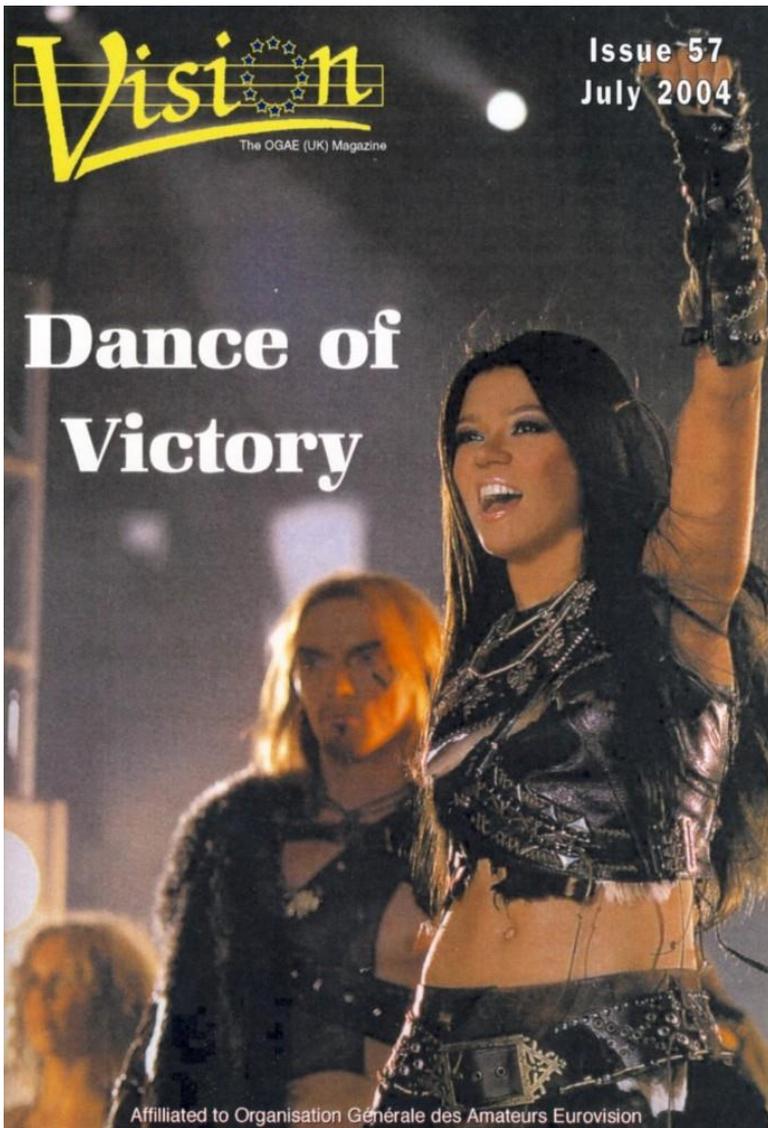


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Dance of Victory



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Edlines

Istanbul in mid May was certainly the place to be this year and, despite any early fears, having two Eurovision shows within a few days actually worked.

Admittedly some were disappointed at not qualifying, but for the first time in recent Eurovision history every nation that wanted to take part was able to do so.

James Fox gave an excellent performance for the United Kingdom and, although he may not have attracted votes in high numbers, still did his country proud.

Of course, the final night belonged to Ruslana and her "Wild Dances". What a performance! With hindsight it had winner written all over it. It's just a pity the song has not been promoted in the UK.

And so it is the responsibility of Ukraine to host the prestigious 50th contest, but before you look too far ahead, why not relax and take time reading all about those two wonderful Turkish nights!

Gordon Lewis

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Eurovision CD's ... and much more!

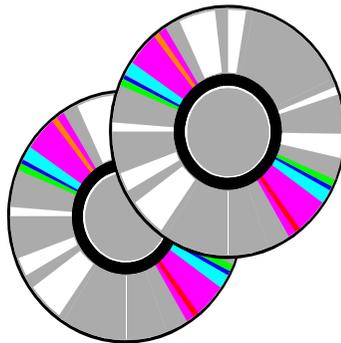
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Under The Same Sky



May Day weekend saw delegates start to arrive in Turkey for the 49th Eurovision Song Contest, Julia & Ludwig being among the first to make the short flight from Valetta to Istanbul. It marked the beginning of almost two weeks of Eurovision preparations and rehearsals, but many were concerned to find themselves arriving in what was described as 'disorganised chaos'. The stadium was barely decorated, the press centre was far from ready and there was a distinct lack of security! But, as always, it would be alright on the night and TRT can proudly boast one of the best contests of recent years.

Rehearsals and press conferences began in earnest on Wednesday, 5th May and it was Jari Sillanpaa who had the unenviable task of opening the first contest of Eurovision's televised two-show event. Jari explained that he was Swedish by birth and, having witnessed ABBA's "Waterloo", had always dreamt of singing in the international songfest. A self confessed fan of tango, he said that the music for his entry had been given to him in order to write the lyrics. After many days without a theme someone mentioned a poem about angels and demons ... "It Takes 2 To Tango" was the result!

Next up were newcomers Belarus with some suggesting that "My Galileo" bore similarity to songs performed by The Corrs. However, Alexandra &

Konstantin, through their translator, denied any suggestion that their music was inspired by the popular Irish group. They were clearly proud to be representing their nation with a song that contained elements of traditional music, including an instrument made of clay! Unfortunately, during the second rehearsal two days later, the musician responsible for this unusual item fell from the stage and needed hospital treatment. This unexpected event didn't prevent Konstantin producing a ring for Alexandra though – a ring that was purchased in Istanbul to celebrate their engagement.

After a somewhat disjointed rehearsal, the Swiss Music Stars led by Piero entered the press room with an almost sickening confidence. Piero announced that his favourite song in the contest was, of course, "Celebrate!" and enjoyed the comparison to Estonia's winner "Everybody" – even though he admitted having never heard the song! The comparison ended there, with Switzerland going on to come 36th out of 36 countries as well as scoring the infamous 'nil points'.

Fomins & Kleins were the two front men from a group of Latvian rock musicians. Explaining that "Dziesma Par Laimi" had been written as an album track, they were quite surprised to find themselves competing in the Latvian final where they scored a convincing victory. Having reached Eurovision, they now wanted to record their song in as many languages as possible to represent the various national languages of the countries taking part. Winning the contest was unimportant to the duo. Representing Latvia was their only ambition.

Among tight security David D'Or's movements were clearly restricted, for it was his task to represent a Jewish nation in political turmoil in an Islamic

country. But David's own message was one of peace and unity, which is why he chose to film the promotional video for "Le'ah'amin" in Tiberias, an Israeli city where Jews, Muslims and Christians live and work together without the threat of war and terrorism. The song was inspired partly by Martin Luther King's historic speech, 'I Have A Dream', and also John Lennon's classic song "Imagine". Accompanied by his wife and young children, David's vocal talents were among the most unique of 2004 and he clearly proved his ability during an acappella performance of "Amazing Grace".

One of the smallest countries to ever appear at Eurovision were next in line, with Marta Roure representing Andorra. Claiming that she was not particularly nervous at performing the debut entry for her tiny nation, Marta added that she felt all contestants were facing a similar pressure throughout the contest. She also explained that "Jugarem A Estimar-nos" was performed in Catalan due to similarities between Andorran and Catalanian cultures. Marta remained emphatic that no French or Spanish versions would be recorded despite Andorra's close geographical proximity to its larger neighbours.

Jazz lover Sofia found herself representing Portugal having won 'Operação Triunfo' with her Eurovision song "Foi Magia". Unfortunately the enthusiasm seemed to stop there, with many delegates dismissing the Portuguese entry before they had actually heard it! Even Sofia's efforts at rallying the assembled journalists did little to raise her profile although, despite failing to qualify, her performance was far stronger than many had previously predicted!

With their 'love it or hate it' type song, Julie & Ludwig revealed that "On Again ... Off Again" was biographical. Having

been a couple for five years, their relationship came to an end during the summer of 2003. However, they decided to continue with their singing partnership as close friends. They were amazed when Ralph Siegel had offered to produce the song and were more than happy to be supported by this veteran of Eurovision. Ralph, who appeared for the second press conference, was also very confident of Malta qualifying, but he still has to wait another year to find that elusive winner. A year can be a long time in the world of Eurovision, but Monaco were returning after quarter of a century to a contest that has certainly changed since 1979! It was explained that the decision to return was the result of a change in television management and the personal involvement of Prince Ranier. Ironically this is the same Prince Ranier who had, reputedly, ignored Severine when she won for the small principality back in 1971. However, times and attitude change and Maryon, who takes inspiration from Jennifer Lopez and Mariah Carey, was more than happy to perform "Notre Planète" in her Christmas tree outfit.



Favourites Greece cancelled their first press conference because there were not enough journalist present ... or was

it down to a bad rehearsal?! However, Sakis Rouvas appeared second time around in order to "Shake It" for all and sundry. Something of an ambassador for the Hellenic nation, Sakis likes to sing for peace, happiness and friendship, and his efforts to unite Greeks, Cypriots and Turks have not gone unnoticed in the Mediterranean region. This increased his popularity enormously, but there were genuine doubts as to whether this particular song should win for the Greeks!



Ruslana was slightly red faced at the end of the first day, her dancers having managed to break the glass stage during rehearsals. She was extremely apologetic, which was just as much down to her genuinely lovely personality as it was to any sense of guilt. An extremely talented young lady, Ruslana is a pianist, conductor and songwriter. Furthermore, she also directed her promotional video that was completed in the course of four sleepless days and nights! Her charm and "Wild Dances" quickly caught the imagination of those in Istanbul, with reports of this possible winner sweeping the globe within seconds. Odds were instantly slashed across the world while the rest is history, providing Eurovision with one of its most unique winning entries ever.

As rehearsals and press conferences continued into another day, it was soon Lithuania's turn to face an increasingly busy media centre. "What's Happened To Your Love?" was the work of Greek-Cypriot songwriter Michalis Antoniou who met Simona at the Maltese Song Festival in 2003. Having already entered songs in many international events, Michalis decided to submit a song to Lithuanian Television that would be performed by Simona and her singing partner, Linas. Already survivors of a lengthy national selection, the two were optimistic about their chances and are planning to continue working together in the future. Although she is only 17, Anjeza Shahini has already won several prizes at several Albanian music events. "The Image Of You" was originally written and performed in Anjeza's native tongue as part of the National Albania Song Festival but, when it was selected to become a Eurovision entry, it was decided to re-record the song in a more 'user friendly' language. The dancers were also removed in preference to backing singers that helped enhance the song even further. Anjeza said that she had watched ESC 2003 and had particularly enjoyed Sertab's entry. In slight contrast, the Head of Delegation revealed watching Eurovision in secret as, like other entertainment programmes, the show was forbidden during Albania's dark communist era. Former UK Song for Europe songwriter, Mike Connaris, had finally reached the Eurovision stage with a song written for Cyprus. Mike explained that his father had been Cypriot and that CyBC now allowed those with Cypriot relatives to enter the national final. It was too good an opportunity to miss, especially as he had also discovered the talented 16 year old, Lisa Andreas. Some present were disappointed that "Stronger Every

Minute” would be performed entirely in English, but both Lisa and Mike pointed out that the inclusion of Greek words had only been intended for performances in Cyprus. Despite suffering a throat infection, Lisa performed an impromptu version of Christina Aguilera’s “Come On Over” for the press and, when asked about Turkish and Greek division on the Mediterranean island, received a round of applause when she replied “I don’t think politics should be involved in Eurovision”.

Described as one of the most enjoyable press conferences of 2004, Tose Proevski arrived with the FYR of Macedonia delegation who were all wearing politically sensitive t-shirts bearing the words ‘Don’t FYROM Me’.

Tose then launched into a version of “Hold Me Now” before singing a Greek song originally recorded by Yiannis Ploutarhos. He hopes to record an album in Greek in the future and revealed that his early ambitions were to become an opera singer. With four albums to his credit, Tose is an established star in his country and surrounding area, and was looking forward to reaching a wider international audience with “Life Is ...” which was written in a style similar to Macedonian traditional music.

Wedding bells were already ringing when the Slovenian duo, Platin, arrived in Istanbul, for they had already planned to marry in Turkey the day after their performance in the qualifying round. The ceremony itself was kept very secret, with Simon adding that even the happy couple didn’t really know what it would be like until the day arrived! However, the couple revealed that 300 guests would be joining them as they married on a boat sailing on the waters around Istanbul. Diana spoke about “Stay Forever”, saying that it was

an amazing feeling to hear the song played regularly on the radio. It was intended to write the lyrics in English, although a Slovenian version is available and was performed during the press conference.



Neiokõsõ entered the press arena performing the Eurovision theme tune, “Te Deum” on traditional instruments made by the father of one of the group members; one of only a few people living in Estonia today who retain the ancient crafts of an almost forgotten era. “Tii” was written in the Voru dialect, but it was ultimately the Estonian public who decided that this minority language would form the basis for their latest Eurovision entry. It was also mentioned that J R Tolkein found inspiration from this dialect and that the language of the elves contained in “Lord Of The Rings” was based on Voru. The group were happy to see more traditional and ethnic styles entering Eurovision, adding that their own accompanying dance was based on a Greek syrtaki because “we all take something from each others cultures”. Croatian star, Ivan Mikulic, was celebrating his birthday during Eurovision season and an appropriate chorus of “Happy Birthday” was a feature of the second press conference, where it was sang by those assembled

in English and Turkish! Ivan first shot to fame when he was offered the lead role in "Jesus Christ Superstar", something that he was clearly honoured to have achieved. His Eurovision entry, "You Are My Number One", has been number one in the Croatian airplay charts, but Ivan remained defiant when challenged about singing an English version in preference to the original lyrics that some claimed were the ones chosen by the Croatian public.

Having taken part in the TV talent show, "Star For A Night", Tomas Thordarson believed this had prepared him for the responsibility of representing Denmark with "Shame On You". Questioned about the obvious Spanish influence, Tomas insisted that it was a Danish song chosen by a Danish people – although he was forced to admit that the English version had greater appeal! His most favourite Eurovision entry came as no surprise when he quickly confirmed it as being "Fly On The Wings Of Love" which won for Denmark in 2000. He hoped his song would be just as successful!



Having already released five albums in Serbia & Montenegro, Zeljko Joksimovic has recently signed an international recording contract and was looking forward to an even greater career. Extremely musical, Zeljko plays

11 different instruments but had decided to concentrate on his singing for Eurovision, leaving the Ad Hoc orchestra to do the rest – at least on the playback track! He prefers to sing "Lane Moje" in Serbian, but refused to reveal the special person to whom he dedicated this emotive love song. Zeljko has worked with Tose Proevski previously and was not worried that they now found themselves competing against each other. He had also received advice from Johnny Logan who had told him "don't be upset. It's only three minutes of your life after all!" "Pink is my favourite colour" and Deen wanted to make sure everyone knew it! He arrived at his first press conference singing "In The Disco", while his pet rabbit, Gabbana, accompanied him to the second! On both occasions Deen wore an array of pink clothing with very little underneath! He considered Kylie Minogue to be very sexy and also admires Beyonce Knowles and Donna Summer. But any claims of plagiarism to the Queen of Disco's "Hot Stuff" was quickly denied by the delegation from Bosnia Herzegovina, with songwriter Vesna Pisarovic explaining that the song was inspired by the music she and Deen used to dance to in the disco. Vesna, who represented Croatia in 2002, would like to enter Eurovision again, as would Deen who disclosed that his favourite all time entry is Imaani's "Where Are You?"

