

vision

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Talking to the Troubadour

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Edlines

Welcome to another issue of **Vision** at the start of yet another New Year! It seems impossible that 12 months ago no one had heard "Flying The Flag (For You)" or "Molitva", and yet here we are with another batch of Eurosongs about to be unleashed upon the musical world.

Having celebrated 50 years of British participation in the special October issue, this latest edition contains a spread of articles reflecting the variety of interests that Eurovision now generates. However, we are particularly indebted to Lenny Kuhr, who took time out of her busy schedule to speak with **Vision** and provide a fascinating cover feature.

All that remains if for me to wish you a very Happy and Prosperous New Year, full of Eurovision tunes old and new for us all to enjoy.

Best wishes,

Gordon Lewis

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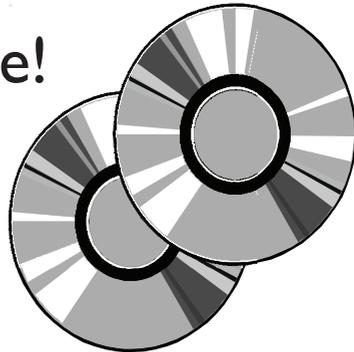
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Talking to the Troubadour

Back in Madrid in 1969, the Eurovision Song Contest saw one of the most controversial endings with four songs sharing the prize. One of those songs was “De Troubadour” and **Marcus Keppel-Palmer** speaks to its composer and singer, Lenny Kuhr from the Netherlands

With a simple straightforward lilting melody and lyrics about an itinerant musician, “De Troubadour” seems in hindsight the odd one out amongst the other winners. With Frida Boccara having passed away, Salome in Iberian hibernation and Lulu recording only sporadically, it is Lenny Kuhr who seems to have gone on from strength to strength in career terms.

When we speak, Lenny has just finished some open-air concerts in the summer and is preparing for a punishing schedule of concerts stretching from autumn 2007 until late spring 2008. Not bad for a woman who is now a grandmother and in her mid-50s.

I start off by asking Lenny to explain for her UK fans what type of music she currently performs in concert and which



her preferred style of music is? Lenny responds "I perform my type of music in concert like I always have. I am a singer/songwriter and in composing I seem to have a very personal style. My musicians often say 'that's a typical Lenny Kuhr composition'." Indeed Lenny has embraced a number of styles in the many recordings she has made. Not long ago she recorded an album inspired by Portuguese Fado music. I asked Lenny how this came about. She replies "as a young girl I had many albums of Amalia Rodriguez. Her music felt like coming home for me. I have in my singing a Latin feel and often people say they hear Fado in the way I sing." And which other types of

music inspire her? "I can be inspired by singer/songwriters; Joni Mitchell for example or Jim Croce."

We go back to talking about how it all started and the 1969 contest. I ask Lenny how it was that she came to represent the Netherlands in the Eurovision Song Contest that year, as she was a very new artist at the time. "I was asked", she states simply. Lenny elaborates. "A year before I won an important contest and part of the prize was the release of my first single. So although I was a very

**"I am a singer/
songwriter and
in composing I
seem to have a
very personal
style"**

young artist, I was not wholly unknown. I had a few songs, just written that I selected for the 1969 event. It was not like today, where songs are specially written for the occasion, but then the songs

were written just for the fun of it." Was it important to Lenny that she had composed "De Troubadour", a song in the chanson style? "Of course, in those days it was unusual to find a female artist who composed their own songs."

"It's only in the last decade that female singer/songwriters are coming out in bigger numbers. For me it has always been natural to do what I did. I considered 'The Troubadour' as a very good song with a potential to end high in the contest. Winning the Eurovision Song Contest made it an important song for me. It would not have had the impact it still has today if I had not won." Lenny continues "nevertheless when you listen to the lyrics, the song tells the story of my life and was in a way prophetic. I am a troubadour. It is a song that is still very popular in Holland and whenever I perform it (it was the 'encore' in my last show) the audience sings along."

We discuss the controversy of the 1969 contest. "The Franco regime was no issue for me. I was in the flow of the contest, the national competition and consequently the European final. My world was the world of music." Lenny clearly had a good time at the contest, but it was not without its scarier moments. "The contest in Madrid I remember very well, especially the fact that the scores for the orchestra were lost. There was no email so we had to wait for copies from Holland. They came rather late but I remember that I was very calm and said to myself 'if they are not in time I will do the song without the orchestra, just me and Piet - my guitarist.'" Thankfully, that wasn't necessary.

How did Lenny feel about the result with the chaos of four joint winners? She replies enthusiastically. "I was very happy. Being a winner is a wonderful feeling. And being one of four winners was very special. Right after this result

they changed the rules to prevent multiple winners. I expected Frida Boccara to win!" And what does Lenny think of the Eurovision now? "I do not follow the contest like I did before (with my daughters, on the sofa, each of us with a scoring list). I do not stay home for it anymore. The differences between now and then are many. For me it shifted from a competition of songs in the native tongue to a competition of acrobatics,



Lenny with the winning dress

show dance, fashion and playback music with nationalistic influences. It felt like a beautiful song was not enough. I was happy with Serbia, the winner of the last competition. Maybe it's a turning point?"

