



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 9, 2012

WHAT: Portuguese Fado Diva Ana Moura
WHEN: Sunday, February 5 at 7:00pm
WHERE: Bowker Auditorium
University of Massachusetts Amherst
TICKETS: Call 1-800-999-UMAS or 545-2511 for tickets or go online to
<http://www.fineartscenter.com/>
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ANA MOURA, CAPTIVATING INTERPRETER OF THE PORTUGUESE FADO AT BOWKER AUDITORIUM

"Sorrow wrapped in guitar filigree, elegant romance with a tragic undercurrent—that's the tradition of Portuguese fado that Ana Moura joins."—New York Times

Portuguese vocalist Ana Moura, whose soulful and riveting interpretation of her land's captivating Fado style has made her a star in Europe, brings her gentle, persuasive magic to North American audiences. The 25-year-old singer has become a leading exponent of this poetic, deeply expressive idiom which personifies the Portuguese psyche as it explores such universal themes as lost love, separation, and longing. As Ana explains, "It's very special because it's all about emotions and feelings. It needs no translation."

Ana has emerged as a leading voice of traditional Fado just as the venerable idiom is enjoying a renaissance of popularity. As with jazz and country music in the U.S., tango in Argentina, and samba in Brazil, Fado sprang from the culture of working class people. And, as with the aforementioned examples, over the years the style evolved from its humble origins to win broad appeal. Today, as Ana proudly proclaims, "In Portugal, Fado is for everyone."

Fado, which means "fate" or "destiny," was an unintended harvest from Portugal's far-flung empire, blending Portuguese folk poetry, Arabic cadences, and African and Brazilian rhythms. By the time Fado started taking shape on Lisbon's waterfront in the mid-1800s, the nation's status as a world power had been in steep decline for centuries and the music's themes often reflected the forlorn but defiant outlook of a people whose poverty forced many young men to emigrate in search of work.

With its unabashed emotional intensity and preoccupation with heartbreak, betrayal, and separation, Fado became a ritualized form of emotional release. The music has thrived for generations in Lisbon's "Fado Houses," taverns where people gather to hear vocalists perform the haunting songs.

For much of the 20th century, diva Amália Rodrigues singularly personified Fado and came to be the face of Portugal's starkly political use of the art form. When she died in 1999, at the age of 79, Fado looked to be an inheritance rejected by young Portuguese. Then a new generation embraced the style, as charismatic young artists like Mariza and Mísia, Cristina Branco, and Ana Moura started to revitalize the song form.

Ana was born in United States and grew up in a family in which everyone sang at meetings and special events. She soon developed a taste for various musical styles, but Fado was always a constant presence. In her late teens, at a Christmas party, several singers and guitarists had the opportunity to listen to her interpretations, including the legendary Portuguese singer and vocal coach Maria da Fé, who invited Ana to join the cast of her Fado House. During her daily work with Mme. da Fé, she met the composer and guitarist Jorge Fernando, resident musician at the House, and began a professional relationship and friendship that continues today.

In 2003, Ana released her first album, "Guarda-me a vida na mão." The record received lavish praise from the media and opened doors with the public, both nationally and abroad. Soon afterwards Ana began her world tours, including a debut performance at New York's prestigious Town Hall.

The following year saw another step in Ana Moura's career. Her new record was ambitious: "Aconteceu" (2004) was a conceptual adventure, a double CD divided into traditional Fado ("Dentro de Casa") and possible paths out of and around Fado ("À porta do Fado"). It was around this time that Ana received an invitation to perform at Carnegie Hall, thus becoming the first Portuguese singer to perform in New York's legendary venue.

But the world wanted more and was beginning to feel small for Ana's soul. She went to Cannes, during the Film Festival. She sang at the Getty Museum. She sold out prestigious venues all over the world. Meanwhile, in distant Japan, a musician bought a series of Fado records. He placed one of them on his CD player and a few minutes later was left speechless: he had found the voice he had been looking for. That man was Tim Ries, resident saxophone player for the Rolling Stones and mentor of a parallel venture: The Rolling Stones Project, for which he invited prestigious singers from all over the world to sing personal versions of the Rolling Stones songs. When he heard the first few minutes of "Aconteceu," Ries didn't hesitate for a second and invited Ana to participate in the project.

Ana Moura's worldwide stature is still on the rise in 2011, with a nomination for Best Artist by the prestigious world music magazine *Songlines*, and with the making of a documentary on her career for the Mezzo TV channel.

Meanwhile, on her travels round the world, Ana lives day by day doing what she does best: singing with a soul that is paradoxically brimming with passion and yet barely perceptible behind the fragile smile of a girl.

Tickets for Ana Moura are \$30, \$25, and \$15; Five College, GCC, STCC students and youth 17 and under are \$10. For tickets call the Box Office at 545-2511, toll-free at 800-999-UMAS, or purchase online at fineartscenter.com. The performance is sponsored by *El Sol Latino* and 93.9 FM The River.

PHOTOS

Hi-res photos available for download: <http://www.umass.edu/fac/pressphotos/>.

PRESS PASSES

Limited press passes are available. Please contact Shawn Farley at 413-545-4159 or sfarley@admin.umass.edu.

ABOUT THE FAC

The Fine Arts Center, located on the UMass Amherst campus, is a presenter of music, dance, theater and the visual arts, bringing hundreds of outstanding and provocative artists to the Pioneer Valley for over 35 years.

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