With one half of Dutch duo Re-union having Italian origins, it was probably the closest thing to an Italian entry since Jalissee in 1997! However, "Without You" was the song chosen to represent the Netherlands and the two singers felt their chances to be greatly enhanced by going last on the Wednesday evening. Among their favourite Eurovision singers they named Ruth Jacott and Edsilia, while

adding that Lenny Kuhr had advised them “not to take any advice” concerning their participation on the international stage. Re-union’s future plans now include a follow up single and album, although the Dutch delegation as a whole have made little secret over their disappointments and concerns following the final Eurovision show.

Having concluded their initial rehearsals and press conferences, the 22 semi finalists were able to relax while the remaining 14 qualified nations went through a similar process. Many of these delegates, including the UK’s very own James Fox, had arrived in Istanbul on Saturday, 8th May in readiness for rehearsals that commenced the following day.

Ramon was in fine spirits as he took the stage with confidence and later disclosed that “Para Llenarme De Ti” had been his favourite song in ‘Operacion Triunfo’. Having just celebrated his 18th birthday the young singer was proud to be representing Spain and had received advice from Rosa and Beth – both of whom had told him to enjoy the experience! Having just released an album, Ramon pointed out that he prefers to sing in Spanish but can, if necessary, perform in English. As if to prove this point he then launched into “Can’t Help Falling In Love”.

For a second year the Austrians managed to cause more than a little disruption, but Alf Poier’s antics in 2003 were nothing compared to those of Tie-Break! It was probably meant to be more organised and songwriter Peter Zimmermann, a confectioner by trade, had made chocolate cakes for the assembled press. But the ensuing distribution rapidly deteriorated into a food fight and heavy cleaning bills for all concerned – including those

journalists present! As for the song “Du Bist”, it appeared to lose significance despite reasonably good rehearsals!

Knut Anders Sørum provided an amazing performance of “High” in the arena, but was not exactly the most outgoing person when it came to answering questions. It was learnt that he likes Britney Spears’ “Baby One More Time” and has performed with Elisabeth Andreasson. Knut has previously led his own band, Expect, but is currently concentrating on solo work. However, he remains in contact with his former band members and did not discount rejoining them at a later date. The Swedish songwriters were more concerned that Norway would not accept them but, in the event, had been welcomed by their Nordic neighbours with open arms!

Belgian born of Spanish parents, Jonatan Cerrada was hoping that this would at least provide him with votes from across two French borders. France are desperate to win Eurovision again, but there were those who felt that irrelevant choreography had ruined the pleasant sounding “A Chaque Pas”, with few understanding why a woman on stilts had any place in Jonatan’s performance! A surprise appearance from Marie Myriam, below, in Istanbul to support the young French pop idol, also included the singing of “L’oiseau Et L’enfant”.



The one and only Stefan Raab helped create an entertaining press conference for the German delegation that was literally squeezed in between rehearsals and live TV shows broadcast back to Germany. When someone compared him to Ralph Siegel, Stefan quickly defended his third Eurovision entry in seven years by saying, with more than a little sarcasm, that it was totally different to “33 entries in 20 years”. Max was still in a state of shock from winning the German with 92% as everyone had expected Scooter to take the prize. However, “Can’t Wait Until Tonight” had been the song chosen and was now tipped to do very well in Istanbul.

Like Germany, Belgium had much to be confident about. “1 Life” was tipped as the song that would go one better than “Sanomi” did in 2003 and take the title back to Belgium for the first time in almost 20 years. Xandee was also quietly optimistic as she diplomatically tried to avoid questions about her pornographic involvement while describing her song as a mixture of different styles combined into a modern dance track. No one, least of all Xandee, can now explain why the Belgian entry did so badly in the light of so much pre-contest enthusiasm.



Once again Russia had selected a teenage singer, but after the

controversy surrounding t.A.T.u they had opted for the more respectable Julia Savicheva who had survived the country's ‘Star Academy’ television series. 16 year old Julia certainly had an amazing voice, but the obvious comparisons to Avril Lavigne seemed to cause nothing but frustration. There were also concerns that Julia's guitar had been replaced by an over choreographed routine that detracted from the song, possibly losing votes that could have been gained from the casual viewer. However, she was ready for both success and failure, looking forward to recording her first album in the near future.

Representing Iceland, Jonsi had arrived in Istanbul with all the makings of a Eurovision classic. Tall, blond and good-looking he was easily the life and soul of the party, but when he took to the stage he seemed to lose his otherwise charismatic personality. “Heaven”, perhaps the only Euro song not to contain the title in its lyrics, could become a lasting ballad and there is no denying that the song was suited to Jonsi's voice. But he just didn't seem to sell it in the way people were expecting, especially as he is used to live performances and had recently played Danny in the Icelandic version of “Grease”. Jonsi revealed that his three year old son's favourite song in the contest was “In The Disco” and then gave a quick impersonation of Deen that was meant to be humorous!

If Jonsi lacked personality on stage, then poor Chris Doran lacked it everywhere else. He proved himself to be one of the more reserved Irish singers of recent years, despite having a huge fan base generated by ‘You're A Star 2’. Final Four, who were also competitors in the television series, had been chosen to be Chris's backing singers, although they seemed more

intent on being the next boy band to emerge from the Emerald Isle. Linda Martin, who was another former winner to be part of an official delegation this year, did not see “If My World Stops Turning” as an obvious winner, but did have to admit that Bryan McFadden’s involvement could gain votes from a younger generation. Seven votes from the UK to be precise!

They came, they entertained and they conquered – at least as far as the press were concerned! Blue Café were more than accomplished performers who were sadly underrated by many throughout the Eurovision season. Lead singer, Tatiana, was very aware of Eurovision history, citing “Hold Me Now” and “Diva” as two of her favourites, while also informing those assembled that a Polish version of “Puppet On A String” exists in her homeland. The band enjoy singing in their own tongue, as well as English, French and Spanish, and are even considering recording a future track in Korean! The unique style of “Love Song” may not have captured the public imagination, but the people responsible for its performance clearly did!



James Fox was his usual cool and collected self, while the BBC were far happier with their entry than they had been a year ago! Believing that ‘Fame

Academy’ had helped prepare him for the Eurovision experience, James was being supported by his former Academy friend and now flat mate, Alistair Griffin, as well as an increasing number of Foxettes who had flown out from south Wales especially for the contest. With so much support being shown to James and “Hold On To Our Love”, there was definitely a feel good factor in the air as there had been at the UK final back in February. Naturally questions were asked about Jemini and ‘nil points’, but James felt this actually removed any pressure as even one point would be an achievement! Among his Eurovision favourites he listed “Everyway That I Can”, “Power To All Our Friends” and Gina G’s dress!! James then treated everyone to an acoustic version of “Waterloo” proving that he can indeed sing, and sing very well.

The host country always receives maximum support from its own journalists and the reception given by the Turks to Athena has to be one of the noisiest on record! Undoubtedly a Ska band, there was no surprise that Madness and Bad Manners were listed among their icons. However, they drew inspiration from a wide variety of performers including Red Hot Chilli Peppers and Radiohead. “For Real” was written with Eurovision in mind and, until now, Athena’s music has mainly been heard within their own country. However, they were hoping that their appearance on such a prestigious international music show would open up new opportunities and were already in discussions with German record companies about possible releases in the future.

Romania was a disappointment. After two years in the top ten many had high hopes for Sanda, but her performance was not going to be a vote winner. Nonetheless, Sanda has been

performing since the age of four and, like the Cheeky Girls, originates from Transylvania! Romania are very proud of their Eurovision appearances, in particular those recent successes that avoided them competing in the qualifying round. It was hoped that "I Admit" would receive similar support internationally as it had on the radio stations around Bucharest.



Once again Sweden had arrived to win, although Lena Philipsson was suffering from a throat infection that hindered her first rehearsals. But the confident Swede remained undaunted and, having taken 18 years to reach Eurovision, was going to give the best performance of her career! Having won Melodifestival, Lena had previously expressed concerns about singing "It Hurts" in English. However, she had come to realise that Swedish is a minority language and, if she wanted to reach an international audience, she had little option but to sing in an international language. Hesitant when asked about an equally international career, Lena revealed that she doesn't like being away from home too long! With individual rehearsals and press conferences over, all eyes started to focus on Wednesday's semi final that was preceded by full dress rehearsals. The show itself was commendable and

gave an insight into how good the actual conclusion to the week would be. Unfortunately, the broadcast was seriously affected by constant sound and light difficulties, especially during the first few songs, and this may have affected the overall outcome. More than a few eyebrows were further raised when the EBU announced that the votes had to be modified "without affecting the top ten". But ten songs were selected and, immediately after the show, a qualifiers press conference took place amid total pandemonium. Bosnian Deen was ecstatic in contrast to his Serbian neighbour, Zeljko, who displayed a humble pride. Greek Sakis felt that he could now enjoy the rest of the week, while Lisa could still not believe that she had qualified the small island of Cyprus. The other six were equally thrilled to be going through, while commiserations were offered to those who would now have to wait another year.

The day after the qualifier was declared a day of rest, allowing everyone taking part in Saturday's show to relax and, hopefully, regain any lost energy. Full dress rehearsals then took place on the Friday and Saturday, and it quickly became apparent that the winning song had already been seen on European television screens and was probably going to be Ruslana's "Wild Dances". Such predictions were totally accurate and, even with 36 countries representing 36 different musical preferences, Ukraine held on to victory with what is only their second entry. In the winner's press conference that followed, Ruslana was delighted with her achievement, both for herself and her country, and welcomed everyone to Kiev in less than 12 months time! Incidentally, only two countries have ever won Eurovision with their second entry. Ukraine is one with Ruslana and

"Wild Dances", while Switzerland and Lys Assia are the other – "Refrain" being the second of two Swiss songs performed in 1956.

Another Eurovision has passed, but special mention must still be given to TRT who, in spite of many difficulties including the threat of continued terrorism, staged two amazing shows that were extremely enjoyable and, above all, totally safe. Their press co-ordinator, Elif Dagdeviren, should also be remembered as the incredibly brave woman who led and kept order at more than 60 press conferences throughout the two weeks. Other countries share this task between two or three people, but Elif showed the world that one woman is all you need! And she still found time to dance with Richard Crane!



Finally, special thanks must go to the lovely Lorraine Kelly and her presenting partner, Paddy O'Connell. Increasingly the public face of British involvement at Eurovision, Lorraine and Paddy have won many friends through their genuine love, warmth and friendship that was shown to every single person privileged to meet them in Istanbul. And with the BBC recently announcing that Eurovision received more viewers than in other recent years, the future is certainly looking bright once again for Royaume Uni.

2004 For The Record

*Vision's annual look at contest CD's
Other releases may be available*

ALBANIA : "The Image Of You" Anjeza Shahini – RTVSH Promo : One track promotional CDR's were circulated ahead of the contest. A commercial release is being considered.

ANDORRA : "Jugarem A Estimar-Nos" Marta Roure – Musica Global DL GI-359-2004 : Andorra's first entry is found on this one track single.

AUSTRIA : "Du Bist" Tie-Break – WEA 5050467 30462 6 : Four versions of "Du Bist" from the Austrian boyband. These include an acoustic unplugged mix as well as an instrumental version.

BELARUS : "My Galileo" Alexandra & Konstantin – TVR Promo : An extremely rare promotional CD includes "My Galileo" in its contest version together with an extended remix.

BELGIUM : "1 Life" Xandee - ARS Productions 740809-5 : Two track single featuring radio edit and extended remix. Almost unprecedented, this dance track went straight to number one in the Belgian (Flemish) charts within one week of its release.

BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA : "In The Disco" Deen – PBS BiH P0031 : A one track single may appear disappointing at first, but the jewel in this crown is the multimedia section! Look out for Deen's video and an amazing presentation detailing 40 years of Bosnian entries.

CROATIA : "You Are The Only One" Ivan Mikulic – Orfej CD ORF 315 : Croatian, English and instrumental

versions are accompanied by videos of both language versions and a brief excerpt from Ivan's leading role in "Jesus Christ Superstar". A multimedia sections includes photographs, lyrics and biographies.

CYPRUS : "Stronger Every Minute" Lisa Andreas – Fox Records Promo : English and English/Greek versions are found on this CD which is still awaiting a commercial release. The promotional video is also featured.

DENMARK : "Shame On You" Tomas Thordarson – My Way Music 5485542 : English, Danish and Singback versions are found alongside a Radiomix and an extended Clubmix. A bonus sixth track is entitled "Loco In Havana".

ESTONIA : "Tii" Neiookõso – ETV/Global 742115 006190 : Certainly Estonia's most unusual entry to date, the CD contains the original version together with four remixes and the promotional video.

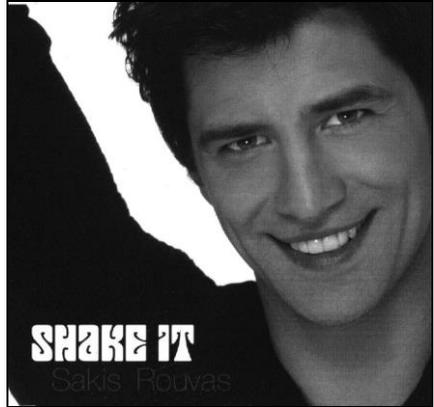
FINLAND : "Takes 2 To Tango" Jari Sillanpää – Edel VJCD507 : One track release features the Finnish entry, but the lyrics are included on the inlay to compensate! A second CD (Edel VJCD508) released just before the contest includes five remixes.

FRANCE : "A Chaque Pas" Jonatan Cerrada – RCA 8 28765 98582 6 : The original French version is accompanied by the English translation, "I Still Believe". One track promotional copies omit the latter song.

FYR MACEDONIA : "Life Is ..." Tose Proevski – MKRTV Promo : Two promotional CD's are in circulation. One is a standard audio disc, while the other is multimedia and can only be

accessed on a PC. A commercial release is expected during the summer.

GERMANY : "Can't Wait Until Tonight" Max – WEA Rare 2004 001 : From the pen of Stefan Raab come's Max's Eurovision entry featuring radio, live and instrumental versions plus the Dry Wurlitzer Mix.



GREECE : "Shake It" Sakis Rouvas – Minos EMI 5 49214 2 : An amazing five versions of "Shake It" are found on this CD, including Eurovision and Radio edits together with three remixes.

ICELAND : "Heaven" Jónsi – Skifan SCD300 : Includes just the vocal and instrumental versions. One track promos were circulated ahead of Istanbul.

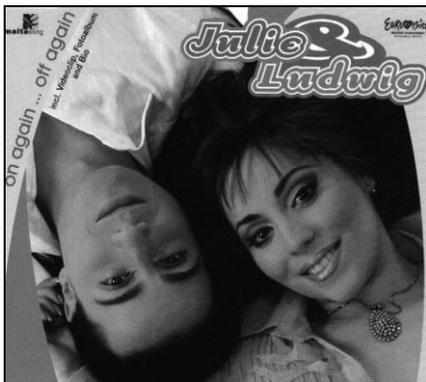
IRELAND : "If My World Stopped Turning" Chris Doran – Columbia 674874 2 : The single features the vocal and instrumental versions, Chris's live interpretation of ESC winner "Hold Me Now" and an interview excerpt with the man himself.

ISRAEL : "Leha'amin" David D'Or – Hed Arzi 64053 : This five track EP

includes the Israeli entry alongside David's remaining three songs shortlisted for Istanbul. A fifth bonus track is entitled "Optimi".

