

CULTURAL ROUTES OF THE

AZORES

*Personalities*



FRANCISCO  
DE LACERDA

*Fre. Ovídio*



FRANCISCO Inácio da Silveira de Sousa Pereira Forjaz DE LACERDA (1869-1934) was a renowned figure of Portuguese cultural life in his time, and one of the most famous Azoreans abroad: composer and orchestra conductor, he worked mostly in France and Switzerland, but also in Portugal and, for some periods of time, in the Azores.

Born in the parish of Ribeira Seca, Calheta Township, São Jorge Island, he was the fourth and youngest son of João Caetano Pereira de Sousa e Lacerda (1829-1913) and Maria Uília da Silveira (1829-1917), somewhat socially renowned families from the islands of Pico and Faial. His father, an educated man and amateur musician, initiated him, as a child, in studying the piano, which young Francisco would carry on learning with teacher Pedro de Alcântara, from 1886, in Angra do Heroísmo, where he went to high school. His first known compositions date from this period: a mazurka, “*Uma Garrafa de Cerveja*” (*A Bottle of Beer*), and a band instrumental piece, “*Tristezas da Minha Alma*” (*Sorrows of My Soul*).

Once he graduated from high school in Angra, on October 1888 Francisco de Lacerda left to Oporto, to study medicine, but he soon opted for music. He enrolled in the Lisbon Royal Conservatory, where he studied the solfeggio, the piano, harmony and vocal ensemble, as well as Italian. A brilliant student, he graduated in 1891 and was awarded first prize, as well as a pecuniary award. That same year he was invited to take the place of provisional piano teacher in the Conservatory and made tenure the following year. In the meantime, he married Isaura Roquete de Campos Soares.

In 1895, he applied for a scholarship for young people looking to perfect their artistic studies abroad. Although the board of the Conservatory proposed to the government that Lacerda, for his prestige, should be relieved of this contest and given a monthly stipend, he refused and subjected himself to trials. He was granted the scholarship and he went to Paris, where he studied with, among others, Émile Pessard (harmony), Louis-Albert Bourgault-Ducoudray (music history), and Charles-Marie Widor (counterpoint and organ). He was considered a pupil of great merit. Later, in 1897, he enrolled in the *Schola Cantorum*, where he studied with Félix Alexandre Guilmant (organ) and Vincent d'Indy (composition).

When in Paris, he became acquainted with Eça de Queiroz, with whom he became friends, and met with Viana da Mota in the commemorations of Almeida Garrett's centenary. In 1900, he visited his home island, where he collected traditional music. Back to Paris, he made his first public appearance as orchestra conductor, with great success. Appointed jury member of the Universal Exposition of 1900, he collaborated with Ressano Garcia and António Arroio in organizing Portugal's participation. Two years later, he was appointed Professor in *Schola Cantorum*. In that time, he composed several works.

In 1904, he was appointed concert director at the Casino de La Baule (Loire Atlantique), and in 1905, he conducted the opening concert for the *Association des Concerts Historiques de Nantes*, which he had founded and would run until 1908. His “*Danse du voile*” was published in the Paris *Revue Musicale*. The prestige he gained in the meantime was recognized by the French government, who distinguished him with the degree of *Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur* (1906).

In 1908, Lacerda signed an annual contract as artistic head of the Kursaal orchestra in Montreux, renewed until 1912, where he presented works of then little known composers such as

Borodine, Mussorgsky, Fauré, Chausson and Debussy. In Portugal, king D. Manuel II granted him the degree of Officer in the *Order of Santiago* (1910).

After his father's passing in 1913, and done with the 1912-1913 Season of the Great Marseille Classical Concerts, which he conducted, Lacerda returned to São Jorge for health reasons, where he stayed until 1921 in his residence in Urzelina, and spent long periods in his family home, in Fajã da Fragueira. During those years, he collected and studied traditional music and devoted himself to composing: he composed "Os Reis" (The Kings), for voice, metals and drums, and "Minha mãe casai-me cedo" (Mother, marry me off soon), for solo female voices and mixed choir, and also religious chants of a popular nature. He moved to Lisbon, where he organized the first sessions of "Uma hora de arte" (An Hour of Art) and created "Pró-Arte" (Pro-Art) with the help of Raul Lino, Afonso Lopes Vieira, Eugénio de Castro, among others, and founded and directed the *Lisbon Philharmonia*. In 1924, Lacerda retook to his career as an orchestra conductor in France and Switzerland, and conducted again (and until 1928), the Marseille Great Classical Concerts, with integral auditions of works such as "St. John Passion" and "St. Matthew Passion", the "Mass in B minor" and Bach's "Magnificat", Beethoven's "Solemn Mass", Brahms's "German Requiem", Wagner's "Parsifal", Manuel de Falla's "La Vida Breve" (*Life Is Short or The Brief Life*), and Debussy's "La Demoiselle Éluë". He settled permanently in Lisbon, where he guided Portuguese musical representation at the Seville Ibero-American Exposition, and kept working, collecting traditional Algarve music.