I asked Lenny how winning the Eurovision affected her career. She affirms "it was an acceleration. It gave me opportunities I would not have had without winning. But I am convinced that I would have had a successful career as a singer/songwriter without the Eurovision."

Putting Eurovision behind us, I ask

Lenny about her long career in the music business. But it hasn't all been straightforward for the troubadour as Lenny explains. "Success is a very thin line to walk on. I have had successful years and hard years. For example, in the early nineties I lost the ability to speak and consequently to sing. It took several years before my voice regained its strength and depth. About ten years after losing my voice I felt strong enough

"Winning the Eurovision Song Contest made it an important song for me. It would not have had the impact it still has today if I had not won"

to start a new theatre tour. The drive is always there, the drive to write and sing. And the source where it all comes from is still flowing." I remark that during her career, Lenny seemed to have some periods off. She explains "I lived in Israel for about a year. In that period of time though, I had much success in Holland with a hit from my album 'Dromentrein' so I travelled a lot. Living in Israel was especially important for my life. I went there with my husband and my daughter. I gave birth to my second child and left Israel a year later with my two children and my guitar."

Lenny also explained the impact that spirituality had on her musical career. "Spirituality has always been and still is very essential in my life. So it is intertwined in my music, as music is my life. When I lost my voice and felt like I could never sing again, I had to look deep in myself to find the essence. I made a

song then called 'Wie Ben Je' (Who Are You). Who am I when I am no longer the one I thought I was, when I am no longer a singer. The albums from that period are very spiritual." I also suggest that family is important to Lenny. "I got my first guitar when I was ten years old. It was a third-hand piece painted by my father to make it look good. My parents always supported my wish to become a singer." She bubbly states "my family has always been a source of inspiration for my songs. I made songs for my children, my grandchildren. We just made a song for our newest grandchild (actually the second grandchild of Rob, my husband) who will be born shortly. It is not strange to be a grandmother and still be touring and singing. It's a joy. Right now my two grandchildren from Israel are here and they just saw me in a concert for the first time in their and my life. I toured and sang as a young girl, as a mother, as a spouse and now as a grandmother. Life flows."

Time flows too and our conversation is almost at an end. I ask Lenny what her current plans are. "This year I celebrate my 40 year jubilee as singer/songwriter. In September we release a new album with 40 songs taken out of the last 40 years. Not a 'best of album' but an album with 40 songs that tell the story of my life. We recorded the album live in four concerts in May and June of this year. In October we have the premiere of a new theatre show called '40 Jaar Verlief' (40 Years In Love)." And will her UK fans ever see her perform in London? Sadly, Lenny says that singing in Dutch means that she is unlikely to come over to the UK. So any fans will have to go over to see one of her many concerts in the Low Countries. Nearly 40 years after winning Eurovision, Lenny Kuhr remains an engaging artist, composer and conversationalist. ■



Making a Big Splash!

Although critics said it wouldn't last, the 5th Junior Eurovision Song Contest was held in Rotterdam on 8th December 2007, presented by Kim-Lian and Sipke Jan. Although it is 31 years since the Netherlands hosted a Eurovision event, the Dutch still succeeded in staging an impressive show that easily rivalled the organisation of other countries.

Under the theme "Make a Big Splash", the event also profiled the work of UNICEF and all proceeds from the international televote were donated to this organisation. 17 countries took part, but the United Kingdom was noticeably absent for a second year forcing British viewers to once again huddle around their computer screens to watch the live webcast.

Perhaps more surprisingly was the absence of Spain who have, for the time being at least, permanently withdrawn from the junior show despite being the most successful country to have taken

Gordon Lewis reports on the recent Junior Eurovision Song Contest broadcast from the Ahoy Arena

part. Croatia, who won the inaugural contest in 2003, were also missing having failed to broadcast the 2006 show live. However, there was no shortage of countries wanting to take part, with Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia and Lithuania all making their debut.

As always, there were those songs and singers that were clearly 'junior' in every sense of the word, but Serbia must be congratulated on their mature effort by

Nevena Bozovic with "Pisi Mi" which surely deserved first rather than third place. However, young Ukrainian singer, Ilona Galitska, clearly modelled herself on the Helsinki performance of Verka Serdutchka. But what may be acceptable for children in Kiev was more questionable in the rest of Europe. Likewise with Greece, who also incorporated a costume change into their routine. Is this really appropriate for what is supposedly a children's television show?



Aliaksai: The proud winner

Once all the songs had been performed, international Georgian star, Katie Melua, provided the first of three interval acts with a classic performance of "If I Were A Sailboat". She was followed by Dutch band, Ch!pz who performed their new single and show theme song, "Make A Big Splash", before all 17 participants took the stage for the combined performance of "One World"; a song that had been specially commissioned for the live broadcast.

As voting commenced, most of Eastern Europe seemingly took the lead, following the example of Armenia and Georgia who were neck and neck in the early stages. As Georgia started to slip away, Armenia remained ahead until the penultimate vote saw Belarus take the lead by eight points. Tension was high, with Belarus also being the last nation to vote. By awarding Armenia just seven points, Belarus retained a one-point lead and became the first country to win the Junior Eurovision Song Contest twice.

