

## **Brazilian singer warms up a cold winter day**

Monday, February 7th, 2005  
Smartpark Jazz Innovators Series  
Pantages Playhouse Theatre  
February 5

**4 out of 5 stars**

By Chris Smith

LUCIANA Souza has a beautiful voice, period.

Oh yeah, she also has great intonation and a great delivery. And she can sing vocalese without it sounding affected. And she handles material from influences as diverse as Pablo Neruda poetry set to music, to Antonio Carlos Jobim, to Billie Holiday to Chet Baker.

And the Brazilian singer pleased her audience Saturday with a mix of music, including her own compositions, sung in English and Portuguese.

Souza's concert capped off a four-day visit from her base in New York City to Winnipeg where she held master classes with University of Manitoba faculty of music students.

She opened with *I Shall Wait*, a poetic composition of her own with intriguing music, good vocalese, and some lovely guitar work by Larry Roy, a member of her local "pickup band."

That band -- Roy, bassist Steve Kirby, the director of jazz studies in the music faculty and the man who brought Souza here, drummer Alvin Atkinson and pianist Will Bonness -- plays together regularly and meshed well with the singer's needs.

While Souza had nothing but praise for all the musicians, she singled out Bonness and told her audience to listen to the 19-year-old pianist while they could, before he moves on to bigger things.

What Brazilian singer worth her sandy beach doesn't do Jobim, and Souza chose an arrangement of *No More Blues* she said she has been singing since she was a child. Her rendition was fabulous and the trio (Roy sat out) damn near sounded Brazilian behind her.

She reached back to her youth again later in the show when she performed *I'm In Love*, a tune she wrote when she was 14. The lyrics were in Portuguese, so I can't judge their depth, but the piece overall was musically remarkable, and her voice could be enjoyed as another instrument.

Souza included a number from her latest CD, *Neruda*, which features English translations of the Chilean poet's work. She performed a love sonnet and accompanied herself on thumb piano.

Singer Anna-Lisa Kirby, who performed a couple of numbers with the band in the first set, before Souza's performance, joined her onstage for the encore, *Stolen Moments*.

The two singers meshed well, sharing the singing and scatting duties on the well-known jazz tune. Souza enticed Atkinson and Roy to scat by holding her mike for them so they could scat as they played their instruments.