LATVIA : "Dziesma Par Laimi" Fomins & Kleins – Micrec/EMI MRCX 019 : Excluding Junior ESC, the first song to be sung in Latvian on the Eurovision stage is available as a one track single. European releases are expected to include additional language versions.

LITHUANIA : "What's Happened To Your Love?" Linas & Simona - Intervid IVCD-072 : A bumper offering from Lithuania with seven different mixes of the song, video clip and multimedia.



MALTA : "On Again, Off Again" Julie & Ludwig – Jupiter Records 8 28766 10972 6 : The Maltese entry is contained in its original and dance versions. A third track, "Intensity", is also included together with a multimedia presentation.

MONACO : "Notre Planete" Maryon – Stick Music 640488 2 : 25 years after their last ESC performance, Monaco return with this two track CD single featuring vocal and playback versions.

NETHERLANDS : "Without You" Re-Union – ARS Productions SCD 740817-5 : This simplistic offering from the Dutch contains the vocal and instrumental versions of "Without You". A second release (PM 2004002) has a Eurovision dancemix and the video clip.

NORWAY : "High" Knut Anders Sørum – Global Music GLCDS003 : Two recordings of the Norwegian entry are found on this single, these being the MGP and album versions.

POLAND : "Love Song" Blue Café – EMI Pomaton CD573 : "Love Song" is accompanied by two additional tracks entitled "Español" and "You May Be In Love".

PORTUGAL : "Foi Magia" Sofia Vitória – RTP Promo : The Portuguese entry is included in its original, English and instrumental versions.

ROMANIA : "I Admit" Sanda – TVR Promo : The Romanian entry is available as a promotional one track single.

RUSSIA : "Believe Me" Julia Savicheva – Monolit Records Promo : A one track single has been circulated to promote the latest Russian entry. A five track version in DVD packaging is also available and features several remixes.

SERBIA & MONTENEGRO : "Lane Moje" Zeljko Joksimovic & Ad Hoc Orchestra – RTS CD 414756 / DVD 490118 : Available as a combined CD and DVD package, the single features original, English and instrumental versions of "Lane Moje". The DVD includes the video together with biographies and photographs.

SLOVENIA : “Stay Forever” Platin – Sazas PLA-CD001 : English, German, Slovene and instrumental versions precede a remix and multimedia presentation. Platin married in Istanbul and this CD is presented in wedding invite style!

SPAIN : “Para Llenarme De Ti” Ramón – Vale Music VLCD5G 1625-5 : The single features audio and multimedia versions of the Spanish entry.

SWEDEN : “It Hurts” Lena Philipsson - Columbia COL6749241 : A two track single contains the English and instrumental versions. A similar second CD (COL6748111) features the Swedish original “Det Gör Ont”.

SWITZERLAND : “Celebrate” Piero Esteriore & the MusicStars – Universal 981 841-5 : The song that came last in 2004 is contained on a two track single that also includes the instrumental.

TURKEY : “For Real” Athena – TRT Promo : The original English version is accompanied by the video and “Ist” - the slightly unusual Turkish version.

UKRAINE : “Wild Dances” Ruslana – EMI 549054 2 : The winning song from the 2004 contest was released in various formats prior to the contest and has also received a UK release containing the vocal and instrumental versions, as well as “Hutsul Girl”.

UNITED KINGDOM : “Hold On To Our Love” James Fox – Sony 674873 1 : The UK entry is accompanied with James’s own composition “Something About Her”. A second CD (Sony 674873 2) contains original, instrumental and video versions of “Hold On To Our Love” together with a bonus song “Needing You”.

VARIOUS : “Eurovision Song Contest Istanbul 2004” – EMI 5778832 : As single sales decrease across the globe and fewer ESC countries release their entry commercially, the compilation entry is increasingly the only way to obtain all competing songs, especially when there are 36 in total! The double CD features each country in ISO order, which is why Spain (ES) precedes France (FR), and Sweden (SE) is in front of Slovenia (SI).



Phone In Poll Results

Derek Farquhar reports another busy time on the 'phones during the days leading up to Eurovision, not least because readers took the opportunity to vote on all 36 competing songs! The results are as follows and there is little doubt that Lena Philipsson, pictured below, was the favourite.

1. Sweden	303	19. FYRoM	53
2. Ukraine	230	20. Bosnia Herzegovina	49
=3. Belgium	214	21. Netherlands	48
=3. Cyprus	214	22. Germany	46
5. Russia	163	23. Ireland	42
6. France	132	=24. Albania	39
7. Greece	131	=24. Croatia	39
8. Spain	114	26. Slovenia	34
9. UK	99	27. Turkey	33
10. Iceland	89	28. Switzerland	27
11. Norway	86	=29. Belarus	22
12. Malta	82	=29. Romania	22
13. Poland	81	31. Monaco	20
14. Andorra	72	32. Latvia	13
15. Israel	68	33. Austria	6
16. Denmark	65	34. Lithuania	5
17. Serbia & Montenegro	59	35. Estonia	1
18. Finland	55	36. Portugal	0



Dance Of Victory

One of the favourites to win the 49th Eurovision Song Contest, Ruslana is only the second Ukrainian act to take part in the annual contest. Between rehearsals in Istanbul she found time to speak with OGAE (UK) President, Richard Crane.



After thanking Ruslana for granting an interview, it was pointed out that her stage performance was very demanding, wondering how she prepared herself. Ruslana was clear in her response replying that she had studied various martial arts, including meditation, that helped her both physically and mentally to perform on stage. "Each day is a new challenge and I never think how difficult it will be" said Ruslana. "It is very similar to sport where you have new obstacles and challenges to overcome each day." Asking about Ruslana's live shows, part of which were featured in the Ukrainian preview video, curiosity was expressed about how many people performed on stage with her. It turned out that she is usually accompanied by 16 dancers, eight drummers and a further five members that all help create the dramatic sound and look to her shows. Ruslana is keen that her audience gets a professional show. "You try not to

make it look complicated so the audiences can go wild. When they do it gives us a good feeling and we know we have done it in the proper way."

"Wild Dances" is Ruslana's second album, so how did it compare with her debut release? "It was absolutely different" she confirmed. Inspired by a visit to the mountains, the new album followed a dramatic change in her life.

"You know when you get this feeling of being unsatisfied by everything and you have spent a part of your life asleep. You have your eyes opened and you go completely wild. You feel life 100%. That's what happened to me". Ruslana had visited the mountains to search for 'something deeper'. While she was there she discovered some ancient folklore that nobody knew about and this had awakened something within her. She was inspired by the way the local people used rhythms and, no matter what they did, they would use dance to express themselves. In the mountainous regions even a funeral would not be a solemn affair, but a celebration of dance similar to that of a wedding. Ruslana discovered dances that were better than "Lord Of The Dance" and many of them had never been filmed before.

She also discovered the story of a man called Olexa Dovbush. He was a unique man who had become a legend with his mystique powers, amazing strength and endurance. Ruslana continued by describing Olexa as the sort of man that would make a good subject for a movie, for he was a strong male image. But if a movie was made about this mountain culture wouldn't Ruslana be afraid that any subsequent unwanted attention could threaten its existence? She did not think so, replying that the film would be made in a contemporary and eclectic style that would help protect the ancient

traditions. She also added that it was important for this culture to be preserved as no one had ever recorded or studied the way these people sang and danced. "Nobody studies Ukrainian culture and there is a threat that you will lose it if you do not study it".

Having discovered Ruslana's love and respect for "Wild Dances" it seemed natural to ask her about the Estonian entry, which also revolved around ancient dialects and traditional music. "I like the original drums and know the drummer, Peeter Jõgioja" who she also described as 'fun' having met him prior to arriving in Turkey. "There are a lot of ethnic songs this year and I particularly like the entries from Turkey, Spain, Belgium, Greece, Romania and Serbia. I wish them all success and I hope that this year will be remembered as the best Eurovision ever, better than any that has gone before or any that will be in the future." But Ruslana didn't want to talk about her own chances, revealing a deeply held superstitious nature that prevented her from discussing any possible outcomes.

Instead, Ruslana started to chat about her visit to London last year when she went to record in Peter Gabriel's Real World studios. "I went into the studio kitchen and there was this man standing there drinking milk. He was asking me all sorts of questions about my music and I thought he was a security guy who knew a lot about music. I had been told that Peter Gabriel rarely came to the studio and I knew he had been performing elsewhere that day so I didn't realise it was him! It wasn't until someone told me after he had gone". "I would love to work with him as he is a great musician and teacher and he has opened up so many doors for ethnic music and brought it to the world's attention." So how did Ruslana, a singer from

Ukraine, come to be at Real World studios in the first place? It transpired that EMI had sent them a recording of her music and an invitation to record soon followed!



Looking back at past Eurovision's, several world artists have been brought into the public eye, including Dan Ar Braz, Secret Garden and Ofra Haza, so had Ruslana heard of any of these and, if so, what did she think of them? "I know them" she replied, "Eurovision has opened up new doors to different musical cultures". Ruslana also respects the work of Celine Dion, Toto Cutugno, Julio Iglesias, Dana International and Sertab. "I like their music very much."

Surprised that Ruslana knew so many of these past performers suggested that she was already a Eurovision fan prior to her own involvement. She confided that when she was a child her mother told her "you are going to be in Eurovision one day" even though it wasn't something they watched or could watch at that time. Ruslana felt that Eurovision was like getting on a new path that could provide an artist with a big breakthrough in Europe. "Without performing in Eurovision an artist might not get that interest."

Since being chosen to represent the Ukraine Ruslana has embarked on a

whirlwind tour of Europe, visiting at least 15 countries. Given her interest in culture had she had time to see anything of other European traditions? It had proved difficult for her due to the short time she was in each country, combined with the amount of time given to rehearsals and interviews. However, while visiting Iceland Ruslana had visited the country's famous Blue Lagoon and ridden on Icelandic horses; an experience that she enjoyed immensely.

Ruslana again recalled her visit to London, this time with some humour. While she and other members of her band were walking around Baker Street and Oxford Street they tried finding any bands playing live. Meeting a woman in the street they asked her "where is big band?" But they scared the poor woman and she ran away! Nonetheless, Ruslana had been impressed with London and also liked Istanbul. She has already performed in London and hopes to do so again in the future.

Believing "Wild Dances" to be a song, or rather performance, about being true to yourself and expressing your feelings, Ruslana felt that it could appeal to her gay fans who would identify with the message in the song. She went on to reveal that she had many gay friends whom she always found were very loyal and honest. She also recalled the time when she performed at Hercules in Finland. "There was a guy in the crowd who was really getting into "Wild Dances" and I invited him up on stage. His dancing was so wild that it put some of my dancers to shame". These men "have a good sensitivity of art".

The interview was drawing to a close, but Ruslana's trousers were visually a matter of interest, being a shiny silvery blue with perspex pockets that

contained watches inside each one. Had she, like last year's Polish singer, designed her own costume? Ruslana smiled, confirming that she remembered Ich Troje's lead singer but that her own trousers were the work of a Ukrainian designer. "The Customs men were really interested in why I needed so many watches!"

Ruslana is an incredible person who enthuses an ancient tradition for a modern world. Hopefully it will not be long before she becomes a household name in the United Kingdom too!



Ruslana celebrates victory and, in so doing, places Ukraine firmly on the international map

Retrospective 2004

Darren Jenkins' annual and often irreverent look at the world's largest live television show.

Eurovision 2004? The biggest show in Eurovision's 49 year history, but was it a giant leap forward for the contest or did it help add fuel to the argument that Eurovision is past its best and maybe it is time to put it out of its misery.

Of course, it was TRT's chance to shine by hosting two separate shows. The Wednesday night semi-final was beset with faults, the most obvious one being the dreadful sound accompanying so many of the songs. The postcards were dull and some of the links to the green room were cringe worthy.

On a more positive note, when Jari Sillanpaa took to the stage for the first song it was clear that once again the set designers had certainly been on top form. Jari, however, looked a little uncomfortable and didn't seem strong enough during the chorus. I always assumed a tango would evoke passion and a tempestuous aura. Not so from the Finn's. Passion grows ... evil clothes ...

Anneka Rice with hair extensions popped up to warble Belarus' debut. With by far the worst English of the night and a man blowing into a sweet potato you just knew that the contest was in full swing. I think the duo should've gone down the Rednex road and produced a more country performance, but I'm sure this is a Eurovision classic that will be fondly remembered.

Do you remember that very annoying Big Brother 4 contestant Federico? How uncanny was the likeness between him and Piero, both facially and in the annoyance stakes? The

Swiss certainly seemed to have lost the Euro plot. Poor vocals, a dreadfully dated song and, for added measure, Piero also smacked himself in the mouth with his microphone. Well, it saved anyone else doing it.

The Latvians boasted Yoko Ono on guitar and should be proud they sang in their native tongue. The vocals were weak though and they never stood a real chance of qualifying.

The Israelis must have been devastated when faced with elimination. The sound seemed to come and go during David's performance, but what a wonderfully capable vocalist he is. It didn't sound as good as the CD version, but were there honestly ten better songs than this?

Our second debutants, Andorra, really could've done with a brighter stage for a song that seemed pretty lively and was tuneful enough. They could've done with a singer too.

Sofia Victoria seemed so at home on stage and was definitely among the best semi-final performers. The Portuguese got the balance spot on between dancing and singing, and it was a good spectacle to watch. It would be good to see her represent Portugal again, only this time with a much stronger song.

The same thing cannot be said of Maryon from Monaco. This was a strange one. I do actually like the song, but I never get any enthusiasm for it when it comes on the Eurovision CD. Maybe it was just too plain and nice to make any impact.

It was tough on Lithuania to follow Greece and Ukraine. Linas looked a little creepy but was vocally secure. After Sakis he shouldn't have removed his jacket though as he didn't have the physique to compete!! I wasn't entirely sure what was going on in the background.

Slovenia seemed to have the quietest backing track of all the songs but I was impressed with their vocals. The performance was sickly though. Just get a room will you.

I thought Estonia's performance to be the most visually entertaining of the evening, thanks largely to the eccentricity of the drummer. Strong vocals throughout, musically unique and a great ending. All it needed was to be one position higher.

I thought the Danes had picked the winning song from their final. In spite of the Jayne Torville-esque tribute, Tomas lacked any real enthusiasm and he was right to throw his jacket away as he wouldn't be needing it on the Saturday night.

What did you think of the ABBA piece? Hmm. Me too. I enjoyed the drama of announcing the qualifiers and there were three or four surprises, but more on that later. Sadly, all of us had to then realise that one/some/all of our favourites wouldn't be in Saturday's final, but at least with a semi-final we get the chance to see all countries perform live on a big stage and, if we are lucky, we get to see them twice.

My own semi-final placings were : 1. Belarus; 2. Albania; 3. Israel; 4. Estonia; 5. Portugal; 6. Bosnia Herzegovina; 7. Croatia; 8. Serbia & Montenegro; 9. Cyprus; 10. Ukraine; 11. Monaco; 12. Denmark; 13. Finland; 14. Malta; 15. Lithuania; 16. Slovenia; 17. Switzerland; 18. Latvia; 19. FYR Macedonia; 20. Andorra; 21. Netherlands; and 22. Greece. My personal positions for the final will follow after each song.