Congratulations, therefore, to young

singer Aliaksai Zhyhalkovich and his rocky pop song, "S Druzyami" (With Friends), as well as to Belarus who are still desperately trying to emulate their Junior success at the main Eurovision Song Contest. But Minsk will still have to wait to host the contest as, unlike the May event, the winner does not host the next junior edition of the popular show. This honour has already been awarded to Cyprus and will be broadcast on 22nd November 2008. ■



Belarus rules: The winner and dancers

The results

Country	Song title	Performer	Points
Belarus	"S Druzyami"	Aliaksai Zhyhalkovich	137
Armenia	"Erazanq"	Arevik	136
Serbia	"Pisi Mi"	Nevena Bozovic	120
Georgia	"Odelia, Ranuni"	Mariam Romelashvili	116
FYR Macedonia	"Ding Ding Dong"	Rosica & Dimitar	111
Russia	"Otlichnitsa"	Alexandra Golovchenko	105
Bulgaria	"Bonbolandia"	Bon Bon	86
Sweden	"Nu Eller Aldrig"	Frida Sandén	83
Ukraine	"Urok Glamuru"	Ilona Galitska	56
Romania	"Sha La La"	4 Kids	54
The Netherlands	"Adem In, Adem Uit"	Lisa, Amy & Shelley	39
Malta	"Music"	Cute	37
Lithuania	"Kai Miestas Snaudžia"	Lina Joy	33
Cyprus	"I Mousiki Dinei Ftera"	Yiorgos Ioannides	29
Belgium	"Anders"	Trust	19
Portugal	"So Quero E Cantar"	Jorge Leiria	15
Greece	"Kapou Bertheftika"	Made In Greece	14

Celebrating Gold

Promising to be bigger and better than before, the second Birmingham Bash held on 6th October 2007 did not disappoint. For the second consecutive year, nearly 100 members and friends of OGAE UK gathered at Jurys Inn within walking distance of the National Indoor Arena that hosted the 1998 Eurovision Song Contest. And in the year that the United Kingdom submitted its 50th entry to the annual music festival, the Bash had a decidedly British feel to it.

Proceedings began with a tribute to former UK conductor and musical director, Ronnie Hazlehurst, who had died a few days earlier, with a collection raising £52.71 for BBC Children in Need. This was followed by 'Names, Names, Names' – a contest that gave delegates the chance to vote on 15 songs that, unsurprisingly, had a name in the title. The victor was Germany's 1979 entry, "Dschinghis Khan", closely followed by a more recent

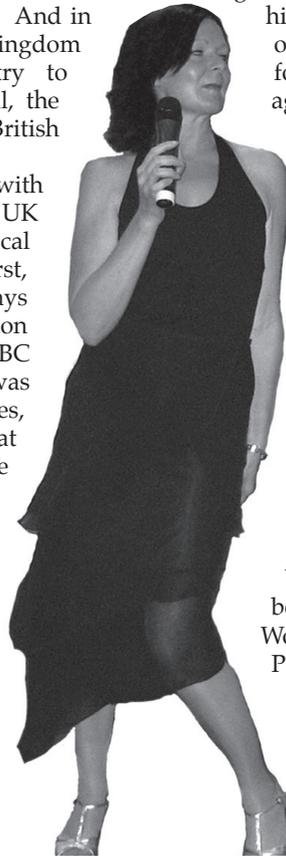
Gordon Lewis, with a little help from Dean Asker, reflects on a recent Eurovision event in Birmingham

Greek offering, "Yassou Maria". However, due to a slight technological glitch, the full results were inadvertently lost.

After a Weakest Link style quiz, won by Jamie

McLoughlin who was closely followed by Stephen Boddington in second place, Hassan Yusuf introduced the special guest panel by making full use of his natural wit and charm. Not one, not two, not even three, but four Eurovision celebrities had agreed to share their thoughts and experiences of the contest with those who had gathered to meet them.

British commentator Paddy O'Connell, for the semi-finals at least, referred to the introduction of two preliminary shows and hoped that this would lead to less block voting from certain countries. He also added that Morrissey had been in discussion with the BBC, but that the singer would not agree to compete in an open selection process. When asked whether he was being lined up to replace Sir Terry Wogan as the main commentator, Paddy suggested that the BBC would go for a bigger name,



such as Graham Norton, and indicated that two commentators may replace Terry in the not so distant future.

Daz Sampson admitted that his Athen's performance was so energetic at the start that he behaved more like the Duracell bunny than a Eurovision singer! He remains convinced that "Teenage Life" should have reached the top ten, but never considered the song to be an outright winner. In contrast, his five teenage backing singers were reduced to floods of tears following a disappointing result. Daz also confirmed that he had submitted a song performed by Carole Decker in 2007, and would not discount himself from a future contest appearance.

John Kennedy O'Connor may not have performed on the Eurovision stage, but video footage proved that he had been a member of The Main Event who performed "Gonna Do My Best" in the 1980 Song for Europe. Since then John has become a successful author and his work includes "The Eurovision Song Contest: The Official History" which took more than five years of careful research to complete. Even then the final editing was left to the European Broadcasting Union who insisted that the publication was indeed 'official'. As such, there are discrepancies between what may have happened during the live shows and what the EBU officially says happened! John is currently working on a similar project that will focus on the history of Miss World.