He passed away on June 17th, 1934, victim of tuberculosis. The following year, there were several homages to his memory in France, of which we must highlight the execution of his "Trovas" by the Nantes orchestra, conducted by Pedro de Freitas Branco, and by the *Marseille Artistic Association*.

The preparation of the texts that make up this guide is owed to:

João Caetano de Sousa e Lacerda. *Cartas a Francisco de Lacerda*. Introduction and notes: Teresa and J. M. Bettencourt da Câmara. Angra do Heroísmo: Secretaria Regional da Educação e Cultura, 1988.

José Bettencourt da Câmara. *Francisco de Lacerda, Musicien Portugais en France (1869-1934)*. Paris: Centre Culturel Gulbenkian, 1996.

To define our journey and to identify the places and properties, we counted with the collaboration of António Lopes Gomes.







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## A TOUR of FRANCISCO DE LACERDA

THROUGH the ISLAND of S. JORGE, following the words of his father

While Francisco de Lacerda lived and worked in Lisbon, in France and Switzerland, his father, **João Caetano de Sousa e Lacerda** (1829-1913), would write him long letters to the sound of steamers that sought the island of São Jorge, where he lived. In those letters, João Caetano would write about family and acquaintances, and the most varied aspects of the local personal life – the crops, the weather, the deaths, health, reading –, would argue political ideas and, often, would counsel his son and proudly comment on his professional activity. It is based on those letters – always beginning with “My dear Francisco” – that we propose this tour around S. Jorge.







## START OF THE TOUR, BY CAR

From Porto da Calheta, we head to **Estrada Regional 1-2 A**, going up and, then, at the first intersection, we turn right into Rua de Baixo, proceeding along the extension of the **Estrada Regional 1-2 A** towards the parish of Ribeira Seca (3,7 Km).

Entering **Ribeira Seca**, we head to



**5** The House where Francisco de Lacerda was born

"You cannot imagine how pleased and surprised I was at the thanks you got for your cooperation, from our old friend A. Dumas' granddaughter! Who would have thought that, born and raised in the obscurity of an Azores village, you would one day receive in Paris the compliments from a petite fille of the immortal novelist, so well-known and beloved in these parts! Life undoubtedly has more astonishing surprises than anything imagined by novelists."

Next, we head back the same way towards the



**6** Parish church, where the Maestro was baptized

On the North side of the Church, we find the



**7** House of Gaspar Silva, a friend of João Caetano

"Gaspar Silva always asks for the diabetes medication. I told him you're not in Paris now, but that I would mention it, in case you knew someone in the capital who could ship the medication to Lisbon".

Next, we retake to the municipal road towards **Fajã dos Vimes** (7,3 Km) where, in **S. Sebastião Chapel**, we can see the



**8** Harmonium shipped from Paris by Francisco de Lacerda, at his father's request, and paid for by the Chapel commission

"I'll be expecting the harmonium. [...] If the harmonium hasn't been bought yet, buy one of around a hundred and ten thousand insular reis, since the Exchange rate was less than expected. Bear in mind the commission for your work and time, that's why time is money."

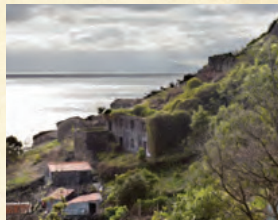
From **Fajã dos Vimes**, we take the trail that leads to **Fajã da Fragueira**, passing through



**9** Ribeira do Calhau

"The poor courier – Francisco Vasconcelos' youngest son – got here completely drenched. He tried to cross the Ribeira do Calhau brook, against my warning, but he returned without having dared to cross it. He did the right thing: when he insisted on walking to the Fajã, I was concerned."