With the sound problems of the semi-final and the elimination of many of my favourites (what does that say about me?!) it was with a certain amount of trepidation that Euro Party 2004 began. There was enough alcohol to make

George Best feel welcome so if the worst came to the worst it could help to ease the pain! However, the final show was so much better. Sertab sang like a dream at the start even if she had been dressed by the House of Elliot and the hosts couldn't annoy me anymore. I became forgiving when I've had a few!! Ramon looked a lot older than his actual 18 years and got the final off to a flying start. After a strong 15 seconds on guitar the senior frenzied and strutted on stage without losing any of his strong vocals. I always thought that Spain could be a dark horse and those on stage did nothing to change my mind. (15)

Tie-Break certainly didn't have the attention of my party guests. It's always hard for a ballad such as this to be drawn so early to make much of an impact and, of course, that was to be the case. Not the greatest singers in the world and I detected a hint of Westlife's "My Love" during the chorus. But they liked Lorraine Kelly and that's fine by me. (17)

Never mind "High", the Norwegian entry left me feeling a bit low. It reminded me of the kind of thing 80's singers such as John Farnham would sing. The highlight was seeing the baldy backing bloke back again. Let him sing by himself next year! Sorry, I wasn't Knut's about this one. (20)

Quite what was going on during the French entry is anyone's guess. I felt very sorry for Jonatan having Marie Line flapping aimlessly behind him – it brought out a horrible vein on his neck. To his credit he sang very well and showed some great expression, but it was pure irony that the last word he sang was 'normale'! Respect for the eyebrow piercing. Now tell my mother that I'm not the only one!! Was there anybody else that was hoping stilt lady would take a tumble ... ? (14)

The Serbian entry brought a touch of humility to proceedings. A dark number reminiscent of early Yugoslav entries seemingly dedicated to a deer. I enjoyed early recordings of this song when there was a strong choral arrangement and less Ad Hoc, but this was still worthy of a good finish. I'm just not sure it should've been as high as second. (10)

Malta should've been as low as 22nd. Why would anybody choose this kind of thing as a musical representation of their country? While undoubtedly gifted vocally, Julie & Ludwig had the sexual chemistry of a brother and sister double act and he was so uncomfortable trying to dance. Painful. (19)

The Dutch victory was achieved with them qualifying for the final as I didn't think they deserved too. I can only echo the great Ken Bruce by mentioning how much like Extreme's "More Than Words" this sounded. The lead vocalist looked to me like Gareth Gates with long hair and that inane grin throughout, and then the munchkin on guitar did some squeaking too. Ears please forgive me. (24)

I followed Max's progress via Stefan Raab's TV Total show in Germany and the Deutsch certainly seemed to have taken him to their hearts. A mellow and modern sound this year in stark contrast to Mr Raab's last effort and this was worth every vote it got. My only complaint was for the monobrow. Wax Max. (8)

I was really pleased to see Albania qualify. They must have been pretty confident though bringing two outfits!! I preferred the semi-final dress and, to be honest, her singing was better than too, but I supported this from the very early days and I proudly glowed when the votes came in. (4)

It was sad that the Ukrainians couldn't have put more effort into their entry ... I

thought Ruslana raised her vocals from the semi and the spectacle was strong throughout the week. It was different, powerful, very visual and was certainly not forgettable. If whips, fur and leather are the order of the day then I'm booking my flight to Kiev now. All that was missing was Tarzan. (12)

Not quite the same performance from the Croats but vocally a fine effort by Ivan the Great. Only in Eurovision could a six minute period produce such contrasts. This was some of the best vocals of the night marred slightly by some poor English and he shouldn't have changed his suit from the semi. No other complaints though. (7)

We came up with some great dance moves to rival the great Deen himself. Vocally he was either quite weak or especially strong and it was a strange combination. I was happy to see this qualify though as it added to the '04 experience and later, when we went clubbing, we got a lot of attention for our 'up and down, here we go' routine. Question of the evening went to party guest Jess who wondered if Deen might be gay. We've decided she should be allowed out for often. (5)

So why the failure for Belgium this year then? Admittedly Xandee didn't give her best vocal performance but there were many worse who scored better. I thought visually this ranked among the best too with a routine totally in time with the music. It's been put to me though that many viewers may still have been channel hopping or making drinks after the commercial break. Sounds plausible as this wasn't the joint 22nd best song. (6)

Quite why the Russians turned the Lavigne-esque Julia into yet another bland pop bimette is anyone's guess. It totally ruined what was quite a good song that really didn't need multicoloured break dancers that left

her looking pretty stupid covered in body paint. Honestly, I despair sometimes. Next I hear she's covering the Tammy Wynette classic "Stand On Your Man" ... (13)

So you're on stage, just about to sing when up pop the Macedonian mafia to manhandle you. That stops and you actually start singing well. Then you're shoved on a chair and Sertab's old Andrex is ripped from your nipples. How are you supposed to take any notice of the song among such pointless and distracting antics? This really shouldn't have qualified. (22)

And neither should Sakis whose vocals at the semi-final were quite possibly the worst ever heard at any Eurovision. That does take some doing as this isn't really a difficult song to sing. Admittedly he improved for the final but it was still very poor especially on 'love' and 'amor' in the chorus. It beggars belief how this did so well. Shame on the UK public too. I'm sure he will spend any royalties on a nice full length mirror. (23)

Thank heavens for Iceland. Among the shenanigans this stood out so well. Excellent vocals from the boy Jonsi and nothing to distract from such a great song. Just a tad too overdramatic at times, but he seemed a great sport during the BBC Three coverage. Go on Robbie, give him a call. (9)

You know Ireland are set for a bruising when I admit to liking their entry. Chris Doran didn't really deliver on the night and his voice was flat on more than one occasion, which was a pity. His stylist should now be unemployed too. So it's the semi-final for the seven times winner next year then. Did anybody else think that he looked like Welsh Rugby player Jonathan Davis? (18)

I was proud to say that Poland was my favourite going into the final but they too, like the Serbians, could've really

done with some backing vocals instead of the brass section. Tatiana sounded pretty poor especially singing the word 'sweet'. Pawel's unique ad-libbing vocals were the redeeming feature. His leggings certainly weren't. (11)

At least James' guitar playing lasted longer than Ramon's. He had the easiest job in trying to beat last year's effort and certainly didn't disappoint. He looked the biz and was among the best performers in Istanbul. It wasn't a great song though and our 16th place was probably just about right. (16)

Inconsistent is how I would describe Lisa Andreas. I held my head in my hands while she performed in the semi-final, yet only three days later it all fell into place for her and how this didn't bring Cyprus their first top three placing I do not know. Surely some record producer in the UK must have seen so much raw talent to work with. She could be a big star. Good luck with the GCSE's. (3)

The crème de la crème though was definitely the hometeam. Early 80's ska music was revisited and re-modernised into the most amazing three minutes of Eurovision 2004. The backstage shots of the crowd in front of Athena looked wonderful and this was the best home entry since Niamh Kavanagh. Peace, love, respect and a big, big thank you boys. (1)

I thought Romania had a very weak entry again this year and at least the voting justified it. More prancing about from the horrific Sanda and the bruiser in the gold tank top didn't help things at all. That glitter once belonged to Ira Losco. Marcel & Monica had a quick sweep before they sang in Tallinn. It's true! (21)

I wouldn't have said it hurt, but by this time of the evening the alcohol was definitely taking effect. I preferred this in Swedish but I loved Lena's

performance with the microphone. Indeed, she struck the right balance between vocals and performing. I must be getting old you know. That's two Swedish entries I've liked in a row. (2) The interval act was pretty interesting, kind of like a hopping 'Riverdance' but full of exuberance and some great dancing. Sadly the same cannot be said of the voting. 36 countries were far too many to vote and it all got a little tedious. Maybe it's time to go back to the jury system as I predicted about 80% of the top marks before the countries started voting. I'm sure many of you did too. One rather large milestone that passed Mr Wogan by was the first ever Cypriot point off a Turkish jury or televote. Also that the French, Finnish, Maltese and Macedonians voted in a different order to their CD listing. And our hostess's fringe? What was that all about? So what of the UK's chances in 2005? I have a few proposals. We need singers to start off wearing as many clothes as is possible, then use the three minutes to strip completely naked, pulling some ribbon out of an orifice of some sort. Backing dancers must stamp and gyrate while wearing lots of body paint and glitter. Most important of all, the UK must be uprooted to west of Russia, south of Scandinavian and north of any former Yugoslav country. Birmingham 2006? No problem. So that's me done for another year and, as ever, it's now your turn. In the centre pages of the last issue was a voting form. Please return it to me with your semi-final and final top tens, together with any views that you have on any song or feature of Eurovision 2004. All results and a selection of your views will be published next time. A huge thank you to all of you who have already returned their forms.

Eurovision 2005

The government of Ukraine have confirmed that they will sponsor the 50th Eurovision Song Contest and discussions are now taking place between government officials, Ukrainian Television and the European Broadcasting Union. At the time of printing no dates were announced, although it is believed that the venue will be a stadium already being constructed in Kiev.

Until further information becomes available, it is impossible to say whether OGAE will be offered tickets for the 50th event. However, anyone who is already considering travelling to Ukraine should write to **OGAE (UK), 51 Greenfields Avenue, Totton, Southampton SO40 3LU** requesting entry to any future ticket ballot.

Please note, this does not guarantee that any tickets will be made available.

As in previous years any ballot will be restricted to one ticket – one member and only those living in the UK will be eligible. British travellers are also advised to check their visa and other entry requirements before making any confirmations.

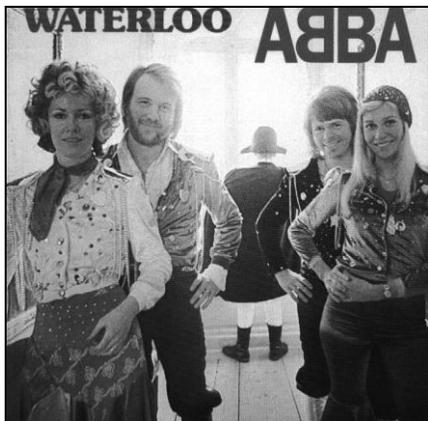
Finally, 50 Years of Eurovision will be celebrated on Saturday, 16th October 2005 in a special gala concert to be held at London's Royal Albert Hall. The BBC have won productions rights and it already promises to be a star studded night of Eurovision celebrations! Once again, it is not known what the ticket situation will be for such a prestigious and no doubt popular show so, just in case OGAE are involved in the process, a separate letter should be sent to the address shown above.

2005 looks like being an exciting year indeed for the world of Eurovision.

The Day I ...

Hated ABBA winning Eurovision

Andy Brook, Eurovision fan and part time songwriter, vividly recalls watching the 1974 Eurovision Song Contest.



It's hard to believe that the Eurovision Song Contest was as popular in Britain back in 1974 as it is these days in Sweden. Along with the big sporting events and Miss World, it was an occasion when the whole family would sit down together, and children would be allowed to stay up late as a treat.

By 1974 I was already a veteran, having seen my first Eurovision five years previously, and I thought I knew the score. There was little doubt in my mind that Gigliola Cinquetti would win, as it was almost a foregone conclusion that the winning song would be a ballad sung by a pretty woman in a long dress. But where was the competition to come from? Possibly the Netherlands if it was to be an up tempo number, but I didn't think a hippy stood much of a chance in Eurovision. After all, Nicole and Hugo had come last the previous year. I also had a sneaking regard for Israel and

Yugoslavia, which followed one another in the contest, but I could not stand the song that followed them – "Waterloo". It was nothing more than a noise, sung by an outrageously dressed group who were doing little more than shouting. I hoped ABBA would come last.

Poor Olivia Newton-John. Cliff Richard had suggested that the BBC asked her to sing a ballad, and look what they came up with! A song she was embarrassed to sing and, to the annoyance of the BBC, she let this be known. Nevertheless, she gave a faultless performance and wore a long flowing chiffon dress which apparently cost an absolute fortune, but in the end she looked and sounded out of place, and was lucky to do as well as she did. Olivia ended up in fourth place, equal with Luxembourg who had strayed from their winning formula and entered an up tempo number.

There were signs that ABBA was going to do well. They were the favourite of the orchestra and received much attention from the press. Dressing the conductor as Napoleon was, of course, a stroke of genius, and, of course, the quality of the song and its performance played a much more important part in determining the winner than now.

Mouth & McNeal got as close to overdoing it as you can get with their music box, but it positioned them midway between the Yugoslav rockers earlier in the show and the Wombles later on. Looking back, ABBA and Mouth & McNeal are like Slade and Wizard's Christmas songs. One was much more successful than the other, but you really need them both together. The Irish entrant, Tina Reynolds, was recovering from a car accident and, rather meanly, the BBC would not allow her to use prompt cards in case she forgot the words. She didn't, but much good it did her.

Gigliola Cinquetti came on stage last, trembling. I'm not surprised. For the second time in three years an outstandingly good ballad was going to be squeezed into three minutes. Unlike "Après Toi" there was no way of easily chopping half a verse of "Si", so they chopped bits here, bits there, and speeded the whole thing up as well. The result was a complete dogs dinner and Gigliola's performance was probably the worst of the night. The song, though, remains an all-time Eurovision classic.

Katie Boyle, of course, was a consummate professional to the extent of having her very own pronunciation of 'Aaaabaaa' and wearing no knickers under her dress so the panty lines didn't show.

Rumour has it that the current voting procedure was due to have been introduced back in 1974, but the BBC thought it would be too long. Would ABBA still have won with that system? Probably.

Sweden did get five points from Finland in the very first round, but then the UK gave Italy five points. Surprisingly, given the success of "Waterloo" in the British charts, the UK gave Sweden no points at all.

ABBA led from the very first round of voting and I remember becoming increasingly angry as it became apparent that they would win. 24 hours later, after listening to the song constantly, I was converted and became a huge ABBA fan! In the UK Eurovision has never since left such an impression on the British public.

ABBA went to number one in the charts, Gigliola Cinquetti and Mouth & McNeal both reached No 8, and even Olivia Newton John managed to get to No 11. Her follow up song was "I Honestly Love You" and, if that had

been her Eurovision song, the history book would have probably stayed on the shelf.

25 years to the day after ABBA won Eurovision, 'Mamma Mia' opened for previews in the West End. The ABBA boys say that it was pure coincidence, but I was lucky enough to be in the audience for the first ever performance of the musical that has made them more money than ABBA ever did. It still plays to a packed house every day, and runs right across the world. The latest version is about to open in Seoul. ABBA went on to give the world some of its very best pop songs : "Fernando", "The Winner Takes It All", "Mamma Mia", "SOS", "Lay All Your Love On Me", "The Name Of The Game", "The Day Before You Came" and, of course, "Dancing Queen".

"Waterloo" may not rank with those songs, but it will always have a very special place in my heart. My train journey into central London arrives each morning at Waterloo station and I can't be the only one who cannot see the station name without singing 'I was defeated, you won the war' every single time.

Will ABBA ever reform? I very much doubt it and I honestly hope not. Bjorn Ulvaeus was interviewed in The Independent to celebrate the fifth anniversary of 'Mamma Mia' in the West End, and he said that he would hate to ruin the magic by trying to recreate the magic that was ABBA. I couldn't agree more.



If you have a memory or reflection, which you would like to have featured in "The Day I ..." please e-mail Marcus Keppel-Palmer at Marcus.Keppel-Palmer@uwe.ac.uk or write in to Vision at the usual address.

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Viva La Diva

Graham Welch profiles this year's UK born Cypriot entrant, Lisa Andreas

Lisa Andreas was born on 22nd December 1987 in Chatham, Kent, to an English father and a Cypriot mother. As a child, she spent two-and-a-half years living in Cyprus, and was christened in Pano Lakatamia, before returning to the UK. She continues to visit the island often to see relatives.

