

Lagrima (A Tear)

Written by bluelover

Thursday, 19 July 2012 14:44 - Last Updated Saturday, 21 March 2015 13:17

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Fado began as a howl out of the dives and houses of ill repute along the Lisbon waterfront. The lyrics dwell on themes of longing, sadness and fatalism, to a wistful accompaniment made up of guitars and woodwinds. Melodically, Fado draws on Arabic, African and Iberian influences. The Cape Verdean *Morna* style made famous by Cesaria Evora is a close cousin.

Lagrima

The unrivaled queen of the Portuguese fado was **Amália Rodrigues**. She was born in Lisbon's Alfama district in 1920. Against the wishes of her family, as a teen Rodrigues performed as a tango dancer, and at 19 she made her professional singing debut alongside her sister, Celeste, at the fashionable Lisbon nightspot *Retiro da Severa*.



Amalia Rodrigues

Within a year she was a star, selling out clubs every night; in 1944, she traveled to Brazil,

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drawing huge crowds during her stay at the *Copacabana Casino* and later returning to Rio de Janeiro to make her first recordings.



Fado

In 1950, while performing at the Marshall Plan international benefit shows, she introduced '*April in Portugal*' to international audiences, under its original title "*Coimbra*".



Amalia Rodrigues

By the late 1950s the USA, Britain, and France had become her major international markets;

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Japan and Italy followed suit in the 1970s. In France especially, her popularity rivaled her Portuguese success, and she graduated to headliner at the prestigious Olympia theatre within a matter of months.

In all, Rodrigues recorded upwards of 170 albums and even appeared in a number of feature films, retaining her drawing power even after the popularity of fado itself began to dissipate during the 1960s.



Amalia Rodrigues

A period of depression, and an introspection led to the recording of two very personal albums: '

Gostava de Ser Quem Era'

(1980) (literally

'I Wish I Were whom I Was'

)and

'Lágrima'

: all these songs were written by her own hand, since she used the poems she herself wrote.

Her last all-new studio recording,

Lágrima

, was released in 1983.



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Music to Amalia's lyrics wrote **Carlos Gonçalves**. He was born in Beja, at the Portuguese Alentejo. At thirteen years old he is passionate by the Portuguese guitar and starts his learning.



Carlos Goncalves

In 1957, when he moves to Lisbon, Carlos Gonçalves begins his artistic life thanks to his technical skills which immediately allowed him to play for the great *Fado* artists of that time.

In 1968, Carlos Gonçalves starts his collaboration with Amalia Rodrigues, taking part in the group directed by Jose Fontes Rocha, to whom soon replaced forming then a group with Sebastiao Pinto Varela (Portuguese guitar), Jorge Fernando (viola) and Joel Pina (bass viola).

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