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BBC Music Reviews Terra

## Mariza Terra Review

Album. Released 1 September 2008.

### BBC Review

**There's not quite enough that really hangs in the memory or has that special spark...**

**Jon Lusk 2008-08-29**

It's been three years since the world's most famous contemporary fadista released any new material. A gruelling tour schedule, the stylish stop-gap that was Concerto Em Lisboa, and the recent box set have all signalled that Portugal's 'material girl' was drawing a line under the first phase of her career, so expectations on her fourth studio album are predictably high among fans.

The 'new album, new producer' philosophy she's followed so far continues here, with Spain's most in-demand knob twiddler, Javier Limón, taking that role this time around. His trademark liquid guitar grooves are a recurring presence, and he even brings along his protégé Buika, who duets with Mariza on his own Pequenas Verdades. As soon as the mercurial Mallorcan opens her mouth, it's as if you're listening to a Buika album, which may or may not be considered something of a faux pas.

The velvety strings that characterised Mariza's third studio album Transparente have been replaced by frequently-used hand drums, three pianists and a woozy muted trumpet, which helps lend Beijo De Saudade a rather Cuban feel, even if it is a Cape Verdean morna, featuring the other very welcome guest vocalist, Tito Paris.

The rest of the material is mostly divided between updates of classic fados and more recent compositions, in both cases by regular favourites. There's also the lively folkloric Fronteira, the jazz-tinged As Guitarras by Brazil's Ivan Lins and a couple of euro-ballads (Tasca da Mouraria and Morada Alberta) by or involving Portuguese rock icon, Rui Veloso. He may have penned the wonderful

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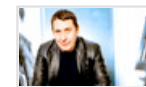


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Transparente, but neither of these offerings is in the same league, and more likely here for the domestic rather than international market.

Terra is a balancing act between holding on to roots and reaching out to wider musical influences that's varied and accomplished but somehow less than the sum of its sumptuous parts. Mariza's crystal foghorn of a voice is as wonderful as ever, but after half a dozen plays, there's not quite enough that really hangs in the memory or has that special spark of genius she's capable of delivering.



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- 1 Já me deixou
- 2 Minh'Alma
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- 6 Vozes do mar
- 7 Fronteira
- 8 Alfama
- 9 Tasco da Mouraria
- 10 Alma de vento
- 11 Se eu mandasse nas palavras
- 12 As guitarras
- 13 Pequenas verdades
- 14 Morada aberta

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