Her steps towards a singing career were taken at the age of eleven when she took part in a karaoke night at a local pub. She performed "My Heart Will Go On", a song made famous by 1988 Eurovision winner and global superstar Céline Dion.

At the age of 13, Lisa began performing semi-professionally as a solo artist. She took part in a number of concerts and roadshows around the UK, appearing alongside Atomic Kitten, Damage and many others.

Cyprus' CyBC television channel was so impressed by her that it broadcast a documentary about the teenager at Christmas 2001.

The following year, she performed at the 'Hands Across the Sea' concert in London's Leicester Square. The concert, arranged by the London Fire Brigade and attended by a host of major celebrities from the world of music and show business, was held on the first anniversary of the September 11 attacks on the United States. Its aim was to raise funds for the New York Fire Brigade Disaster Fund.

Despite increasing demands for her vocal talents, Lisa is still a full-time pupil at the Chatham Grammar School for Girls, where she has been form captain for two years running. She has recently studied for her GCSE exams.

Earlier this year, she was approached by songwriter Mike Connaris, another Briton of Cypriot parentage, about performing his composition "Stronger Every Minute" at the Cypriot national final. She jumped at the opportunity and flew off to Nicosia in February to perform in the contest.

The winner was chosen by an expert jury and televoters, and Lisa won with 96 points. She was given two weeks off school and flew off to Istanbul to take part in the Eurovision semi-final.

Shunning the increasing use of gimmicks to enhance a song's chances of success on the Eurovision stage, Lisa announced that her performance would be "just me and my song". She was successful, receiving enough points from televoters to qualify and go through to final on Saturday 15th May.

The emotional ballad was a favourite with bookies ahead of the contest and finished a respectable fifth, with 170 points. "The experience has given me a boost in my career and a boost to my confidence" she told the BBC.



At just 16, Lisa Andreas was the youngest performer to appear on the Eurovision stage in Istanbul in 2004

Whatever Happened To

TAMMY JONES

by Marcus Keppel-Palmer



In 1976 the format for Song For Europe reverted from having one performer appointed by the BBC singing six songs to a show where a number of performers sang only one song. Brotherhood of Man won with "Save All Your Kisses For Me" and went on to win Eurovision in fine style, but there were a number of experienced performers in the Song For Europe including Tammy Jones who, like James Fox and Jessica Garlick in recent years, was already well known from a TV talent show.

Born in 1945 near Bangor in North Wales, pint size Tammy - she's not quite 5ft tall - was born Helen Wyn Jones. Her love of singing and of performing was evident from a very early age and she sang in children's choirs, the chapel and Eisteddfods. She

then went to study at the Guildhall School of Music, where she was drilled in the rigid discipline of operatic singing. But pop music, particularly in her native Welsh, became her passion and she turned down an opera scholarship. She appeared on several Welsh language BBC shows before getting her own, "Tammy", at the age of 17. By now she had taken her professional name. Guest spots followed on English television with Benny Hill, Tom Jones, The Bachelors, Dick Emery and Morecambe & Wise, as well as an appearance at the London Palladium in 1969 and the Royal Command Performance in front of HRH Princess Anne. Cabaret appearances were both national and international with visits to Poland, Israel, Zimbabwe, America, Canada, Africa, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Argentina.

Tammy had also been recording in Welsh since the mid-60s with some success. Her first Welsh record, released in 1965, was called "Helen Wyn a Hebogiaid y Nos", and was followed by a duet record with Aled Hughes, "Caneuon Aled a Helen Wyn". More records followed in 1966 with "Caneuon i'r Plant" (Songs for Children) and "Moliannwn/Scarlet Ribbons". Despite further releases in the 1960s, including a single record on CBS Records called 'Lai Lai Lai' and myriad TV appearances, success on a national scale eluded Tammy. So she returned to the Welsh concert and club circuit with her repertoire of Welsh and country songs.

The Pop Idol phenomenon is not new and in the 1970s there were a number of similar talent shows. The two leading ones were 'New Faces', on which Tony Hatch was a judge, and 'Opportunity Knocks' hosted by the inimitable Hughie Greene and which featured a 'clap-o-meter'. Rather than being

entirely music focussed these shows looked for new talent across all branches of the entertainment industry and singers would find themselves in competition with comedians, magicians, ventriloquists (like Roger de Courcey) and even body builders.

'Opportunity Knocks' had made stars of Les Dawson and Lena Zavaroni by the time Tammy successfully auditioned for the show in 1975 - she had in fact auditioned unsuccessfully twice before. On the show she sang the Frank Sinatra song, "Let Me Try Again", winning the viewers postcard vote in the days before televoting! This allowed her to return the following week and Tammy went on to win six weeks in a row. It was one of 'Opportunity Knocks' most successful runs ever and Tammy was immediately signed up by Epic Records to release "Let Me Try Again". The record soared up the charts reaching number 5 in May 1975.

Tammy was catapulted into a further round of TV shows, cabaret shows, summer season and pantomime. She also released two albums and that year her world sales were the most by any female artiste. In 1976 she entered in Song For Europe singing "Love's A Carousel", written by Harold Spiro who had co-written Olivia Newton-John's "Long Live Love". Tammy came 6th overall gaining a maximum 12 point vote from the Bangor jury.

The song was released on a single, but didn't make a showing in the charts. Tammy also released an album with the title of "Love's A Carousel". She remained popular as a recording and performing artist, and was voted second most popular female artist in 1976 in a music magazine poll.

Although further singles and chart success eluded Tammy, she was in demand as a cabaret performer singing a range of country and easy listening

material on TV shows such as 'The Dick Emery Show', in cabaret clubs, on cruise ships and appearing in pantomime. Tammy's great love for country music also led to her appearances and recordings in Nashville, as well as doing a TV documentary for Welsh Television. She also sings gospel music and she was invited to appear on 'Highway' with Sir Harry Secombe.

In recent years Tammy became enamoured with the Antipodes and moved to Omokoroa on New Zealand's north island in the 1990s where she was delighted to discover a large Welsh community.

This gave her the opportunity to rediscover her Welsh music roots and to record further albums on local New Zealand labels. Tammy still performs regularly and divides her performing and recording careers between New Zealand and Wales. She has even learned the Maori language and sings in that too.

Recently Tammy has released two new CDs, "The Answer To Everything" and "Easy Listening Country", which include some re-recordings of her old favourites, although sadly not "Love's A Carousel". She has become a real New Zealander and has taken out citizenship. She has even sung at the ANZAC Memorial Day.

Almost 60 and nearly 30 years after her TV talent show success, Tammy Jones remains a regular performer with a vibrant career. It would be cheering to think that other Song For Europe reality TV artists would enjoy similar longevity. In today's more disposable age that is more a thought in hope than in expectation.

Tammy Jones may not have been able to represent the UK in Eurovision, but her long career is a tribute to her belief in opportunity and talent.

What Happened To Your Love?

Linus & Simona were this years Eurovision entry for Lithuania. But why did the biggest pop group in Lithuania split, how did the Lithuanian song come to be written by a Cypriot songwriter and where do the duo go from here? Richard Crane has the answers.

Prior to becoming part of the duo Linas, who is a self-taught violinist, attended art school. This wasn't the brush and canvas type but a school of the arts where he was encouraged to develop his music production skills. By the time he graduated a career in music was already beckoning and, by 1997, he had formed L+.

Within three months their songs were topping the Lithuanian charts. "Things happened so quickly. During that summer we played 90 concerts, including four in one day!" recalls Linas. But despite massive sales of four albums the group had split by the beginning of 2000. "The group were young", Simona commented, "and didn't expect such huge success". "After three years I felt there was something missing" continued Linas. "I disbanded L+ and decided to go solo"

In the meantime Simona, who listens to Erik Bennett, India Arie and Erykah Badu, had been making a name for herself performing at 15 international music festivals. The ambitious 19 year old won several awards and particularly enjoyed singing at gospel festivals in Sweden and Germany. Did Simona feel these had helped her prepare for Eurovision? "This contest is certainly the biggest so far and my participation at other festivals has helped me gain valuable experience. It is a step

towards getting contacts abroad. Eurovision is very important".

Linus, who cites Stevie Wonder as his biggest influence, is also a veteran of song festivals and has travelled to Malta, Latvia, Belarus, Cyprus and Ukraine, among others, to perform. "It is important to meet with performers from other cultures" and it was at the Maltese Festival 2003 that he met Cypriot songwriter Michalis Antoniou. They became friends and kept in touch. Meanwhile Linas and Simona had participated in the Lithuanian pre-selections for 2002 and, in the same year, met during 'Fizz Superstar'. Simona believes the show was beneficial to her understanding of the mechanics of a TV music show.

The couple started working together and, in 2003, they decided to enter the Lithuanian pre-selections as a duo. Unusually Lithuanian Television opened their pre-selection contest to entries from songwriters of any nationality, so Linas immediately contacted his old friend Michalis. The result was "What Happened To Our Love?" Following their selection for Eurovision the video was shot in a single day and then it was off to Istanbul for the contest. They were already great friends with previous Lithuanian entrants Aiste, Aivaris and Skamp, all of whom were extremely supportive and offered good advice.

So what does the future hold for Linas & Simona? Much depended on their result at Eurovision, but they've already recorded seven tracks for a new album, hope to play America in the summer and, with the help of Michalis, a collaboration with Peter Andre may be on the cards. This years contest had love as its theme and Lithuania were counting on Europe loving their entry. Having failed to qualify Linas & Simona could well be asking the rest of Europe "What's Happened To Your Vote?"

Ken's Convention

If you're thinking about coming to the 2004 OGAE (UK) Convention but are slightly unsure about what may happen, why not learn from Ken Dixon who attended his first weekend last October.

What a quite fantastic day I had at Reading for the UK convention. Being the first one I had attended I wasn't sure what to expect, but I have to agree with other delegates that it was truly a day to remember. The highlight of my year!

I really enjoyed the Turkey videos, although it was a pity that the sound wasn't quite loud enough as I felt like getting up and dancing along with all those classics.

The buffet lunch was excellent and the hotel facilities including staff were very friendly helping to create a good atmosphere.

And the record fair! I had no idea there would be so many records and CD's for sale and I managed to buy several releases that I have been trying to find for years. All of these were early Christmas presents to myself!!

For once I had forgotten all about England and how they were performing against Turkey in the Euro 2004 qualifier as I joined the rest of the crew in 'Stars In Your Eurovision Eyes'. The original show is not something I usually watch on television, but I made the effort as they were Eurovision songs sung by many lovely people who I was just starting to know. What a great effort by all concerned, including our host, the one and only Nicki French.

Wasn't it great that Nicki also sat with us on of our tables for the evening meal. I just didn't want the evening to end, but soon discovered it was only just beginning.

Following the meal Nicki gave a great cabaret act and, even with a sound system that seemed to have its own agenda, she just carried on like a true professional. She later joined in with the disco where, once I was on the floor, found that every song had my feet moving. The look on delegate faces as their requests and classic tunes were played was a joy to see.

Finally, after such a long and enjoyable day, I sat in the bar with a few others until 4.00am, and didn't care at all that I had to leave before 7.00am to catch my train back to Whitstable. Apologies to anyone who may have heard me crashing about while they were probably still trying to sleep, but unfortunately I had to work the next day. Here's to the next convention, and hello to those I met and who I hope to see again this October.



Hopefully Ken's experiences have tempted you into attending the 2004 Convention that will be held at Ye Olde Bell Hotel, Barnby Moor, near Retford, Notts, pictured above, on the weekend of 23rd and 24th October. Booking forms were included with issue 56 and inclusive weekend prices begin at just £115 per person based on two sharing. Day visitor rates are also available. For more information please send a SAE to OGAE (UK) Convention, 51 Greenfields Avenue, Totton, Southampton SO40 3LU or visit www.uk.ogae.net

Quiz Time

Devoted to the ten countries who recently joined the European Union - answers on page 51

1. Which of the EU accession countries was the first to participate in the ESC?
2. Which of the EU accession countries was the first to host the ESC?
3. And which of the EU accession countries has never yet participated in the ESC?
4. Which seaside resort in Poland holds an annual music festival that, during the 70s and 80s, was the Intervisio song contest run by the Eastern Bloc in competition to the ESC?
5. Why was Cyprus' entry to the 1988 Eurovision Song Contest disqualified?
6. This years Latvian participants Fomins & Kleins recorded their ESC entry in how many different languages?
7. Slovenia has participated in the ESC final on nine occasions, but only one of its entries has received the maximum "douze points" - and that from two countries. Which song?
8. Lithuania is the only one of the three Baltic States still waiting for its first ESC victory. What was their highest placing to date, and with which song?
9. A Lithuanian-born singer has, however, finished 2nd in the contest. Who was she?
10. Poland's debut entry "To Nie Ja!" scored more points than all of the country's other entries put together. True or false?

Richard's Round Up

Before I start this Round Up I'd like to thank a few people who made Istanbul so special. Firstly, and most obviously, Ruslana for being so much fun and a genuine person, to all of Ruslana's team for their hard work, to Elif and her father for their belief, patience and persistence, to Paddy and Lorraine for being the new face of Eurovision in the UK, to Jari and his team, the guys in Athena, Simon and Blue Cafe, Lena, Mark from Belgium, Pieter von Schloten and to all the fans I met, especially Simon, Bill, Malcolm and Judy.

2004 will be a year to remember for many reasons but it also saw the return of ABBA to the singles charts after an absence of 12 years. "Waterloo" reached number 20, but it also reached number 1 in the 7 inch sales chart. "Gold" returned to the Top 5 in the albums chart and they also made the Top 20 Music DVD chart with "In Concert". Their 'Last Ever Video' is set for release at the end of June and is also likely to storm the charts. Did anybody spot Per Svensson from the Cardigans? An extended version of the "Waterloo" album is also due for imminent release too which promises to include the German and French versions of the title track.

Not only did ABBA return to the UK charts, but they were joined by Agnetha. Her cover of the Cilla Black classic "If I Thought You'd Ever Change Your Mind" reached number 11 and the album, "My Colouring Book", peaked one place lower on the album chart. Both positions were new highs for Agnetha's career and her first chart appearance as a solo artist for over 20 years. "When You Walk In The Room" is due to be the albums second single. Unusually for Cliff Richard his latest release failed to chart. "2003 World

Tour" (EMI 5781692) was issued but even Cliff's loyal fan base couldn't muster support for this somewhat cheap cash-in. The tracks were taken from his world tour last year and although the DVD sold well, fans decided that Cliff without the visuals wasn't worth the money!

Alcazar had a third single issued from "Alcazarized". "Menage A Trois" (BMG 82876532702) follows "Not A Sinner, Nor A Saint" and "Love Life".

Ronnie Carroll is set to return to the recording studio with a single to be issued to promote the Rainbow Party; a new political party. Apparently a squatter selling the house he became legal owner of last year, and who is also a fan of Ronnie and the new party, has financed it.

Congratulations to James Fox on equalling Jessica Garlick's number 13 peak on the singles chart. Watch out for his Radio 1 'Live Lounge' recording of "Waterloo" which is likely to surface as a bonus track on any future releases.

New Seekers fans will be interested to know that a Peter Doyle "Rarities" CD has been issued in Australia. The CD contains tracks recorded before Peter's untimely death last year. Details can be found at his website. Elsewhere BR Music have issued several DVD's including "Greatest Hits" titles by Brotherhood Of Man (BD3018-9) and Guys N Dolls (BD3017-9). Both DVD's contain their ESC/SFE entries.

