



Rodrigo Leão

Rodrigo Leão has a singular and extremely rich career connected to some of the most important moments of the Portuguese music scene post 1980. Rodrigo sees it almost as a book or a film with different chapters, but always connected. He explains that his ways never really changed and that some things remain the same: “even at the beginning of **Sétima Legião** I was doing things that I still repeat today”, he explains to reinforce the idea of the continuity that his music bears.

The group **Sétima Legião** was a breeze of fresh air on the Portuguese music scene when it appeared in 1982 with Rodrigo and his friends Pedro Oliveira and Nuno Cruz. Through the label that released **Sétima Legião**, Rodrigo met Pedro Ayres Magalhães, himself a successful pop musician with Heróis do Mar, and both decided to start a new adventure that would have a deep international repercussion: **Madredeus**. From being a bass player with **Sétima Legião** Rodrigo went on to play keyboards with **Madredeus** and with that option he established a new connection with his future career. Rodrigo would record 5 albums with **Madredeus**, being a key element in the building of an international career for that group. But in 1993, while he was still in **Madredeus**, Rodrigo started his own solo career revealing an unusual artistic unconformity with “**Ave Mundi Luminar**”, a first clue to his very personal view of the world that gathered participations from **Madredeus`** Teresa Salgueiro, Francisco Ribeiro and Gabriel Gomes.

With the solo debut, Rodrigo started to explore new sounds getting closer to some contemporary classical music, to minimalism and started a journey that has led him to many different sensibilities: “In my music you will find Michael Nyman, tango or French music”, he says. His discography comprises “**Ave Mundi Luminar**” (1993), “**Mysterium**” (1995), “**Theatrum**” (1996), “**Alma Mater**” (2000), the live “**Pasión**” (2002) and “**Cinema**” (2004). “**O Mundo (1993-2006): O Melhor de Rodrigo Leão**” was released internationally at the end of 2006 to a unanimous applause. Pedro Almodóvar joined the praise and described Rodrigo as “one of the most inspired composers in the world”. Collaborations with people like Beth Gibbons or Ryuichi Sakamoto, both featured on the album “**Cinema**”, are also proof of the range of Rodrigo’s music and it’s universal appeal that made him a composer in demand for TV scores in Portugal.

Now there’s a new chapter in the never ending story of Rodrigo Leão’s career. It’s called “**A Mãe**” and it’s an ambitious work with the contribution of such artists as Divine Comedy’s Neil Hannon, Thindersticks` Stuart A. Staples or Melingo, the great ambassador of Argentina’s new tango. “The new songs”, Rodrigo explains, “were written on the move, with different windows opened to the world and that allowed me to explore different emotions, different look.” “Although there are some more joyful songs, this is a record that I made turned to myself, to the inside.” The new record features songs that were written in such places as United States, Italy or India: “I recorded street sounds, children playing, birds singing. And sometimes even with my mobile phone”, he says. The **Cinema Ensemble** still counts with Celina da Piedade, Ana Vieira, Viviana Tupikova, Marco Pereira, Bruno Silva, Luís Aires e Luís San Payo an unbeatable team both on the studio and on the stage. In 2009, Rodrigo is still writing his own history with the music he plays that sounds almost magical. **He is truly a unique composer!**

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