Until we reach the



**10** Fragueira

## Fragueira, or Paris Francisco de Lacerda

"We would come to spend two summer months – August and September – at our little Fragueira house, where I ended up living".

The most important building in the little Fajã, now in ruins, is the



**11** Fragueira House, where João Caetano lived and where Francisco de Lacerda spent a lot of time, both in childhood and adulthood

"We would come to spend two summer months – August and September – at our little Fragueira house, where I ended up living. Often you would vanish from home to go dig in a small piece of barren land at the end of the road overlooking the seashore. There I found you many times, with your shirt un-tucked, digging or restfully sitting and eating the chunk of bread your mom would give you to snack. [...] To this day, when I go by there, I see you portrayed as you were then, in the mirror of imagination, digging or resting, your long blond hair shaken by the afternoon breeze..."

From this house terrace, with a magnificent view over the sea, João Caetano would watch the ships that docked on the island:



**12**

"When docking into Fajã dos Vimes, the ship cut a right angle, towards our house and that is when I understood our friend the commander's maneuver. [...] Reaching along the shore in front of our house, the ship whistled and someone waved from the bridge. We replied right away, waving and signaling the three appropriate salutes."

After visiting the house annexes, equally in ruins – the **[13]** cellar, the **[14]** small oven built by João Caetano for his baby grand-daughter, daughter of Francisco de Lacerda, or the **[15]** casa do bote



**13**

**14**

**15**

Climbing the trail, that starts with steps,



**16**

Leading to the



**17** Portal Chapel, now on Estrada Regional 1-2 A

"Today is the festivity of Our Lady of The Good Voyage, in the Portal chapel. I didn't go because I've grown to fear Fragueira. Less than two or three years ago, I had less trouble climbing it than today to come home from the harbor. So swift, our physical decay."

## TOUR BY CAR

After enjoying the view of the sea and Pico Island ahead, we retake to the municipal road towards **Ribeira Seca** and, from there, passing through **Caminho Novo**, we converge with **Estrada Regional 2-2 A** and follow it towards Topo village. Now in **Serra do Topo**, close to the windfarm, we find, on our left, the trail that leads to **Fajã dos Cubres**, passing through **Caldeira de Santo Cristo**, on the North coast of the island.

## PERCURSO PEDESTRE

10 km, on a straight path, properly marked, with a medium difficulty rating. After we pass a bridge and Caldeira de Cima, we'll get, at a bend along the way, a beautiful **[18]** view of **Caldeira de Santo Cristo**, with Graciosa and Terceira Islands from afar, where visitors would say their goodbyes to the Caldeira when returning through the Mountain Range path:



**18**

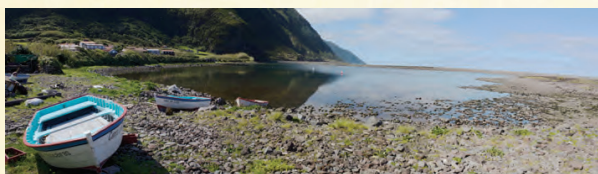
"It was with a sad apprehension and unpeakable nostalgia that, from high on the Island, we would bid the Caldeira farewell until the following year. This farewell repeated itself for years and years, until the day came for the final goodbye. You boys emigrated from the paternal nest, carried away by the drift of life which only ends with death. As you boys were absent, our pilgrimage had no more reason to be; it ended, as everything does in this world..."





## SÃO JORGE

Arriving at



### 19 Caldeira de Santo Cristo

We find the [20] house where the Lacerda family would spend his vacations. Then, through the [21] Church of Santo Cristo,



### 20



### 21

"We had but arrived at the Caldeira and the local neighbors came to visit us, some with calabashes of milk, others with potatoes, other with potatoes and fish – the magnificent snappers, scaled, unlike anywhere else."

We return to the trail, passing through Fajã dos Tijolos and Fajã do Belo, until the Fajã dos Cubres, where we take on a new

## TOUR BY CAR

We head to the Norte Pequeno parish (4 Km), then we take the Estrada Regional 1-2 A towards the Island South coast, until the parish of Manadas (14.7 Km), where we can visit the



### 22 Church of Santa Bárbara, national monument

We return to Estrada Regional 1-2 A, and carry on to the parish of Urzelina (4.4 Km), and appreciate the



### 23 Family home, where Lacerda lived and worked between 1913 and 1921

"I'm writing to you from Urzelina. I have been here for eight days and I seek to return to Fragueira tomorrow."

