



RAMANA VIEIRA

TRACK INFO FOR: LÁGRIMAS DE RAINHA (TEARS OF A QUEEN)

The title, **Lágrimas De Rainha (Tears of A Queen)**, was chosen because I was moved by the tragic tale of Portugal's own *Romeo and Juliet* story. The story took place in a Portuguese city called Coimbra in 1355 where a maid, Inês De Castro, was hired to take care of the princess of Portugal and the son of the king, Dom Pedro. Inês and Dom Pedro fell in love. Unfortunately it was a forbidden relationship that was prohibited by all the noble men of the city. Nevertheless, Dom Pedro and Inês were secretly married. Eventually the relationship was discovered and Inês was stoned to death. Dom Pedro ascended to the throne and as an act of revenge he had his beloved's body brought from her coffin, dressed her in royalty and seated her next to him. Dom Pedro then forced the courtiers to kiss her pallid hand. Legend has it that the flowing water from a fountain near the poplar grove in Coimbra contains the tears of Queen Inês, the tears of a queen.

1. Coimbra: Created in 1939, "Coimbra" is an old, popular Portuguese song. It was made famous by the greatest Fado singer that ever lived, Amália Rodrigues. It was her first international hit and was recorded live in Paris. We maintained the traditional mood of the song with the Portuguese guitarra but enhanced its rhythmic feel with cello and Latin percussion. The melody of this song is internationally like the English version of "April In Portugal" that was played in Hollywood so that the melody might be more familiar to the public.

2. Fado Marujo: This is another famous Fado, sung by Amália Rodrigues, about a Portuguese sailor walking in the streets and districts of Lisbon. Since it describes him as having a strut to his walk, we created an up-tempo Fado by using a variety of percussion instruments along with the classical guitar. Originally this was recorded as a ballad but we thought the Brazilian feel would compliment the story line.

3. Foi Deus (It Was God): I have such a great love and respect for Amália that I have included quite a number of her songs on this CD. We performed this song as a slow Fado using a very familiar and simple feel with just classical guitar and voice. This song is very spiritual and talks about how it was God that put the stars in the sky, that made space without end, gave the gold to the sun and the black to the swallow. And I believe it was God that gave this voice to me, so in this song I sing this message deep from my soul.

4. Lágrimas De Rainha (Tears Of A Queen): This is our title cut and the concept for the CD as mentioned previously. In keeping with the story of the two tragic lovers we decided to add textures to this that included church bells, bird whistles, and the guitarra. I love this song because the "Old World" feel is there and yet we provided a contemporary edge using the drum kit groove, a kind of world music fusion at its best. I enjoyed writing the melody to the lyrics provided by the famous poet, Portuguese-Canadian Euclides Cavaco.

5. Lágrimas Caladas (Silent Tears): This is an original composition based again on the beautiful work of the poet and author, Euclides Cavaco. When I approached him to write some lyrics about tears for the new record I never imagined his words would be this perfect for the song. For this composition I wanted a simple piano and cello sound. I was honored to have film composer Robert Randles ("The English

Patient”, “Amadeus“ and “The Talented Mr. Ripley”) add a beautiful string arrangement as a wonderful finishing touch.

6. Povo Que Lavas No Rio (People That Wash In The River): This song, sung originally by Amália Rodrigues as a slow, lamenting fado, turned into a more spicy and haunting version. By bringing in some Spanish guitar sounds we captured the images of passionate gypsies singing in a local village tavern. The percussionist is playing conga and djembe drums (which are of African origin and have become a staple instrument not only accompanying African dance and music, but, now various forms of world music). We love how this song turned out!

7. Amália: This song was composed in dedication for the most worshipped and legendary Portuguese Fado singer in the world. The words depict the loneliness that fame brought her which eventually resulted in a disconcerted love life. I wanted to convey her sensitivity and the pain that the demands of being in the spotlight can create for an artist of her depth. It was important for me to share my feelings about her in this way because of how much she has meant to my life and music. This is one of my favorite songs on the record.

8. Maria Lisboa: This is a very popular and traditional Fado song and made famous by many *fadistas*. It is about Lisbon and the sentiments of the capital of Portugal along with the fact that almost every Portuguese senora or senorita is called “Maria”.

9. My Country Portugal: Another original song, done as a fun, upbeat samba, about my feelings of being Portuguese-American and representing this amazing Portuguese culture here in the United States of America. We wanted to keep this lively in order to get people on their feet!

10. O Peso Do Mundo (The Weight Of the World): This original song is the first love song I ever composed in Portuguese. It is about the gratitude of having another person to help shoulder the weight of the world as you go through life. I dedicate this song to my husband, Kirk, who shares that weight with me with love and joy.

11. This Is My Fado: In this original song I have tried to capture the essence of what I love to do; create original Fado songs that speak of passion, love, pain, poetry and my entire life. The main message I want to convey is that I have something to contribute within this musical tradition, formulated from the roots of my ancestors, and I intend to let my voice be heard. This song with its sensuous and light groove features Portuguese guitarist, Helder Carvalheira and our percussionist on the flamenco Cajon drum. Known as the soul of Portuguese music, the *guitarra Portuguesa* is a 12-string guitar derived from a lute common to the Congo region of Africa. Helder is an expert on this ancient instrument and constantly in demand in the Northern California area because of his over twenty-five years experience both in North American and Portugal. The Cajon is essentially a plywood box (one side which is looser than the others) that you sit on and play as a hand drum and usually has an air hole that allows it to be amplified like a bass drum. It contains guitar strings, which give it a snare-like sound, and it contains a variety of tones depending on how and where you hit it. The Cajon, once the darling of Peru, Spain, and Cuba, is now a gift to the global village of music.

12. United In Love: I composed this song for the *2006 Winter Olympics* when I was asked to be a very special part of a video montage that was conducted by Christopher Hedges. So I wrote this song inspired by that performance. Since I feel I am on a mission in this lifetime, as an advocate of peace, to bring art, healing and beauty to the planet, I wrote a song that contained that message. This features Didier Bouvet on guitar and myself on piano.