Remaining as enthusiastic

as ever, Nicki French was so eager to attend the Birmingham Bash that she even invited herself! Despite coming 16th with "Don't Play That Song Again", she remains a loyal ambassador of Eurovision while openly sharing her concerns that the current voting system has led to domination from the east in recent years. Currently in the studio recording tracks for a forthcoming show with a contest theme, Nicki was delighted to represent the United Kingdom once again and thanked those present for their unflinching support during these past seven years.

With the exception of Paddy O'Connell, who stayed until the early hours of Sunday morning, the remaining three guests had to travel to various parts of the country for other engagements, although it was clear they did so with some reluctance knowing that the party was only just beginning.

Marcus Keppel-Palmer and Dean Asker hosted the second Golden Star Awards - Eurovision's answer to the Oscars. Five of the six categories were specifically linked to the United Kingdom's half century, while the final award was reserved for the best song from the 2007 contest.

Delegates had voted before coming to the Birmingham, but this did not detract from the anticipation and excitement as each category was announced and the respective winner revealed.

The awards were interspersed by the Eurovision



Eloise Flint and Rachel Hill: winners of Stars in their Eyes Grand Prix

version of Stars in their Eyes, giving some of the more adventurous delegates the opportunity to perform a contest song of their choice. Renatus Triggs took the lead with his interpretation of Birthe Kjær's "Vi Maler Byen Rød" which was followed by Anna Book's "Samba Sambero" from Melodifestival 2007 expertly performed by Andrew Moffat. Next came Terry Egan with his tribute to Marija Serifovic and "Molitva" which was performed in word perfect Serbian.

Paul Marks-Jones then took the audience from the present back to 1974 while performing Peret's "Canta Y Se Feliz" from that year, while Eloise Flint and Rachel Hill stayed in the seventies with a carefully choreographed performance of Baccara's "Parlez Vous Francais?" The penultimate song came from David Onion and "Rocket Ride", originally sung by Jannicke Abrahamsen at Norsk Melodi Grand Prix 2007, before Emily Roberts brought the show to a frantic end with the memorable "Push The Button" from Teapacks.

It was then over to the assembled audience to cast their votes, with each person allowed to vote for one act before the top three were announced. Andrew Moffat was awarded third place, while Emily Roberts was narrowly pushed into second place, just one point behind her sisters Eloise and Rachel who were awarded the Stars in their Eyes Grand Prix by



Nicki French



John Kennedy O'Connor



Paddy O'Connell



Daz Sampson

Paddy O'Connell. And in true Eurovision style, the duo then gave a reprise of their well-deserved winning performance.

After a short interlude, and a surprise appearance from local choir, Rainbow Voices, who entertained those present with "Save Your Kisses For Me" and "Flying The Flag (For You)", the day came to an end all too quickly with the now infamous Eurovision disco. Prior to arriving those attending had been asked to nominate their all time favourite tracks, and many of these were played to keep people dancing into the early hours of Sunday morning.

After the event Paul Marks-Jones, one of the day's organisers, said "Birmingham Bash 2 proved to be a real hit with everyone who came along. There was a great atmosphere, and we were especially delighted that Paddy, Nicki, Daz and John were able to join us to celebrate the UK's 50th entry into this great contest. We'll now be looking ahead to make next year's event even better." ■

OGAE UK would like to thank all those who helped make Birmingham Bash 2 a success, including our four very special guests.

Dean Asker, Martin Faulkner, Nicki French, Marcus Keppel-Palmer, John Kennedy O'Connor, Bryan Manley, Paul Marks-Jones, Gerry Martin, Andrew Moffat, Paddy O'Connell, David Onion, Daz Sampson, Robin Scott, Hassan Yusuf and the staff at Jurys Hotel, Birmingham

BIRMINGHAM BASH 2 AWARDS

NAMES, NAMES, NAMES

"Dschinghis Khan"	Dschinghis Khan	1st
"Yassou Maria"	Sarbel	2nd
"Le Papa Pingouin"	Sophie & Magaly	
"Mrs Thompson"	Just 4 Fun	
"Eloise"	Arvingarna	
"Sokrates"	Beethoven	
"Dzuli"	Daniel	
"Nina"	Stefan & Eyfi	
"Maria Magdalena"	Tony Vegas	
"Johnny Blue"	Lena Valaitis	
"Guildo Hat Euch Lieb"	Guildo Horn	
"Marija Magdalena"	Doris Dragovic	
"Mata Hari"	Anne-Karine Strøm	
"Samson"	Emly Starr	
"Lejla"	Hari Mata Hari	

GOLDEN STAR AWARDS

(winners from each category shown in bold)

BEST UK SONG 1957-1984

1972	"Beg, Steal or Borrow"	The New Seekers
1982	"One Step Further"	Bardo
1968	"Congratulations"	Cliff Richard
1983	"I'm Never Giving Up"	Sweet Dreams

