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Musae releases their début album “Musae: From Argentina to Appalachia”

Released October 14, 2005- “Musae: From Argentina to Appalachia” features vocal arrangements of music from North America, Venezuela, Mexico, Argentina, and Brazil. Blending choral and folk traditions, the music evokes the poets and people of this vast land, who sing of struggles and redemption, love lost and found, all reflecting Musae’s heartfelt singing and commitment to community. Price: \$15, available at www.musae.org

Artistic Director Natasha Hoehn reflects on Musae’s recording process:

“During our sessions at Fantasy, our world seemed to consist only of the recording process: keeping the right foot positions behind the microphones; vain attempts at following automated click tracks; trying to stay relaxed and heartfelt while worrying about all the little details all at once; and, of course, gorging ourselves on enough snacks to feed an army.

So, at the end of the last day, we all should have been rushing out the doors to pick up the neglected pieces from our “real lives.” But even though we were done, we all stayed put behind those microphones that night. Not one of us left the room. Instead, we started chatting like we hadn’t seen each other in years. Abby opened a box of wine. (Yes, a box.) RayRay kicked off her shoes. Rachel turned down the lights...and we kept singing.

We sang for a long time that evening, long after Jeffrey had left the console to come join us in the recording booth. ‘Dona Nobis Pacem’. ‘All Praise to Thee’. ‘Take My Heart.’ ‘Viva La Musica.’ We sang, and sang, and no-one wanted to stop. We sang together, freely, no longer caring about the wrong note here, the shaky entrance there. And when we ran out of songs we knew, we improvised. It was one of those moments that feels like magic, when time slows down just a little and you wish it might freeze-frame even longer.

In many ways, that 'post-recording' session encapsulates the energy and meaning behind this whole album. All of us in Musae share that unrelenting urge to keep singing, to continue uniting our voices to create something greater than the sum of its parts. We want to keep creating those magical moments for ourselves and for our audiences. And while our lives unfold around us, it is music-making that holds us together, soothes our rough spots, and allows us to keep discovering, learning, and growing.

All of us share years of formal and informal music-making that span nearly our whole lifetimes (or at least since we were in grade school!). We feel lucky to be able to continue that journey together, and are so grateful for the support that we have been so privileged to enjoy from our families and friends in order to make this project possible."

Tracks

Selections from "Como Tu" Venezuela, Alberto Grau

"Mahk Jhi" (Heartbeat Drum Song) Ulali

"Bright Morning Stars" Traditional American, arr. Paul Siskind

"Queen Jane" Traditional Appalachian, arr. Stephen Hatfield

"Las Amarillas" Traditional Mexican, arr. Stephen Hatfield

"Te Quiero" Argentina, arr. Liliana Cangiano

"There is a Balm in Gilead" Traditional American Spiritual, arr. William Dawson

"Salmo 150" Brazil, Ernani Aguiar

"Duerme Negrito" Venezuela, Atahualpa Yupanqui, arr. Emilio Solé

"Homeward Bound American," Marta Keen, arr. Jay Althouse

"Hark, I Hear the Harps Eternal" Traditional Appalachian, arr. Alice Parker

ABOUT MUSAE:

Founded in 2003, MUSAE is professional female vocal ensemble based in San Francisco, whose mission is to enhance the community through the performance of accessible and diverse music. Through excellence and innovation, MUSAE stretches the traditions of repertoire for women's voices and sparks the imaginations of participants and audience members alike. This Spring, MUSAE records its debut album at Fantasy Studios in Berkeley, for release in the Fall of 2005.

For more information please contact press@musae.org or visit www.musae.org.

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