



MASSACHUSETTS CULTURAL COUNCIL
FOLK & TRADITIONAL ARTS PROGRAM

FIELDNOTES

Accession Numbers:

LO-02-07-FN

Fieldnotes

LO-02-07-C

Audio recordings

LO-02-07-N, CS

Photographic documentation

Additional materials

Date(s): May 29, 2002

Related Accession Numbers: LO-02-04, LO-02-06

Individual/Group/Event: Fado Music performed by singers Ana and Jose Vinagre and musicians Viriatu Ferreira and Jose Silva

Fieldworker(s): Laura Orleans

Location of Interview: Backyard of John Pinhero's home on the occasion of a surprise birthday party

Street Address: [REDACTED]

City: [REDACTED]

Zip: [REDACTED]

Co: [REDACTED]

Contact person (if different from above): _____

Title: _____

Sponsoring organization (for event or group): n/a

Address (if different from above): [REDACTED]

Phone: Daytime: [REDACTED]

Evening: [REDACTED]

E-mail: _____

Website: _____

Special Needs (including translation):

Traditions documented on visit (traditional art/skills, occupational experience, ethnic or religious community): Portuguese Fado

Traditions noted for follow-up:

Other Possible Contacts: Jose Vingare should be fully documented. Musicians are RI residents, but could be tapped for a potential cross-state apprenticeship.

Summary Description: I interviewed Ana Vinagre quite extensively prior to making this recording. She was not comfortable singing during these interviews both because she did not have her accompanists

and because her voice is not at its best in the morning. She does have a CD made in 1994, but it has very few traditional selections and is nearly 10 years old so I felt that a field recording was warranted. Ana initially suggested setting up a "rehearsal," at which her players would be present, but then invited me to attend a surprise birthday party for a close friend of hers at which she would be performing. The party was held outdoors in the backyard of a fairly lavish home in South Dartmouth, MA. Ana was preceded by her husband Jose Vinagre, a fine Fadista in his own right and a good self presenter who as he puts it "prides himself on educating audiences about the tradition of Fado music." I made the recording using a condenser mic with the exception of the final song which Ana sang into my omnidirectional mic. In addition to documenting the fine musicianship of the performers, the recording serves as documentation of contemporary Portuguese-American culture. The partygoers were composed of first, second and third generation Portuguese from one of the areas most prominent families and they ranged in age from children to elderly folks. Most of those over age 30 appeared to understand Portuguese and to have some familiarity with the music as evidenced by the fact that they were singing along to some of the songs. However, Jose did take some time to explain elements of the Fado tradition to the audience, which suggested that many of them were not familiar with Fado. The party began at 7:30 p.m.. Guests were seated around tables with linen tablecloths sipping wine. Attire was fairly casual. Some folks were dressed in shorts and t-shirts while others were somewhat more dressed up. Once the music began the performance became the focal point for the party and there seemed to be a general understanding that everyone should stop chatting and attend to the performance. There was never a time when the music was treated as "background music." When the musicians took a break (after about 45 minutes), the guests ate dinner which was served buffet style. When the music resumed, Ana suggested to the guests that it was time to return their attention to the performance: "Okay everybody, let's go back to the show."

I took some time during the break to talk with Ana's husband Jose about his musical background. Like Ana he was born in Buracuas, Portugal, but grew up largely in the United States. He was fortunate to have parents who encouraged him to "follow his heart" rather than pushing him into a particular career. He began studying engineering and later became a social worker. He was involved in musical theater and folk dance as a teenager and grew up listening to Fado music on the radio. He suggested that he is somewhat more well educated than many other Portuguese musicians and therefore is able to better interpret the tradition to American audiences. He appears to be a skilled singer and charismatic/outgoing performer, but his vocal work is not as precise or nuanced as Ana's and his repertoire is perhaps not as traditional. Ana uses her shawl and her hands for dramatic effect, but seems to be totally involved in her performance almost consumed or transported by the music whereas Jose seems the consummate performer, always aware of the audience and playing to them.

Ana and Jose will perform at the National Folk Festival in Bangor Maine during the upcoming summer (August 2002).