Desgraca ser Pobre (Norberto Araujo/Jose Alfredo Santos Moreira) 09. Coimbra (Jose Galhardo/Raul Ferrao) play 10. Lisboa Antiga (Jose Galhardo/Raul Portela) 11. Ha Festa na Mouraria (Antonio Amargo/Alfredo Duarte "Marceneiro") 12. Maldicao (Armando Vieira Pinto/Alfredo Duarte "Marceneiro")

Personnel: Amalia Rodrigues – Vocal Don Byas – Sax Jose Fontes Rocha – Guitar Carlos Gonsalves – Guitar Pedro Leal – Viola Joel Pina – Bass viola

An excellent intersection between fado and jazz. The greatest fadista of the century meets US jazz sax player Don Byas. The meeting took place at 1968 in Lisbon but the LP didn't appear but after 5 years, at 1973. The reason? Biding fado to jazz might seem pretentious and confusing to the public. So that was the first and last trial. It is this fact that makes this album a "samplo uniquo".

This 1968 recording o'f some of Amália's best known songs is somewhat different from her usual records, allthough from the beginning of her career she accustomed us to innovate, above

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all else in the seemingly restricted area of fado. In fact, she was the first to sing classical portuguese fado songs accompanied by an orchestra (thus introducing the so-called fado-canção-fado-song), and later would innovate by singing folklore also accompanied by an orchestra, which she took, among other countries, to The USA in 1966 and 1968, at the Lincoln Center and the Hollywood Bowl. She would later innovate even more, singing more extensive melodies, different kinds of poems, and different arrangements from the classical portuguese fado accompaniments.

Thus this "Encontro" record was born when American saxophonist Don Byas came to Portugal to play at Lisbon's Jazz Festival, and since several connoisseurs felt there were similarities between jazz and the art of Amália and even Fado, it was arranged for them both to record together. So, Don Byas, so the story goes, listened to some of her songs, and they recorded them. Though, critically the result wasn't as expected, (the saxophone, as it was recorded, doesn't seem to add much to the usual arrangements), Amália's voice was supreme, going from her more famous songs (Povo Que Lavas No Rio, Solidão, Maldição, Ai Mouraria, Estranha Forma de Vida-Strange Way of Life-the latter written by herself-to the more joyous Coimbra-April In Portugal- and Lisboa Antiga).

The record was only released in 1973, because Amália was convinced critics would not like the mingling of fado and jazz, but she was persuaded, as she herself said, to let it be distributed. Strangely, this recording comes through as a sort of lullaby from beginning to end, with Amália's rendition of her songs among some of the best (un unforgettable Povo..., Estranha Forma...Cansaço, Ai Mouraria and Maldição). It was a once in a lifetime recording and a once in a lifetime unforgettable record! --- Fernando Forte

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