BEST UK SONG 1985-2007

1998	"Where Are You?"	Imaani
1988	"Go"	Scott Fitzgerald
1996	"Ooh Aah ... Just A Little Bit"	Gina G
1992	"One Step Out Of Time"	Michael Ball

BEST UK GROUP OR DUO

1981	Bucks Fizz
1997	Katrina & the Waves
1976	Brotherhood of Man
1959	Pearl Carr & Teddy Johnson

BEST UK SOLO PERFORMER

1968	Sandie Shaw
2002	Jessica Garlick
1968/73	Cliff Richard
1974	Olivia Newton-John

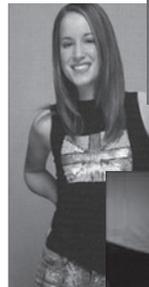
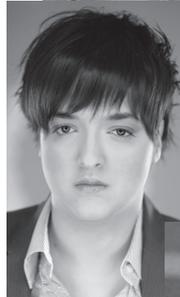
BEST UK FINALIST NOT TO REACH

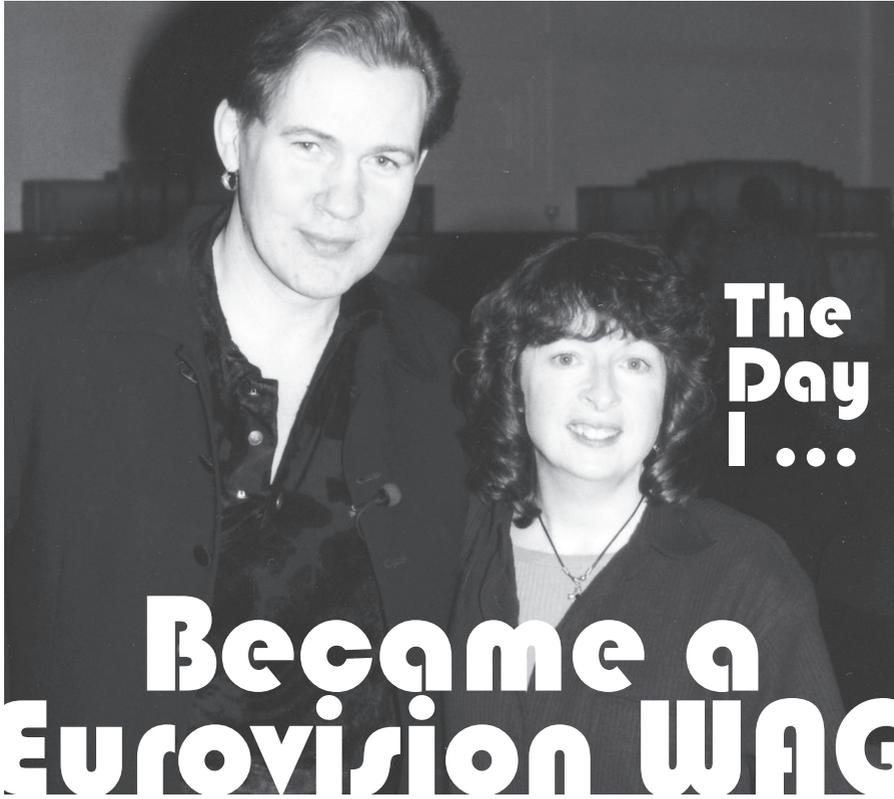
EUROVISION

2000	"Crazy"	Catherine Porter
2007	"I'll Leave My Heart"	Cyndi
1995	"I Need You"	Deuce
1980	"Happy Everything"	Maggie Moone

BEST EUROVISION SONG 2007

Malta	"Vertigo"	Olivia Lewis
Andorra	"Salvem El Mon"	Anonymous
Serbia	"Molitva"	Marija Serifovic
Latvia	"Questa Notte"	Bonaparti.lv





Ann Lewis reflects on the way her dreams came true when she met and married someone who possessed more than a passing interest in the Eurovision Song Contest!

Having always followed the contest, particularly in the 70s when entries always seemed to be better than they are today, the live show was an annual television event not to be missed ... and Johnny Logan stole my heart in 1980 with his young looks and simplistic performance of "What's Another Year". Even so, when I first met Gordon just after The Herreys had put away their golden boots, I had not expected Eurovision to become such a big part of our life together.

Within 12 months of meeting we were

engaged, and Gordon whisked me off to Gothenburg for the 1985 contest coupled with a mini tour of Scandinavia that included whirlwind visits to Stockholm, Oslo and Copenhagen. The three capital cities, as well as Gothenburg itself, were alive with the sights and sounds of Eurovision, while the atmosphere in the Scandinavium on the big night was electric. We also met Vikki on our flight to Sweden, although I'm not sure how she felt about being stalked outside the in-flight toilet door by my future husband!

One year later and we arranged our marriage to ensure that we were back home to watch the 1986 contest, while Gordon made sure we were always in our luxury Cotswold honeymoon hotel room on Sunday afternoons to watch the weekly previews! However, our planning almost went pear shaped the following year with Johnny Logan scoring a second victory on 9th May 1987 and our son, Kevin, born just five days later. Needless to say, our two daughters were winter births!!

