

CRITICS' CHOICE

FILM
ANDREW O'HAGAN

"An awesome and ridiculous film that leaves you thrilled beyond the point of your natural endurance"



2012 »

FILM
ANDREW O'HAGAN

"This is a film with beautiful performances and a visual style that urges you towards reflection"



Bright Star »

THEATRE
HENRY HITCHINGS

"Although the first half of Kwei-Armah's production is pacy, funny and intelligent, the energy level then drops off"



Seize The Day »

READER REVIEWS

FILM
SQUIZ, ISLINGTON

"I loved this film from start to finish. Take the girlfriend, tell your mum - I'd see it again tomorrow and will buy the dvd."

An Education »

THEATRE
JOE, LONDON

"I saw this last night and can't remember the last time I was so moved in the theatre."

This Much Is True »

RESTAURANTS

MUSIC REVIEWS

LONDON, MONDAY 16.11.09

Roberto Fonseca, Mayra Andrade

Royal Festival Hall
Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London, SW1 8XX

REVIEW

★★★★★ Jack Massarik's rating
NOT RATED Reader rating
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Mayra Andrade is a star that shines brightly

By Jack Massarik, Evening Standard 16.11.09

More reviews by Jack Massarik



Cape Verdean singer Mayra Andrade, who opened Saturday night's show, appeared as a new young star a couple of years back. She is not only an olive-skinned beauty but has a caressing, husky voice and a real songwriting talent.

The stand-out songs of her new "baby", as she described her second album, are Odjus Fitchadu, a sad love song delicately accompanied by Brazilian cavaquinho, and the title track Storia, Storia. In the latter she dramatically thrust out her arm and knocked her mic to the floor in pieces. Gesturing to us to keep it a secret, she picked up the bits and re-assembled it before the end of the instrumental break. She carried on without interruption, after which an infectious smile and laughter won huge applause.

I first saw Cuban pianist Roberto Fonseca in the Festival Hall about eight years ago with musicians of the Buena Vista Social Club. He was clearly a major talent and has since developed a successful solo career. His piano playing is muscular and quicksilver, percussively rhythmic and floatingly melodic. Sung vocals bleed into conga rhythms, sax and bass solos and piano improvisations with his jazzy four-piece band.

But Fonseca insists on wearing a wide-brimmed hat which under stage lights often puts his face in shadow. It cuts off communication with the audience and made much of the set seem indulgent and self-absorbed. Thankfully, Mayra Andrade returned and Gilles Peterson brought on rappers and vocalist Danay from his Havana Cultura project to add some more earthy Cuban vibes for the finale.



Touch of class: Mayra Andrade performing at the London Jazz Festival

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