

Portuguese ensemble Madredeus to perform Oct. 17 at UCSD

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PORTUGUESE ENSEMBLE MADREDEUS TO PERFORM OCT. 17 AT UCSD

Madredeus, the Lisbon-based ensemble that boasts a modern, original and distinctly Portuguese sound, will perform at 8 p.m. Oct. 17 in Mandeville Auditorium at the University of California, San Diego. The event is sponsored by the UCSD University Events Office.

The six-member ensemble consists of leader Pedro Ayres Magalhaes, guitar; Jose Peixoto, guitar; Gabriel Gomes, accordion; Francisco Ribeiro, cello; Rodrigo Leao, keyboards, and vocalist Teresa Salgueiro.

Described as "spookily beautiful music...Portuguese fado given a modern spin" by Vogue Arts, the music of Madredeus is soothing and contemplative, steeped in Portuguese culture with touches of nostalgia, melancholy and yearning. Its themes are traditional to Portuguese poetry: the sea, travel, separation, lost love; and as Magalhaes says, "as universal as possible, talking about feelings, life and death."

Though Madredeus music has been referred to as post-fado or New Age Fado, Magalhaes says it is definitely not fado. Fado is the traditional Portuguese style of emotional singing that has been likened to a cross between opera and the blues. "Fado consists of old melodies, some as old as 300 years," says Magalhaes. "Those songs get reinterpreted with new lyrics while our music is original. Our intent (is) to create a new way of expressing."

Magalhaes, the principal composer, writes most of the lyrics. He says they are imbued with saudadean old Portuguese term describing the yearning for a faraway loved one or homelands is fado, but in an uplifting, happier way.

"I like to think of saudade in a positive way," Salgueiro says, "as a strength that enables us to project into the future the best that has happened to us in the past."

Madredeus was formed in Lisbon in 1987. Magalhaes and Leao began experimenting with different instruments and new sounds and went in search of a "Portuguese voice." They found 17-year-old Salgueiro singing in a bar with friends. "Her voice was completely natural," says Magalhaes, "like an archetype of all the female voices I've heard in my country."

Magalhaes and Leao recruited the three other musicians and began practicing in an old church in the Lisbon neighborhood of Madre de Deus, hence the group's name, Madredeus. Within a few months they recorded their first album, *Os Dias da Madredeus*. Subsequent albums include *Existir*, *Lisboa*, and *0 Espirito da Paz*.

Since their Madre de Deus days they have performed extensively in their homeland and toured throughout Europe, the Far East, South America and the United States.

Covering a sold-out concert in Paris, the New York Times wrote: "Some songs are mournful, others lively, some veer close to fado, others draw on tango. The instrumentation is complex, but in the end it serves to emphasize Ms. Salgueiro's soprano voice...her range and self control."

Of a performance before a capacity crowd in Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Times wrote: "Dressed in black, performing on a dark stage, the ensemble created a mesmerizing mood with nothing more than its music, its calm, dignified presence and some atmospheric lighting. The music had an external feeling of tranquility, filled with long tones, keening harmonies and Salgueiro's soaring, intensely focused sound."

Tickets for the Oct. 17 performance of Madredeus are \$18 general admission, \$16 for faculty, staff and senior citizens, and \$14 for students. Tickets are available at the UCSD Box Office, 534-8497, and at Ticketmaster outlets. For further information, call the UCSD University Events Office at 534-4090.

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