Family life was relatively normal, until Gordon discovered the existence of OGAE in the early 90s and started to receive Vision. His record collection, until then restricted to winners and UK entries, also started to grow somewhat rapidly, preventing me from using valuable storage space for more practical reasons.

And then the radio, television and newspaper appearances started when the local media learnt of a crazy Eurovision fan living on the outskirts of Southampton. It certainly became a talking point ... and no doubt an embarrassment to some of our family and friends! Gordon was also featured on the Meridian (ITV) series, "True But Strange", although I'm not sure what the neighbours thought about being woken by the television crew loudly playing "Waterloo" from one of their vehicles.

By the mid 90s Gordon had returned to full time education as a mature student and, finding himself with time on his hands (!), offered to take over the editorship of Vision for a few short years. More than 12 years later and he is still busy editing! Of course, this involvement with Vision started to open up new opportunities that many Eurovision fans can only dream of ... and their partners dread at times.

We travelled to Dublin in 1997 with

our three children, although only Gordon was able to access the venue and show. However, he still managed to secure a family invite to the Dutch party, courtesy of the five members of Mrs Einstein who were all missing their own children. Before long Kevin, Sarah and Rebekah were being filmed for the Netherlands' news and were also photographed by the Oslo press alongside Secret Garden, who were at the adjoining Norwegian party.

Another 12 months passed and, as a result of the United Kingdom's last victory, Gordon was able to spend a week in Birmingham where I joined him on the Saturday night for the actual contest. Personally Gothenburg will always be special to both of us as it was our first live show, but the audience at the National Indoor Arena was just as electrifying and the nail biting finish almost too much to bear – especially as I wanted Chiara to win.

“Family life was relatively normal, until Gordon discovered the existence of OGAE”

1998 also marked an increased interest in Eurovision for British fans which, in turn, saw Vision evolve into an almost full time, unpaid career! Admittedly Gordon was and is supported by many contributors, but sometimes I have felt like a Eurovision widow while he sits by the computer struggling to meet deadlines. Still, it keeps him happy and the Internet has made the task a little easier in recent years.

During the last 10 years I've accompanied Gordon to various conventions and have met some



Gordon and Ann Lewis: Flying the Flag in Athens

amazing people, many of whom have now become valued and trusted friends. I've been able to go back stage with Brotherhood of Man and have worn Niamh Kavanagh's winning jacket. I've cuddled James Fox in the BBC bar, while front row seats at the 50th anniversary show, "Congratulations", was one of the most amazing experiences of my own Eurovision life.

While in Copenhagen we were able to attend the fan party organised by OGAE Denmark where we met singers past and present, including the delightful Sertab and the fabulous Fabrizio. Helena Paparizou, Alex Panayi and Massiel were staying at our hotel, while after the show we spoke with Carola, Bobbysocks and, among others, another of my own idols ... the loveable Renars Kaupers from Brainstorm.

In 2006 I joined Gordon in Athens for the two live shows but, although I enjoyed visiting the Greek capital and catching up with friends old and new, I also felt that the contest had lost something compared to those I attended in 1985 and 1998. It's just too big these days and, for the

semi-final at least, the audience had become far too informal for my liking; treating the event more like a rock festival than the Eurovision Song Contest!

But of all my experiences as a contest WAG, the one I remember the most took place in the spring of 1998 when Gordon received four tickets for the recording of Hale & Pace's Eurovision edition of "Jobs For The Boys". While Gordon was busy talking to the various celebrities in the audience, I was far busier meeting the other man of my dreams ... Johnny Logan himself!

Before leaving the BBC's London theatre I probably said goodbye to the friendly Irishman at least three times, possibly more, accompanied by hugs and kisses all round. I almost managed to arrange a date between Johnny's son, Adam, and my then teenage niece, who had joined Gordon and me for the show! Had I succeeded I may have been related to Johnny Logan by now ... but at least I finally met my idol nearly 18 years after the love affair began.

There are some advantages to being married to a Eurovision fan after all! ■

ESC Online

Martin Faulkner's regular look at the Eurovision World Wide Web

Welcome to the latest edition of ESC Online. I say it every winter, but this is very much the quiet time of year in terms of online happenings in the world of Eurovision, so I'll be taking this opportunity to look instead at some of the websites dedicated to the contest's glorious past.

We start with an excellent addition to the range of general sites out there. ESC History (www.esc-history.com) does exactly what it says on the tin – from the photograph of Marcel Bezençon on



Marcel Bezençon

the front page to the searchable database of Eurostatistics, this is a comprehensive resource which, although not really offering any information that you can't already find elsewhere, makes

it available via such a simple and user-friendly interface that it's well worth bookmarking.

Of course, in this era of semi-finals with 40+ countries and televoting, it's easy to forget about what some consider to be the glory days of the contest (though those ratings-oriented TV bosses may disagree) – namely, the 1980s and 1990s. Although the Internet has only truly come of age in the new millennium, it's pleasing to note that there are plenty of sites devoted to the heroes of those bygone decades.