Despite rumours of a split and a pregnancy t.A.T.u. are due to return to the recording studio this summer for a new album. The only thing that seems definite is that the duo have parted with their manager.

Having been a long time fan of Brian Kennedy I'm always looking for Eurovision connections. His first was a duet with Ronan Keating, his second was as a composer for Ireland's 'You're

A Star' in 2003 and now I find that his "Get On With Your Short Life" (Curb 0927475642) album contains vocal contributions from Imaani. Apparently Imaani has also provided lead vocals on some Incognito tracks and performed a duet with Dutch artist Gordon in 1999 called "Ask" on Dutch TV. As far as I know this was a performance only and the track was never recorded.

Another former UK entrant providing backing vocals is Sally Ann Triplett who, in the late nineties, worked with Craig McLachlan in 'Greasel'. I suppose I shouldn't have been surprised to find that she sings on "Angel" and "Keith" on his 1996 CD "Craig McLachlan & The Culprits" (Roadrunner RR 88442).

Pearl Carr and Teddy Johnson both make appearances on new compilation CD's as soloists. Teddy Johnson performs "Because Of You" and "Beloved Be Faithful" on "The Big Beautiful Male Voice" (Memoir CDMOIR 572) and Pearl Carr sings "This Can't Be Love" on "A Portrait Of Farnon" (Sanctuary CDAJA 5509). Robert Farnon, of course, wrote "Country Girl" for Kenneth McKellar in 1966 and his instrumental version surfaces on "Showcase For Soloists" (Vocallion CDLK 4238).

Celine Dion has a new album and single out. "A New Day - Live In Las Vegas" (Epic 5152252) features two new studio tracks one of which is the first single to be taken from it, "You And I". The album is also available on DVD. Meanwhile "Have You Ever Been In Love" was issued as a single in some territories from her original "A New Day Has Come" CD.

The Shadows' current farewell tour has produced a surge of re-issues and compilations. EMI has issued "Greatest Hits" (5781982) and "More Hits" (5781992), both of which feature mono

and stereo versions of the original album plus bonus tracks, and the four CD set "Complete Singles 1959-1980" (5781812). The Shadows' "Life Story" is further issued by Universal TV (9817819) and is an overview of their entire career, but mainly featuring new recordings. "Life Story" took the group into the Top 10 for the first time since 1990 and a Green Mountain Mix of "Wonderful Land" even appeared in the dance charts.

Also back in the charts after 27 years are the Bay City Rollers. "The Very Best Of" (BMG 82876608192) has so far peaked at number 11. Fronted by former SFE entrant Les McKeown, the group have also had their first four albums all re-issued, re-mastered and with bonus tracks.

Atomic Kitten return to the Top 5 with their "Greatest Hits" (Innocent CDSIN 16) that includes a re-recorded version of the groups first hit "Right Now". The song originally featured vocals by Kerry Katona, but the group have re-recorded it with ex-Precious vocalist Jenny Frost, who replaced Kerry in 2001.

Although it has yet to gain an official UK release Scooter's German pre-selection entry, "Jigga Jigga", did reach number two in the Dance Charts when All Around The World Records serviced it to DJ's.

Jane Birkin releases a new CD of duets including "Surannee" on which she is joined by Francoise Hardy. "Rendezvous" is released by EMI (5987602). France Gall has a new "Best Of" issued by Universal (9815035) in France.

Engelbert Humperdinck returns to the Top 10 albums with "His Greatest Love Songs" (Universal 9817857) that includes his SFE cover "Another Time Another Place" and the 1962 San Remo entry "Quando Quando Quando". EMI have also issued another Vera

Lynn compilation but sadly it fails to include her English cover of the 1964 ESC winner "This Is My Prayer". Elaine Paige's latest collection, "Centre Stage" (Warner WSMCD 171) includes two new duets with Sir Cliff Richard. The lady behind part of the 1998 interval act, Patti Boulaye, releases "In His Kingdom" on Kingsway (KMCD 2547).

Former Mabel vocalist, Mike Tramp, also used to be singer with White Lion before going solo and they issue "Last Roar" on Mausoleum (CD 251034). Peter Andre returns to the Top 3 with "Insania" and it's taken from the album "The Long Road Back" which debuted at a lowly 44. Fabrizio Faniello has "When We Danced" issued as a single in Germany. It's on the ZYX label (ZYX 002118).

"Exotic Mixture" is the title of a double CD retrospective of Roy Wood. It's issued on Repertoire (REP 4744) and includes his recording of "Songs Of Praise" which he wrote for the New Seekers pre-selection in 1972.

I recently found a UK promo for the BrainStorm single "Maybe" (EMI CDEMDJ 608) featuring the radio edit, BTH radio remix, BTH extended remix, Boyza Fishbone radio remix and Boyza Fishbone extended remix.

Lulu fans may be interested to know that she makes an appearance on the new Kool & The Gang CD "The Hits Reloaded" (Virgin VTDCD 618). The double album features new versions of the groups' hits performed as duets with other artists. Lulu and the London Community Gospel Choir join the band on a re-working of "Celebration". Good to hear that Terry Wogan is still supporting Lulu's "Back On Track" album by giving "Roll The Dice" a regular spin.

In the mid-nineties Lulu co-wrote a song called "My Angel Is Here". As far as I know Lulu never recorded it but

Wynonna Judd included it on her "Revelations" album (CURB 4838072). The song won a Grammy. In 1974 Lulu recorded four songs with David Bowie. "The Man Who Sold The World" was released as a single and it was backed with "Watch That Man". Apparently an album was in the pipeline but artistic differences led to the project being shelved and it was rumoured that Bowie wiped Lulu's vocals from the remaining tracks. However, in recent years a version of "Dodo" has surfaced on bootlegs as a duet. The song was originally titled "Can You Hear Me" and David's solo version ended up on the "Diamond Dogs" album. To mark its 30th anniversary the album has been re-issued with a bonus disc of out-takes and alternative versions. This includes "Dodo" but, at the time of writing, I can't confirm if it is the Lulu version or not. Although the group appeared to disappear without trace in 1983 I can report that Sweet Dreams did release a second single. "Electric" was issued in August 1983 on Ariola (ARO 317) but it

is credited to Dreams which is why it's probably remained elusive for so long. Despite his poor showing in Istanbul Chris Doran can take comfort from the fact he held the number 1 position in Ireland for several weeks. Incidentally, he was joined in the charts by the runner up, James Kilbane, whose "Losing You" (Sony 6748752) reached number 12.

Lara Fabian has a new English language album out. "A Wonderful Life" has just entered the French Top 10. Rosenstoltz's latest album "Herz" (Island) is in the Top 10 in Germany. Finally, despite only peaking at number 47 in the UK, "Wild Dances" is better appreciated in Belgium where it topped the Flemish charts. Congratulations Ruslana and well done to EMI for getting the single a prompt UK release, and to The Box for their support. It was therefore surprising that given Woolworth's sponsorship of The Box they failed to stock "Wild Dances". Their failure cost Ruslana a Top 40 placing! Oh well that's the UK for you!

Junior Eurovision 2004

Originally scheduled for Manchester, ITV have unexpectedly withdrawn from organising the second Junior Eurovision Song Contest.

To date no official reason has been given, but the European Broadcasting Union quickly agreed that last years winners, Croatia, could host the event in Zagreb.

However, as Vision went to press it was announced that no venue is available in Croatia and that the show, which will be broadcast on 20th November 2004, will now move to Lillehammer, Norway.

Twenty countries were expected to take part, although Germany has recently decided not to participate – the second year an entry was offered by the Germans and then withdrawn.

The current line up consists of : Belarus, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, France, FYR Macedonia, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

Although several countries have already commenced choosing their entry, it is not known at present how the UK entry will be selected. Therefore, keep watching those television schedules for a possible show on ITV in September!

Euro Curios

Thomas Latham returns with some more curiosities!

A while ago I was looking at American singers who recorded cover versions of Eurovision entries. Well, to add to that information, Graham Welch has let me know that Lesley Gore (of "It's My Party" fame) released a cover version of the Spanish winner from 1968 under the title "He Gives Me Love (La La La)" in the United States (Mercury 72819). Released in May 1968, the B side was "Brand New Me" and apparently it got to a lowly number 91 in the American charts. In October 1968 it was featured on the LP "Lesley Gore Golden Hits Vol. 1" (Mercury SR611852). To my ear, it's slightly more low-key than Massiel's original and it can be found on a couple of CD's. Firstly, there's the double CD "It's My Party : The Mercury Anthology" (B000001EMS) and then there's 1994's box set from Bear Family entitled "It's My Party!", which features all of the tracks she recorded for Mercury between 1963 and 1969 on five CD's (BCD 15-742-EI). "He Gives Me Love (La La La)" was also released on Columbia sung by American Donna Marie (who also recorded as Marie La Donna, Tracy Russell and sang for the Archies). With the B side "Sunshine Mind" this single can be found on Columbia 4-44549. I've often wondered how Andy Hill kept himself busy after Bucks Fizz's chart career was laid to rest in the 1980's. Well, for a few years in the 1990's he worked with former Chicago frontman Peter Cetera. Peter's previous Eurovision connection was, of course, that he was the driving force behind Agnetha Faltskog's third English language album "I Stand Alone" (WEA

WX150), and duetted with her on the single "I Wasn't The One" (WEA YZ177). In 1992 Peter released an album entitled "World Falling Down" which includes his version of "Have You Ever Been In Love" (from SFE 83) which he co-produced with Andy. It was released on CD (Warner Bros 9 26894-2) but has since been deleted. Although some internet stockists have a few copies left, these are apparently running low so get your orders in quickly.

Frances Ruffelle fans will want to know that she recorded a duet with Christopher Cross entitled "I Will (Take You Forever)" which was released as a single in 1988 on Reprise (W7795). To make things easy for you it has appeared on a number of CD's over the years. The original album, "Back Of My Mind" on Warner, was released in 1988 and on CD in 1998. It also features on 2001's "The Definitive Christopher Cross" (Warner) and 2002's "The Very Best of Christopher Cross" (Rhino Records). The latter seems to contain a remix of the song, so this is turning into an expensive month for all you completists out there.

There are always those who insist that the Eurovision Song Contest is a very serious matter. For those who don't there's a recent cover version that you'll enjoy. Yes, The Wurzels have covered "Ooh Aah Just A Little Bit". I haven't laughed so much in ages. You'll find it on "Never Mind The Bullocks Ere's The Wurzels" on Cruisin' Records (Zen 00262). Go on treat yourselves! It really will brighten up your day.

While you're laughing at The Wurzels, why not cringe at a version of "Save Your Kisses For Me" while you're at it. A cover version by Arthur Mullard and Hylda Baker has appeared on CD. It features on the two CD box set "The Best of British Comedy" from Disky

Communications in the Netherlands (CB 795122). It doesn't match the pure awfulness of their hit version of "You're The One That I Want", but should raise a smile nevertheless. Curiously the song is credited to Arthur English on the packaging, but don't believe it. I know Arthur Mullard's dulcet tones when I hear them.

In case you think these comedy versions of Eurovision songs are a peculiarly British thing, then let me tell you about Emilio El Moro. This comical chap from Spain (whose real name was Emilio Jiménez) recorded a number of cover versions in the 1960's. On the double CD "Cincuenta Grandes Exitos De Emilio El Moro" (Rama Lama Music RO 50312) you'll find his (Spanish language) versions of "Non Ho L'Eta" (IT64 as "No Tengo Edad") "Puppet On A String" (UK67 as "Marionetas En La Cuerda"), "Hablemos Del Amor" (ES67) and "Yo Soy Aquel" (ES66 rewritten as "Tu Eres Raquel").

While we're on the subject of releases from Rama Lama Music in Spain, there are a couple of others worth checking out for Spanish cover versions of Eurovision entries. "Gelu Vol. 2 – Todos sus EP's en discos La Voz de su Amo (1963-1965)" is another double CD (RO 51452) and features "No Tengo Edad" (IT64), "Ella Es Muy Bonita" (FR63), "Jamás Jamás" (FR65), and "Yo Te Amé" (UK65). Meanwhile, "Betina – Todas Sus Grabaciones (1964-1971)" is a further double CD (RO 51402) that has "Marionetas En La Cuerda" (UK67), "Mi Amor Es Azul" (LUX67) and "Congratulations" (UK68).

Talking of Spain there are a number of instrumental versions of one of the most successful Spanish entries, "Eres Tu" (also known as "Touch The Wind"). Guitarist Sonny James's version appears on the CD "Complete Columbia & Monument Hits" from

Collector's Choice that was released on 14th July 2002 (CCM02972). Meanwhile, you'll find another instrumental version, this time by Percy Faith and his Orchestra, on the CD "Fascination" from Sony. It was released on 1st December 1995 (A-15898). Clarinetist Acker Bilk, the ESC 1977 interval act, also recorded a version that can be found on "Magic Clarinet Of Acker Bilk" on Emporio EMPRCD513 (it also seems to be available from K-Tel).

The Allison's' 1961 UK entry "Are You Sure" was recorded in a variety of languages by other artists, and under a number of completely different titles. In French the song became "Soeur Anne" ("Sister Anne") and one version can be found as a bonus track on Richard Anthony's Bear Family CD release "Let's Twist Again" (CD 497 581). In Germany it was entitled "Ahoi-Ohe" and was recorded, among others, by The Blue Diamonds and released as the B side to "Traum Von Mir" on Fontana (266 226 TF). Again Bear Family have produced a CD with it on, so look out for "Ramona" (BCD 16437). As I find other cover versions of this song available on CD I'll let you all know.

If you have any information about releases that may be of interest to others, or even just questions, then please drop a line to Thomas Latham, 286 Russell Court, Woburn Place, London WC1H 0NF.

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Au Revoir

During the first half of 2004 Eurovision has said goodbye to three former participants at the annual contest.

Minouche Barelli, who represented Monaco in 1967 with the memorable "Boum Badaboum", died on 20th February. She had been suffering from a rare illness for more than 12 months.

Cetin Alp, who represented Turkey in 1983 with "Opera", died a few days after Istanbul hosted Eurovision. Feeling unwell, Cetin cancelled an appearance at a pre-contest event organised by OGAE Turkey, but his death on 18th May was unexpected.

Most tragic was the death of Gundars 'Mumins' Mauševics, bass guitarist with Latvian debutants BrainStorm. Having returned from a tour of Ukraine with the band, Gundars was killed in a car crash on the outskirts of Riga in May. Known personally to Vision and OGAE (UK), his death came as a terrible shock.

On behalf of all our readers Richard Crane and Gordon Lewis would like to offer sincere condolences to the families of Minouche, Cetin and Gundars.