We pass through Porto da Urzelina, an important Orange export harbor of the time, where we can still see, by the beaching place, a



### 24 Shallow, dangerous for boating maneuvers

"The boat ran aground in a shallow (we could hear the crash from land) which is between the pier and the beaching place, falling to the side on the incline, and going upright with the rise. This oscillation was enough for two crew members to go overboard and drown."

We return to Estrada Regional 1-2 A, and carry on (9 Km) until



### 25 Velas Village

"I had long wanted to go to Velas to visit some old friends. We went there the day before yesterday, José and I."

Where we finish this Francisco de Lacerda tour through the Island of S. Jorge, which we created, following the words his father wrote to him in his letters - which, through the color and richness of the details and, mostly for their nostalgia, would enliven the memory of his home Island in his absent son.

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE of FRANCISCO LACERDA

<b>1869</b>	<b>May 11th:</b> FRANCISCO DE LACERDA was born in the parish of Ribeira Seca, township of Calheta, São Jorge Island.
<b>1883</b>	He began studying the piano with his father.
<b>1886</b>	He frequented high school in Angra do Heroísmo, carrying out his musical apprenticeship with Pedro de Alcântara. He composed the mazurka “Uma garrafa de cerveja” ( <i>A Bottle of Beer</i> ) and the band instrumental fanfare, “Tristezas da Minha Alma” ( <i>Sorrows of My Soul</i> ).
<b>1888</b>	<b>October:</b> he moved to Oporto, to attend Medical school, but gave it up to devote himself to Music.
<b>1889</b>	<b>February 11th:</b> arrived at Lisbon, where he began his studies at the Conservatório Real ( <i>Royal Conservatory</i> ).
<b>1891</b>	<b>August 20th:</b> he concluded his course at the Lisbon Royal Conservatory, achieving first prize as well as a pecuniary prize. <b>November 30th:</b> he was invited to be a provisional piano teacher at the Conservatory.
<b>1892</b>	<b>July 30th:</b> he married Isaura Roquete de Campos Soares. <b>November 21st:</b> he was hired as a piano teacher at the Lisbon Royal Conservatory.
<b>1895</b>	<b>August 31st:</b> he applied to a government scholarship for young people looking to perfect their artistic studies abroad. <b>September 3rd:</b> he was granted the scholarship and promptly moved to Paris where he studied with, amongst others, Émile Pessard, Louis-Albert Bourgault-Ducoudray, and Charles-Marie Widor. He was considered a high merit student.
<b>1897</b>	He enrolled in <i>Schola Cantorum</i> , where he studied with Félix Alexandre Guilmant (organ) and Vincent d'Indy (composition). He finished composing “Na fonte - Idílio Rústico”.
<b>1898</b>	He met Eça de Queiroz, with whom he became friends. He composed “L'Indifférent,” for voice and piano.
<b>1899</b>	He met with Viana da Mota, in the celebration of Almeida Garrett's centennial, in Paris. He composed “Des papillons de jour,” for voice and piano.
<b>1900</b>	He stayed in São Jorge, where he collected traditional music. Back to Paris, he made his public debut as an orchestra conductor, with great success. He was appointed a jury member for the 1900 Universal Exposition, collaborated with Ressano Garcia and António Arroio in organizing Portugal's representation. He composed “Zara.”
<b>1902</b>	He was a teacher in <i>Schola Cantorum</i> . He composed “Adamastor” for orchestra; he finished “Les morts” for baritone and orchestra, and began composing “Trente-six histoires pour amuser les enfants d'un artiste”.
<b>1903</b>	He conducted a concert in the Pleyel Hall, in Paris.
<b>1904</b>	He was appointed concert conductor at the Casino de La Baule ( <i>Loire Atlantique</i> ). <b>April 1st:</b> He published “Danse du voile” ( <i>Revue Musicale</i> , Paris).
<b>1905</b>	<b>December 29th:</b> opening concert of the Association des <i>Concerts Historiques de Nantes</i> , founded by Lacerda, who would run it until 1908.
<b>1906</b>	<b>February 27th:</b> Honored with the degree of <i>Chevalier in the Légion d'Honneur</i> .
<b>1907</b>	<b>August 26th - September 12th:</b> he stayed in Munich, where he attended Wagner's works.
<b>1908</b>	<b>September 1st:</b> he signed an annual contract as artistic head of the Kursaal orchestra, in Montreux, prolonged until 1912, where he presented works of composers not yet wellknown, such as Borodine, Mussorgsky, Fauré, Chausson, and Debussy.
<b>1910</b>	He was distinguished with the degree of <i>Officer of the Order of Santiago</i> , by King Manuel II.
<b>1911</b>	He wrote the scene music for the piece “L'Intruse,” by Maeterlinck.