German winner Nicole enjoyed one of the biggest hits from the contest with her various recordings of "A Little Peace". While her official website



(www.nicole-4-u.de) initially comes across like a record company advert for her 2006 album "Begleite Mich", further investigation reveals a comprehensive biography, a well-stocked multimedia section, an excellent single and album discography with cover photos and tracklistings (including all the many international issues of her ESC winner), and even a list of her countless appearances on the legendary "ZDF-Hitparade" TV show. It's all in German, reflecting her modern-day status as a staple of the local Schlager scene, but it should be fairly easy to navigate.

From a well-remembered winner to one that most non-fans will have forgotten. Corinne Hermès seemed to disappear for a number of years, but she returned to the limelight with the "Vraie" album in 2006 and now has a suitably moody website to match (www.corinnehermes.com). It's



Corinne Hermès

worth noting that, while her biography does pay tribute to her Eurovision win, her discography effectively glosses over anything more than a few years old. Nevertheless, this is a good way to rediscover an artist who could easily have fallen by the wayside, although you'll need a smattering of French in your armoury if you want to enjoy the full experience.



The Herreys

What makes the Internet such a special resource is that it's not all about well-produced official sites. The Herreys, for example, have a dedicated fan site (www.geocities.com/herreyhome) that makes up in content what it lacks in presentation. Although not updated since late 2006, the biography of their glory years is as relevant as ever, tracing their path from the early days (with some fantastic photos) through to their current endeavours, both solo and as a group. This kind of fan devotion is always worthy of a visit.

Toto Cutugno's site may be all in Italian – which probably comes as no great



Toto Cutugno

surprise given his dubious command of English when hosting the Contest in 1991! – but even non-speakers should have few problems finding their way around. Then again, you can't really go wrong with words like "Biografia" and "Discografia" – with the latter being well worth a look, particularly if you're an album cover fetishist. The homepage (www.totocutugno.it) even links to a shop containing a surprisingly extensive range of merchandise – so if you've ever wanted a T-shirt adorned with photos of the 1976-era Toto, for example, now's your chance!

One of the most successful winning artists of all-time is the Norwegian/Irish duo Secret Garden, and their website (www.secretgarden.no) is a suitably flashy affair, with lots of new-age imagery (birds! trees! stones!



fountains!) and, more importantly, a predictably content-rich information section including details of their forthcoming album "Inside I'm Singing" and, unusually, a set of downloadable press releases and press packs. Not the most comprehensive site on the web, but somewhere to meander around when you're in the mood for something a little more ethereal.

And that's all for this time. As always, if you know of any sites you think I should mention, don't hesitate to drop me a line at m.d.faulkner@hamburg.de. Happy surfing! ■

www.geocities.com/jamoismac/ralphstiegelshow.html

EURO CURIOS

Thomas Latham gets Euro-curious again

First, an update to last time's Euro Curios Special - I have since discovered that no fewer than five record companies rush-released Danish language versions of Dutch winner "N'Beetje" and British runner-up "Sing Little Birdie" in 1959.



Elvis

As well as "En Smule" by Birgit Brüel (DK65) and "Syng Lille Lærke" by Pigerne (Philips - 355 183 PF), the same tracks also appeared by the following artists: Raquel Rastenni (DK58) & John Wahl with Harry Felberts Orkester (HMV 45-X 8391); Lisbeth Frandsen & Niels Windfeldt with Ib Renard and his orchestra (Triola TD 45-35); Rita Storm & Willy Normann with Henry Hagemann and his orchestra (Polyphon XM 61912); and, finally, Inge Stauss & Bent Weidich (Sonet T 8023).

It probably did not escape your notice that 2007 marked the 30th anniversary

of the death of Elvis Presley. While 'The King' did record a song entitled "Puppet On A String" this is completely different to the UK's 1967 Eurovision winner, but that is not to say that he did not record a cover version of a SFE entry. On 7th March 1968,



Celine Dion

only two days after Cliff Richard had performed it to third place in his SFE final, Elvis recorded his version of "Wonderful World" by Guy Fletcher and Doug Flett. The song made an appearance in the film "Live A Little, Love A Little" later that year and was released on the LP "Elvis Sings Flaming Star" (RCA NL 89 126). It can be found on the CD of the album (CMG A 681609) as well as the mid-priced compilation "Elvis Inspirational" (RCA/Sony BMG 8876 77434 2), both of which came out in 2006.

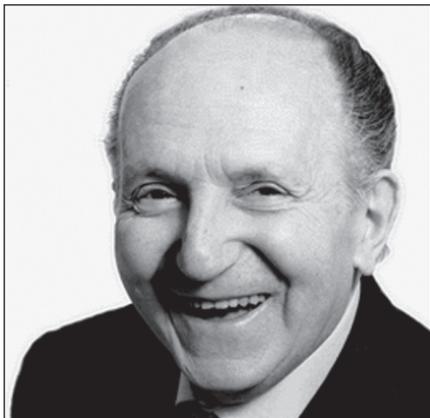
Speaking of "Puppet On A String" one of several versions in Portuguese

(released in Brazil) has turned up on CD. You can find Ed Carlos's "Éstou Feliz" on "Great Brazilian Hits" (Disky - DC 997682).