Record Reviews

ALSOU 19 Universal
Russia 0673079

On her third album Alsou sounds more confident in her vocals and, although all the songs are in Russian, she reminds me vocally of Celine Dion around the time of "Unison". Unfortunately all the titles and credits are in Russian so it's difficult to tell you much more about it. Alsou is supposed to be recording an English version of the album but, although pleasant, it lacks the bite of her previous English album.
RC

RICHARD ANTHONY *Let's Twist Again* EMI France
5316832

Richard Anthony is the French equivalent of Cliff Richard and this compilation features recordings from 1958 to 1961 including French versions of several rock 'n' roll classics. These

include "D in Love", originally by Cliff Richard, "Tell Laura I Love Her", a number 1 for Ricky Valance, "Ya Ya Twist", a hit for Petula Clark, and for Eurovision completists a French recording of "Are You Sure" titled "Souer Anne". RC



BAY CITY ROLLERS *Rollin'*
BMG 82876608202

BAY CITY ROLLERS *Once Upon A Star* BMG
82876608212

BAY CITY ROLLERS *Dedication* BMG
82876608552

BAY CITY ROLLERS *Wouldn't You Like It* BMG
82876608222

Although Les McKeown's SFE entry has yet to surface in any format, here we have superb re-issues of the Bay City Rollers first four albums. Each album comes with its original artwork and with bonus tracks. Unfortunately the 'extensive sleeve notes' are hardly extensive but they do provide an insight into the group's popularity at the time. They could have been improved by more recording details but that's a minor detail when listening to the music. This is what good pop music is all about, great tunes and simple lyrics which is probably because Phil Coulter and Bill Martin wrote six songs on "Rollin'" plus the four bonus tracks and "All Of Me Loves All Of You" and "The Bump" which appear as bonus tracks on "Once Upon A Star". As the group progressed their sound matured but although they grew up many of their fans failed to grow with them. Their final chart album was "It's A Game" in 1977 not yet

re-issued. An unsuccessful album followed a year later. Here we have the guys at their commercial peak so dig out your tartan scarves and relive 'roller-mania' all over again. This is great driving music. RC

BARRY BLUE *Dancing On A Saturday Night .. Best Of Sanctuary* CMDDD828

This double CD collects together most of Barry Blue's recordings from his hitmaking period between 1973 and 1975 incorporating a number of singles, B sides and album tracks. Also swept up are a motley number of recordings from the 80s and early 90s. One track is a duet with Lynsey De Paul of "Rock Bottom" fame. Sadly, there are no recordings of Barry's songs for Europe. If you have the other three collections of Blue's songs reviewed in recent editions, you'll find there are only four new tracks here. It is a shame no room could be found for the singles Barry released under his real name, Barry Green, in the late 60s. This is yet another good compilation of one of the best songwriters from the 70s. MKP

BLUE CAFÉ *Fanaberia* EMI Poland 5838042

I'm not a fan of 'jazz' music but Blue Cafe have taken the genre and turned it on its head! The music is bluesy and ballsy, funky and feisty, sexy and sassy, it makes you wanna dance slow, it makes you want to shake your tail feather and it makes you want to move up closer to the one you love. Welcome to the world of

Blue Cafe. Although Tatiana is the focal point of the group it is the band that make you notice her distinctive vocal style as they compliment her voice. "Fanaberia" is the group's debut CD and this version was re-issued in 2003 to include their pre-selection entry "You May Be In Love" and three videos. On "I'll Be Waiting" Tatiana's voice sounds so fragile at the start but as the song continues she reminds me of Julia Fordham. On "Devil" she sounds like Queen Latifah. "Buja" is a funk work-out whilst other standout tracks include, "Stefan", on which Tatiana raps against a ska backdrop, and the Prince like "Tango". Expect the unexpected!

BLUE CAFÉ *Demi-Sec* EMI Poland 5968462

"Demi-Sec" was issued last year and continues the theme. The chorus of the opening track makes you want to raise your glass in the air, sway from side to side and sing a long. The next track is a slice of seventies funk and this is followed by the glorious "Love Song". If you want to understand what Blue Cafe are all about then "I Love Jazz" will tell you! Pawel takes over vocals on "Share Your Love" sounding like a cross between Louis Armstrong and Joe Cocker. "Equal" wouldn't sound out of place on a Human League album with "By My Side" being comparable to Barry White and Lisa Stansfield duetting. While listening I'm reminded of Sade, Swing Out Sister, Coldcut, Millie Jackson, Bjork as well as the

other artists I've already mentioned. Blue Cafe are truly unique and I would like to thank Polish TV and Simon for bringing them to the Eurovision stage. Let's hope the rest of Europe notices them too. This is a cafe that I'll be a regular patron of. RC



BUCKS FIZZ *Bucks Fizz* BMG 8287661462

BUCKS FIZZ *Are You Ready* BMG 82876621442

BUCKS FIZZ *Hand Cut* BMG 82876621452

BUCKS FIZZ *I Hear Talk* BMG 82876621432

Like EMI, BMG appear to be pulling out all the stops with their current re-issue programme. A re-assessment of Bucks Fizz is long overdue and these CD's are a good place to start. So far only "Are You Ready" had previously surfaced on CD. "Bucks Fizz" was released in 1981, peaked at number 14, and contains the groups first three singles. The original 10 tracks are doubled with the additional bonus tracks that include five Spanish recordings, including "Land Of Make Believe", two B sides and the previously unissued "I Used To Love The Radio". However the 12" version of "Heart Of Stone"

and "Love In A World Gone Mad" are out of place on this CD as they both date from later recording sessions.

"Are You Ready" finds the group sounding more mature and features two number one singles and the excellent "Now Those Days Are Gone". The eight bonus tracks include three B sides (one of which, "Takin' Me Higher", was a group composition), two previously unreleased songs, a couple of live tracks which date from a later period and the 12" version of "My Camera Never Lies". "Are You Ready" was the group's only Top 10 album and was on the charts for almost six months. "Another Night" won the best song prize at the Yamaha Song Festival. If you were hoping that you could get away without buying the re-issue because you have the Camden CD then you'd be wrong. The Camden issue features "What's Love Got To Do With It" which is excluded from any of these current re-issues.

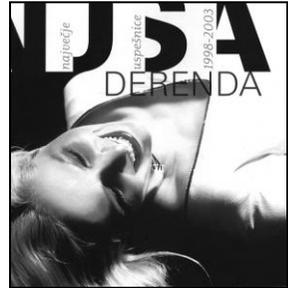
Despite featuring some quality songs "Hand Cut" is often overlooked. Although it made the Top 20 and was on the charts for three months it only features two hits. Surprisingly it only features six bonus tracks, three of which are group compositions that appeared as B sides, and fails to add "When We Were Young" and "Rules Of The Game" that were issued in the same year. It does add the extended mix of "London Town" however. The real gem on this album is the fragile "You Love, Love"

which was issued as a single to promote "The Best Of Bucks Fizz" which appeared on Stylus several years later.

"I Hear Talk" is a masterpiece that was dogged by tragedy. It peaked at number 66 and included the hits "Talking In Your Sleep", "I Hear Talk" and the prophetic "Golden Days". By the time this album came out it looked as if the groups' own Golden Days were well and truly over. Internal bickering and the tragic coach crash left the group shattered and declining sales didn't help. "I Hear Talk" is a forgotten masterpiece that sounds ahead of its time now. Among the eight bonus tracks are "Where Do I Go Now", a B side written by Cheryl Baker, and another B side, "Pulling Me Under", written by Bobby G. The songs seem to express their frustrations. There are a further four B sides and the previously unreleased tracks "Evil Man" and "Young Hearts". It is likely that these were remnants from studio sessions for a fifth album with RCA. It's a pity that there's no room here for "You And Your Heart So Blue" or "Magical".

Bucks Fizz got better and better with each album but it's a shame that BMG couldn't have been more thoughtful about the bonus tracks. Several are on the wrong album chronologically, and six single A sides are missing as are four extended mixes. It would have been interesting to see the two live medleys added and the Australian "Bucks Fizz Album Medley" as well. "Oh Suzanne" and "What's Love

Got To Do With It" could have been given a home here too, but all those minor gripes aside these four re-issues make a welcome addition to any collector of 80's pop or any Bucks Fizz fans. Now all we need is a re-issue of "Writing On The Wall" and compilations of material by Cheryl Baker, Co Co, Brooks and Bobby G! RC



NUSA DERENDA *Najvecje Uspesnice* 1998-2003
Sazas 107993

With "Energy", Nusa Derenda attracted a lot of favourable reviews in Copenhagen. Her brand of high energy propelled her into the hearts of many of Eurovision's gay viewers in particular and this greatest hits package will only confirm her popularity. The 20 track compilation includes her 2001 Eurovision entry in its original Slovene, "Ne, Ni Res", and her 1999 and 2003 entries in the EMA national final, "Nekaj Lepega Je V Meni" and "Prvic In Zadnjic" respectively, the latter one of the album's highlights. It is possible to trace a development in style over the years of Nusa's career, though it is the album's numerous dance

tracks that prove her forte. If this album doesn't have you spinning around your living room, it may be time to hang up your hot pants. GW

DSCHINGHIS KHAN *The History Of Dschinghis Khan* BMG 74321 67305 2

This collection was released in 1999, but I've not seen it before. It contains a number of remixes of Dschinghis Khan classics including a rap in "Moskau", an update of their ESC entry, two versions of "The Story Of Dschinghis Khan" and new to CD are "Der Verrater", "Machu Picchu" and "Corrida". This is another fantastic collection, complementing the three CD set that was released a few years back. It is interesting to speculate whether Dschinghis Khan would have won if they had competed in an age of televoting. MKP

LARA FABIAN *A Wonderful Life* Epic EPC 515167 2

Incredibly, it's been five years since Lara released her first English language album, which contained the international "I Will Love Again". For this album Lara has looked to former Take That singer Gary Barlow to co-write some of the material. The collaboration is most successful on the opening track, the airplay friendly "No Big Deal", and on "Intoxicated". She has also reprised a couple of tracks from her 2001 French-language album, "Nue", with "J'y Crois Encore" becoming "I've Cried Enough" this time around and "Silence" becoming, er, "Silence". The title track is a cover of the 1987 Black hit, arranged in a

much jazzier style than the original. Though Lara is without doubt a great singer, the jury is out on whether there is enough to this album to make her a household name worldwide. GW



AGNETHA FALTSKOG *My Colouring Book* WEA 50504673122

Why do I always shudder when I see an artist is recording an album of cover versions? Well, it's usually for a good reason because, like this one, it's full of duff versions of superior recordings. Usually the original is the best, but not always. There are some tracks on here that work, for instance the title track, but that's usually because I'm not familiar with the original. It's always good to see artists like Agnetha Faltskog back in the charts but I'd much rather hear something original in preference to her trip down memory lane. While "What Now My Love" and "I Can't Reach Your Heart" work as a fan of Cilla Black I find "If I Thought You'd Ever Change Your Mind" and "A Fool Am I" inferior. There's also a cover of the Chris Andrews song "Remember Me". Unfortunately Agnetha's

version of "Past Present and Future" loses all the heartbreak of the original by the Shangrilas. Did she realise it was about rape? Some songs should be left alone and that's certainly one of them. This would make a good EP! RC

ROBERT GOULET *My Love Forgive Me / Truly Yours* Collectables USA COL 5847

This American crooner is probably best known for his starring role in "Camelot" alongside Julie Andrews and Richard Burton in 1960. Since then he has recorded almost 20 albums and this CD pairs two of them from the early sixties. Among the tracks are "Softly As I Leave You", co-written by Hal Shaper, "What Kind Of Fool Am I?", co-written by Leslie Bricusse, and "Choose" which was written by Lionel Bart for Matt Monro to sing in "A Song For Europe". RC

MICHALIS HADJIYIANNIS *Best Of ...* EMI 7243 5 83568 0 9

Michael represented Cyprus in 1998 and has enjoyed a successful Hellenic career after "Genesis". This collection gathers together tracks from Michael's three albums since 1998 in Greece plus a couple of other singles. There are 12 tracks, plus four remixes and a separate DVD included in the package. However, this doesn't include "Genesis", nor any tracks from the album he recorded in 1998 for the Poplife label in Cyprus, nor his 1997 debut album, nor indeed his recent single which was a hit in

Spain. Hadjiyiannis smoulders vocally on these musically dramatic tracks. No doubt in a few years time a fuller retrospective will become available. MKP

ICH TROJE *The Best Of ...* Universal 9800306

This is a Polish language collection and is available in both a single CD format and a double CD. Rounding up 11 tracks from previous albums and including four new tracks into the mix, this is a worthwhile collection. Both "Keine Grenzen" (in the original version) and German pre-selection entry "Liebe Macht Spass" (here in Polish) are on the CD and this neatly complements the German CD reviewed a couple of issues back. Most of the songs are Troje composed originals, but there are covers of a couple of German schlager hits of recent years; Matthias Reim's "Verdammt Ich Lieb' Dich" and Die Artzte's "Manner Sind Schweine". Overall the sound is very schlager influenced and "Keine Grenzen" is the classiest track here. Worth investigating if you liked that. MKP

ILHAN IREM *Seni Seryorum* EMI Turkey 1003592

ILHAN IREM *Romans* EMI Turkey 1002582

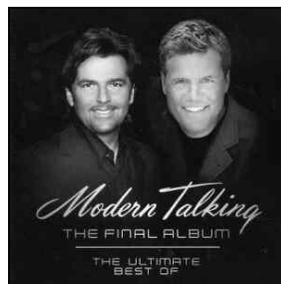
Ilhan Irem was the composer of Turkey's first Top 10 placing "Halley" by Klips ve Onlar and has since become one of Turkey's most prolific songwriters and recording artists. Since 1976 he has released over twenty albums and has three 'best of

compilations to his name. "Seni Seryorum" was released in 2002 and captures the essence of Turkey beautifully. Vocally Ilhan reminds me of Zucchero but musically comparisons are pointless. His music is passionate. It is ethnic without being alienating. It has the warmth of the Turkish sun setting over the Bosphorous, the majesty and awe of the mosques and the blend of culture that makes Turkey so unique. It will be a lasting reminder of the best of Turkey. "Romans" was released in 1994 and is described a meditation version of "Koridor" which was released in the same year and, although it has similarities to "Seni Seryorum", it sounds more like a soundtrack album. It has spoken vocals and a diverse blend of musical styles, but I'm not sure I could meditate to this. There is no denying Ilhan Irem's talent and fans of world music will particularly enjoy "Seni Seryorum". Ilhan is the sort of artist that Peter Gabriel would respect and let's hope it's not too long before we hear more. He would be the perfect choice for a future Eurovision entry for Turkey - traditional but contemporary. RC

ZELJKO JOKISIMOVIC *The Best Of...* City Records CD 000 251

This 18 track compilation drawn from his first three albums shows that Zeljko is a real talent. I was expecting songs similar to "Lane Moje" (not included) but boy was I surprised. Most of these

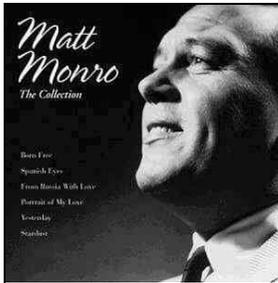
songs are surprisingly danceable, with many showing distinct traces of Turkish pop. "7 Godina" definitely borrows from "Reise Nach Jerusalem", but as there is no information about these songs on the inlay card, I can't say whether Siegel is credited. On each playing a new song becomes my favourite, but in particular look out for "Karavan", "Samo Ti" and "Dukati". This album is spectacular and whether you think that Zeljko's voice is like honey (like one of our readers) or that "Lane Moje" was the best song this year or you just want something classy to listen to BUY THIS. You will not be disappointed. Available from www.Yu4you.com MKP



MODERN TALKING *The Final Album* BMG 82876 54552-2

Billed as the ultimate 'best of' this twenty track collection released following Modern Talking's recent, and second, split spans the singles chronologically from "You're My Heart, You're My Soul" to "TV Makes The Superstar" including all the hits from both the first and second incarnation of Germany's most successful

band and brainchild of Dieter Bohlen, songwriter extraordinaire. Listened to in one go, it is noticeable that many of the singles plough the same danceable furrow with nary a ballad in between. Perhaps at heart they were best experienced in the short three minute form, but surely an ultimate Modern Talking collection could contain a few album tracks. Mind you, who's to speculate against Dieter and Thomas reforming the duo in a few years time? MKP