- 1912** He was in the Azores where he saw his father for the last time. **October 20th**: start of the 1912-1913 season of the *Marseille Great Classical Concerts*, conducted by Lacerda.
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- 1913** **April**: his father passed away, in Fragueira. For health reasons, Francisco de Lacerda returned to the Azores, where he stayed until 1921, at a house in Urzelina, and spent long periods at his family's home, Fragueira.
- 
- 1916** He composed "Os Reis" (*The Kings*), for voices, metals and drums, and "Minha mãe casai-me cedo", for soloist female voices and mixed choir.
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- 1917** He composed religious chants of a popular nature.
- 
- 1921** He sold part of his estate in São Jorge, and left for Lisbon. He only kept Fragueira.
- 
- 1922** He organized the first sessions of "Uma hora de arte" (*An Hour of Art*). **July**: he published de "Trente-six histoires pour amuser les enfants d'un artiste" (*Contemporânea Magazine*, Lisbon). He composed "Para o túmulo de Afonso de Bragança".
- 
- 1923** He created "Pró-Arte" with the help of Raul Lino, Afonso Lopes Vieira, Eugénio de Castro, among others; he founded and conducted the Lisbon Philharmonie.
- 
- 1924** He retook to his career as orchestra conductor in France and Switzerland. **February 17th**: he conducted a concert with his orchestra in Marseille. **April 7th**: he conducted Bach's Passion St. Matthew, in the Théâtre Graslin, in Nantes, and later, in La Rochelle. **May 15th**: he conducted Bach's *St. John Passion*, in Paris. He composed "Serenata a una muerta", for guitar, dedicated to Andres Segovia. He corresponds with Manuel de Falla.
- 
- 1925** He conducted again (and until 1928) the *Marseille Great Classical Concerts*, with auditions of complete works of Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Manuel de Falla, and Debussy.
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- 1928** **January 8th**: he conducted his final concert abroad, in Marseille. He moved permanently to Lisbon, for health reasons. He premiered the orchestral version of "Trovas" (1st series), at the Tivoli Theater. He began preparing the *Portuguese Musical Songbook*.
- 
- 1929** He managed the Portuguese musical representation in the Ibero-American Exposition in Seville. **January**: he published the poetry "Serenata" in Os Açores magazine, of Ponta Delgada. **August 15th**: he wrote the poetry "Pastoral".
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- 1933** **February 4th**: partial interpretation of "Trovas", by the singer Madeleine Grey, in one of the Padeloup concerts, in Paris.
- 
- 1934** He proposed the creation of a Folklore Section in the National Education Council; he collected traditional music in Algarve. **June 17th**: he passed away in Lisbon, victim of tuberculosis.
- 
- 1935** **April 1st**: a rendition of Trovas, in Nantes, by the local orchestra, conducted by Pedro de Freitas Branco. **November 17th**: a rendition of the same work, by the *Marseille Artistic Association*. *Portuguese Musical Songbook* was published.



My dear Francisco

"Often you would vanish from home to go dig in a small piece of barren land at the end of the road overlooking the seashore. There I found you many times, with your shirt un-tucked, digging or restfully sitting and eating the chunk of bread your mom would give you to snack. You finally - after great struggles! - managed to plant a potato garden. The crop was about a quarter, which you sold us for 60 réis. That was the first money you could really call your own, for it was earned through a lot of sweat. Right after - driven by ambition - you began to plough another small piece of land, further down, which you named Queimada de Baixo, to distinguish from the first, which you had named Queimada, naturally because of the heat you endured there. Both have since been licked by the sea, but the memory remains!

To this day, when I go by there, I see you portrayed as you were then, in the mirror of imagination, digging or resting, your long blond hair shaken by the afternoon breeze..."

Your father  
J. C.



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DE LACERDA



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