

CONTACT:  
Christina Kellogg 510.643.6714  
ckellogg@calperfs.berkeley.edu  
Joe Yang 510.642.9121  
scyang@calperfs.berkeley.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 9, 2007

**CAPE VERDE'S NEWEST VOICE, LURA, COMES TO CAL PERFORMANCES  
FRIDAY, APRIL 20 AT 8:00 P.M. IN WHEELER AUDITORIUM**

**BERKELEY, March 9, 2007** – On the heels of the release of her newest album, *Lura – M'bem di Fora (I Come From the Country)*, Portugese chanteuse **Lura** brings her unique blend of Cape Verdean rhythms to Wheeler Auditorium on **Friday, April 20 at 8:00 p.m.** While the Cape Verde Islands' music has been best known through the traditional *morna* style of Cesaria Evora, Lura blends her songs with a street-wise, urban sensuality infused with the passionate roots of Africa. She mixes the familiar *morna* and *fado* styles with the lesser-known rhythms of *funana* and *batuka*, creating a sound that reflects the women of Cape Verde plus jazz and international influences. With her five-piece band, she draws on the islands' pungent blend of trade-route cultures embracing French Afro-pop, Brazilian rhythms, Cuban sambas, and traditional African music. The evening's program will include selections from her new album, as well as from her first international release, *Di Korpu Ku Alma (Of Body and Soul)*, and other favorites. Lura has been called "a young, African-Portuguese, Lisboaan-Parisian Gladys Knight" by the *Village Voice*.

Raised in Lisbon, Portugal, by parents from the Cape Verde Islands, **Lura** was born in 1975, the same year that the volcanic archipelago off the coast of West Africa gained independence from Portugal. This political shift caused the Church and the colonial government to ease prohibitions on certain forms of musical expression. The accordion-driven *funana*, which eventually gave birth to *batuka*, previously had been considered too erotic. The rhythms were originally beaten by women on folded stacks of clothes while a lead singer improvised poetry lampooning community events; a sensual dance called the *torno* accompanied the songs. "The lyrics were about social problems, family problems and messages for children," Lura explains. "I have a special feeling for *batuka*."

Lura was studying to be a sports education teacher and dreamed of being a dancer when at 17 she was invited by Lisbon-based *zouk* singer Juka to sing back-up on his new album. The

-MORE-

arrangement soon became a duet, and Lura joined Juka's act as a dancer and singer. She went on to sang back-up for Cesaria Evora and later performed the opening act for the "Barefoot Diva."

While most Cape Verdean singers perform material from only one of the ten islands, "I'm trying to show the music from every island," Lura explains. "I wasn't from one single island, my parents came from Santiago and São Vicente, and so I take the freedom to explore all the rhythms." In contrast to the European-influenced *mornas* of her predecessor Evora, she plays up the African roots of her music. But there are also hints of rhythm and blues, Latino groove, and pop styles that sweeten Lura's beat. She is a big fan of American R & B artists like Anita Baker, Stevie Wonder, Luther Vandross and Alicia Keyes. The *Boston Globe* observed that Lura "show[s] tremendous vocal strength and range, [working] both the room and her band with sexiness, grace, and authority."

Lura made her international debut DVD, *Di Korpu Ku Alma*, in 2005, and has since received several awards, including *Best Newcomer* at the BBC Radio 3 Awards and *Best World Music Album* at Les Victoires de la Musique in France. Though she has toured extensively in Europe and the United States, this marks her first engagement at Cal Performances.

### TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for **Lura** on **Friday, April 20** at **8:00 p.m.** in Wheeler Auditorium are priced at **\$30.00**. Tickets are available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Wheeler Auditorium; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at [www.calperformances.net](http://www.calperformances.net); and at the door. Half-price tickets are available for purchase by UC Berkeley students. UC faculty and staff, senior citizens and other students receive a \$2 discount, and UC Alumni Association members receive a \$3 discount (Special Events excluded). For more information, call Cal Performances at (510) 642-9988, or visit the Cal Performances web site at [www.calperformances.net](http://www.calperformances.net).

# # #

Cal Performances' 2006/2007 Season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

Classical 102.1 KDFC and SFStation.com are 2006/2007 season media sponsors.

# # #

**CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

**CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS**

**Friday, April 20 at 8:00 p.m.**

**Wheeler Auditorium, UC Berkeley Campus**  
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

*World Stage*

**Lura**

**Program:** Emerging Portuguese chanteuse Lura, accompanied by her five-piece band, will bring her unique blend of Cape Verdean, African, and Brazilian rhythms to Cal Performances for one night only.

**Tickets:** \$30.00, available through the Cal Performances Ticket Office at Wheeler Auditorium; at (510) 642-9988 to charge by phone; at [www.calperformances.net](http://www.calperformances.net); and at the door.

---