MATT MONRO *The Collection* EMI 5820842

MATT MONRO *For The Present / The Other Side Of The Stars* EMI 5971762

MATT MONRO *Sings The Classics* MFP CDMFPE 6426

While there are still many Matt Monro tracks that are awaiting their debut on CD, including several SFE tracks, EMI are making major inroads into Matt's back catalogue. "The Collection" is a double CD featuring 36 tracks and includes ten CD debuts including "Mama Packed A Picnic Tea", "How Do You Do", "It's A Breeze" and his tribute to Diana Princess Of Wales, "Diana". It was his penultimate single

before his untimely death. It also features eight tracks that were previously only available on the box set "The Singers Singer". "For The Present / The Other Side Of The Stars" re-issues two complete albums from 1973 and 1975 respectively. Although the bulk of these 24 tracks are inferior cover versions not worthy of Matt's vocal skills, there are gems like "Curiouser And Curiouser", "Didn't We", "Sarah's Coming Home" and "I Am". This is the third "2 on 1" CD and there are still five original Matt Monro albums on EMI awaiting CD release. Hopefully we won't have long to wait. It would be great if the remaining Song For Europe entries, obscure B sides and EP tracks could be released too, but in the meantime another gold star for EMI! "Sings The Classics" was actually released in 1998 but it's taken me this long to track down a copy! The bulk of the twenty tracks are taken from the late sixties but it does include two tracks from the "Sings Hoagy Carmichael" and his recording of "You Made Me So Very Happy" is copyright 1995, which makes it look as if it was a previously un-issued recording. If you own the "2 on 1" CD's then there's very little to interest you here, but Matt's timeless voice makes any CD a pleasure to listen to. RC

LENA PHILIPSSON *100% Lena Mariann* AKCD 3290 I have to admit to not being a fan of "It Hurts" but Lena (and David Hutchison) won me over in the end. Indeed, despite illness and the

lateness of the day Lena Philipsson won us all over! This album, released in 2001, is the perfect chance to catch up with Lena's past output and it includes her previous Melodifestival entries. Roxette fans may be interested to know that three of the tracks here are co-written by Per Gessle. If you enjoyed "It Hurts" then you'll find 20 pieces of equally tasty Swedish pop here. "Boy" and "Cheerio" are both sung in English. Favourite tracks include "Jag Kanner (Tio Sento)", "Mansken I Augusti", "Sag Det Nu", co-written by Anders Glenmark, and the ballad "Segla" which was co-written by Lena. Hopefully there's a new album in the pipeline and we'll hear a lot more from Lena Philipsson in the future. For now we can relive the past with "100% Lena". RC

TOSE PROESKI *Ako Me Pogledas U Oci* BK Telecom CD 019

This album was released in 2002 and rocketed Tose to stardom in the Balkans. 11 tracks, one in English, show Tose's versatility across a range of musical styles from electro pop, "Luda Mala", to dramatic ballads, "Meni Hvala Nijedno". As he demonstrated on "Life", Tose has a powerful vocal presence and this is reflected on this album. This is shown to especially good effect on the brooding urgent "Cini" on which Tose duets with Esma Redzepova. Instrumentally always interesting, vocally imposing, this is an album worth hunting down. Tose should have released a new double

CD by the time you read this with all his pre-selection songs on. Until then, seek this album out. Available from www.Yu4you.com MKP



SANDIE SHAW *Wiedehopf im Mai – The Complete German* EMI 5988362

SANDIE SHAW *Marionetas En La Cuerda – The Complete Spanish* EMI 5988352

Once again EMI have excelled themselves with two superb compilations that accompany the previously issued French and Italian collections. Maybe

somebody out there is actually listening to our pleas! The Spanish CD will be of most interest to ESC fans as it includes Spanish recordings of "Puppet On A String" plus the Song For Europe entries "Tell The Boys", "Had A Dream Last Night" and "Ask Any Woman". In fact the only pre-selection song that doesn't appear to have been recorded in another language is "I'll Cry Myself To Sleep". There also doesn't appear to be any foreign versions of "One Day", performed by Kathy Kirby but also recorded by Sandie. Most of her hits are here in Spanish including

"Girl Don't Come", "Long Live Love", "Monsieur Dupont" and "Those Were The Days" which was a hit everywhere apart from the UK! Both CD's are superbly packaged and presented, but the German CD has one major drawback. If you have the Bear Family compilation then you'd be buying this new collection for just one track, "Show Your Face". This has replaced the alternative version of "Puppet On A String" which probably makes the Bear Family CD a better purchase, but full marks to EMI for these welcome additions. The Spanish CD is an essential purchase. RC

TOMAS THORDARSON *Sig Det Løgn* Myway Music Denmark 5784382

This 12 track CD features four versions of his Eurovision entry, including the original Danish version. The remaining tracks continue the Latin feel with Tomas sounding like a cross between Justin Timberlake and Ricky Martin. "Sommer Pa Osterbro" would have made a better selection as his Eurovision entry. The only other stand out track here is the ballad "Gi' Dig God Tid". "Loco In Havana" sounds like a poor mans "Another Summer Night" and is one of three songs sung in English. With its Mediterranean rhythms this album is ideal summer listening. RC

VARIOUS *Buttercups & Rainbows* Castle CMDDD 347

This double CD collects together 50 songs written by Song For Europe veterans

Tony Macaulay and John Macleod. Among the SFE artists found here are Carl Wayne, Pickettywitch and The Foundations. No SFE songs are available, but this is a good collection of mainly Pye released tracks including "Build Me Up Buttercup" which is now a staple number at cheesy discos. MKP

VARIOUS *Eirovizijas Dziesmu Konkursa 2004* Microphon MRCD 234

This 13 track collection of the 2004 Latvian pre-selection demonstrates that Fomins & Kleins were up against some stiff competition. C-Stones, Amber and 4 Elements all had strong songs, the latter written by Lauris from FLY. His FLY colleague Martins also wrote one of the entries. As well as the 10 finalists the CD contains three reserve songs, one of which was "Disco Ice" which deserves a wider hearing and to these ears would have given Latvia its best opportunity of qualifying through the semi final round. MKP

VARIOUS *Evropesma - Evropjesma* SCG 2004 RTS CD 414657

This 20 track CD contains all the songs from the 2004 Serbian and Montengran pre-selection won by "Lane Moje", but does not include the four songs which won through from the Serbian Beovizija contest held the night before, all of which can be found on the separately released Beovizija album. The CD is neither ordered in result order nor performance order, so it's a bit of a mish mash. As well as Zeljko, who

towers over the other contestants, you get second placed boyband Peti Element, former ESC contestant Ekstra Nena and cult favourite, Madam Piano. Hearing the songs on CD reveals them in a better light than the performances at the Evropesma pre-selection indicated. Available from www.Yu4you.com MKP



VARIOUS *Germany 12 Points* BMG 82876 59766 2 Released as ever through Ralph Siegel's Jupiter Records, Countdown 2004 underwent a real makeover with chart songs required to compete and videos shown on the Viva channel. As we know, Max won with a landslide and to many these final 11 songs (one Masha was not allowed to compete as she didn't reach the Top 40) weren't camp enough for Eurovision. Listened to in isolation, this is a solid collection of contemporary music with many modern styles represented. Scooter remains a particular favourite, but Overground, Laith Al-Deen, Patrick Nuo and Mia all have great songs which were lost in the juggernaut of Stefan Raab's TV Total contest. Max is a good singer and it'll be interesting to see if his

career develops. Bonus track is Sertab's "Everyway That I Can". MKP

VARIOUS *Melodifestivalen 2004* M & L Records MLCD 006

Once again the Swedish Melodifestival pre-selection has thrown up enough songs that would win most other selections. This double CD collects together 36 entries that fought out the four quarter finals and then the Melodifestival itself. As we know Lena Philipsson won with "Det Gor Ont", but there are plenty of other catchy songs here; E-Type and "Paradise"; Fame with "Vindarna Vander Oss"; the drag queens After Dark with "La Dolce Vita"; Bosson with "Efnaristo" - the list is endless. And unlike the Norwegian, Latvian and German CD's, the CD booklet is mostly informative. If there is a criticism of the Swedish 2004 Melodifestival, then it would be that the 30th anniversary of Abba looms large over many of these songs. Now will the BBC ever give us a treat like this? MKP

VARIOUS *MGP2004 Melodi Grand Prix* Smash Music SMCD 1001

This CD was released by NRK following the 2004 Norwegian pre-selection and contains "High" alongside the eleven other songs in the competition. Generally acknowledged to be weaker than 2003, MGP still contained one of my favourite pre-selection songs, "Mr Brown", by Ja-Da. A fantastic rollicking drinking song that on CD has

the sounds of drinking companions. 70s glam rock re-creationists, Wig Wam also bring a riotous offering to the table, while the other classy song in the field comes from Arlene Wilkes. The songs are not presented on the CD in the same order as in the contest. MKP

XANDEE *1 Life* ARS CD 7408202

Without the commercial break before it there is no doubt in my mind that "1 Life" would have reached the Top 10 in Istanbul. Fans will love this great pop album. It's full of great dance tracks and well-crafted, contemporary pop tunes. Amongst them is "The Power Of Music" which is co-written by B. Lawrie who may be Lulu's brother, Billy, as it sounds as if it comes from the "Independance" album. The majority of the songs here are written by the same team that wrote "1 Life" so you know what to expect. The only cover here is Xandee's version of the Gloria Estefan penned "Cuts Both Ways", although "Ay Que Calor" sounds as if it should've been a Gloria Estefan cover. Xandee slows things down for "Heaven" and then lifts the tempo again for the radio friendly "Dreamworlds". It's back on the dance floor for "I Need You" and "Payback Time" whilst "No Puedo" returns to the Latin sound. Xandee is one of the nicest artists I've ever met and I hope her ESC result doesn't affect her career. There's no reason why it should! Perfect listening before you go out clubbing or anytime you wanna feel good! RC

Singled Out



ABBA *Waterloo* Universal 9820539

This was a somewhat disappointing re-issue that was only a top 20 hit due to the limited edition picture disc and 7". Like the original single it features "Watch Out" as the second track. RC

AGNETHA FALTSKOG *If I Thought You'd Ever Change Your Mind* WEA 375 CD 1 / 2

Agnetha's perfunctory version of the old Cilla Black hit comes on a two track and three track CD single. The first features the album version plus the blue mix, whilst CD 2 has the album version, an Almighty mix and an Almighty dub. RC

NANNE *Evig Karlek* M & L MLCDS 003

Once again Nanne comes up trumps with this Gothic disco stomper that features everything including the kitchen sink. Music on the edge is what Nanne does best and one day soon we'll see her on the Eurovision stage in her own right. This CD features five mixes of the amazing "Evig Karlek". RC

ONE *Power* Capitol Greece 5530122

For some reason this single failed to get a commercial release. Instead it was only available through 'Goodys', a fast food chain in Greece. This is a really strong track sung in English and Greek. The two track single features the album version and the Funky Fly remix. One are stronger than ever and I just hope they get the chance to stretch their wings. RC

MALCOLM ROBERTS *Mature Wine* Right Recordings RIGHT 028

If this had been given radio support there's no doubt it would have given Malcolm Roberts a posthumous hit. "Mature Wine" showcases his excellent vocals and the original can be found on his "Rio" album. The single features the radio edit, lounge edit and the instrumental. Malcolm's sudden death is a great loss and his legacy deserves a wider audience. RC



DVD/Video Reviews

ABBA *Our Last Video* Polydor 9867154

Opinion was certainly divided on ABBA's 'last video' that was featured as a special tribute during the Eurovision semi final. Excluded from the contest DVD, Polydor have featured the short film

as part of this ABBA DVD that also contains the videos from four of their major hits including "Waterloo" and "Dancing Queen". Whether this last video captures public attention remains to be seen. GL



VARIOUS *Eurovision Song Contest Istanbul 2004* EMI/CMC 5994849

Here it is! The first official DVD of the adult Eurovision Song Contest and, hopefully, not the last. A two-disc package, DVD 1 contains the semi final, brief details of each entry and a short behind the scenes documentary. DVD 2 features the final show and is followed by an interview with Ruslana. Both shows are accompanied by an information commentary featuring facts, figures and trivia, but this can be turned on or off depending on personal preferences. As expected the ABBA tribute is not included and the purist will find at least two dodgy editing cuts, but otherwise this is an excellent package which no fan should be without. GL

Vision Smalls

FOR SALE

A wide range of ESC and non-ESC CDs and vinyl records available now. For details please send large SAE to Richard Crane, 57 Roman Way, Desborough, Kettering NN14 2QL.

ESC DVDs, CDs and records for sale. CDs and records from 1958 to 2004. DVDs of ESCs 1986-2003 inclusive available, some including extras and "A Song For Europe" for that year. Visit my website for full list of items available - www.euro.songsales.homestead.com - or send an SAE/IRC for printed list to Michael Mullings, 19 Orchard Grove, London, SE20 8DN, UK or e-mail me at escorders@yahoo.co.uk

WANTED

Trying to complete my Lena Philipsson collection. Does anyone have any Lena Philipsson singles or albums, vinyl or CDs for sale? Email David Hutchison at dhutchison@omniticket.com

Looking for the following albums on cassette, vinyl or CD : Teach-In (released on Polydor 1975) and Anne-Marie David (released on Epic 1983). Contact David James, 51 Glebe Road, Hornsey, London N8 7DA

Wanted! Advertisements for "Vision". If there is something you want, or something you want to sell, why not advertise in your favourite Eurovision magazine?

ERRATUM

In issue 56 page 38 it was reported that Arlene Wilkes was not present at the 2004 Norwegian final. This was incorrect due to a mistranslation from the original report. Arlene was definitely present to provide live performances of her song that came second in both rounds of voting. Vision apologies for any misunderstanding caused.

MISCELLANEOUS

Following the death of Hamish Bruce last year, Vision would like to thank readers for their generosity that has resulted in £100 being donated in Hamish's memory to the British Heart Foundation.

Quiz Answers

1. Malta (in 1971)
2. Estonia (in 2002)
3. Czech Republic
4. Sopot
5. It had already taken part in the Cypriot final four years previously
6. Ten (Latvian, Belarussian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Dutch, Polish, Finnish, Russian and English - all available to download at <http://www.fominsunkleins.lv/endex.html>)
7. "For A Thousand Years" by Darja Svajger, in 1999
8. 13th with "U Got Style" by Skamp, in 2001
9. Lena Valaitis ("Johnny Blue" in 1981)
10. False (Edyta scored 166, the rest 264 - Ich Troje's 90-point haul in 2003 making up most of the difference)

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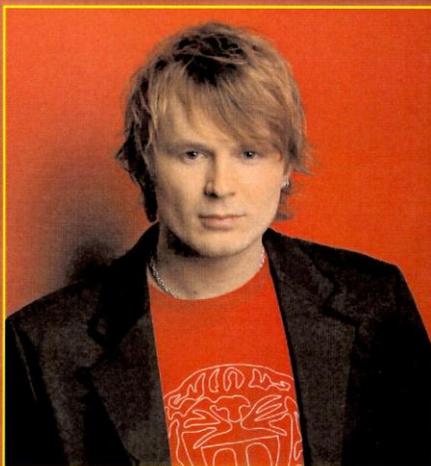
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The 'Last' Page

Norway 2004 - Final



High

Knut Anders Sørum

Received three points from Sweden