On 9th July 2003 a special gala was held to celebrate the life and work of songwriter Eddie Marnay, who had died in January of that year. Among those taking part was Celine Dion who had collaborated with Marnay on a number of her early albums in French. As part of her performance Celine sang "Un Jour, Un Enfant" - the 1969 joint winner that had been co-written by Marnay and originally performed by the late Frida Boccara. Although

vocals should check out 2001's "Queen: Another Kind of Magic - A Symphonic Spectacular", which also features Dean Collinson (co-writer of UK93) among its singers. Sadly, they only get one solo number each ("Somebody To Love" and "Don't Stop Me Now" respectively), but they do feature with other artists on a number of the songs on this Queen tribute (Jay Records - 0060528813572).

As well as currently being a member of the New Seekers, Donna Jones (part of Pussyfoot in SFE80 with Mick Flinn) is also co-writer of the comedy show "Mutton", in which she also performs as Donna Flinn together with Jean



Eddie Marnay



Sally Ann Triplett

her version has not been officially released, you can download a live recording at www.celinedionweb.com/celine-dion/en.music,unreleased-songs.html

Sally Ann Triplett (UK80/82) has recently been playing the role of Amelia Earhart in the musical "Take Flight" by David Shire and Richard Maltby on the London fringe. The Daily Mail noted that from "the moment Sally Ann Triplett arrives as Earhart, the whole evening receives an upgrade." Without a transfer to the West End it is unlikely that there will be a CD released of the production. However, fans of her

Heard and Julia Munrow. Check out www.muttonproductions.com/dates.htm for details of venues and dates. Incidentally, Donna Jones and Mick Flinn have been married for over 30 years. The differently spelled Danny Finn (UK80), who has been married to Eve Graham (UK72) for almost as long and was also a member of the New Seekers, was once a member of Wishful Thinking. The group, including Danny, make an appearance in the David Essex film "That'll Be The Day" performing the Cliff Richard (UK68/73) song "It'll Be Me" under the name The Debonnaires.

The film has been re-issued on DVD by Optimum Home Entertainment together with "Stardust".

Like me, you probably thought that the only song from the 1996 "Great British Song Contest" not to get a commercial release was third placed "A Little Love" performed by Zeitia Massiah. However, it seems that a cover version was released by Mac & Katie Kissoon in the Netherlands. You can find it on single (ABCD 30082-3) as well as on the 1997 album "From Now On" (ABCD 30083-2). The Kisoons are no strangers to covering SFE entries, although for a long time I thought that their version



Cast of "Mutton"

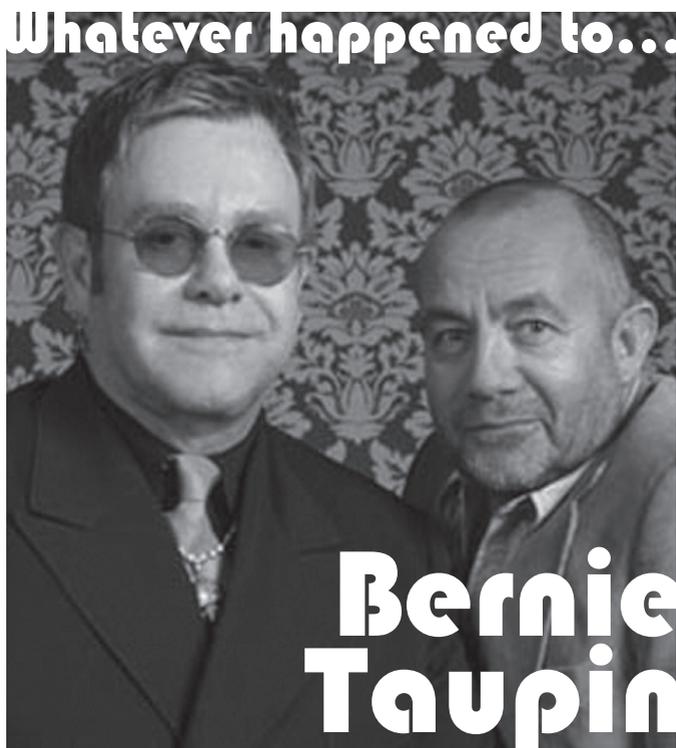
of "Oh No, Look What You've Done!" (which came 11th= when performed by Brown Sugar in the 1978 competition) had only been issued on promo CDs. Recently, though, I came across a commercial release and you can find it on "Sugar Candy Kisses" licensed from State Records (i.e. the writers/producers Bickerton and Waddington) and released in Germany by Castle Communications in 1994 (CHC 7132-2). Incidentally, it is rumoured that Mac & Katie Kissoon were once in the frame to represent the UK at Eurovision in the 1970s – does anyone know any more about this?

A studio version of "Making Your Mind Up" (UK81) has been recorded in Icelandic ("Vid Sigurum Ad Ari") by Eurobandið, and a download was made available at: www.myspace.com/euroband. Eurobandið apparently do a live show packed with cover versions of Eurovision entries and an excerpt from a medley of them can also be found on Myspace. The band's keyboard player, Grétar Örvarsson, entered Eurovision as part of both Stjórnin (IS90) and Heart 2 Heart (IS92), and the two lead singers have both appeared in recent Icelandic finals. Regina Ósk came 2nd in 2006 with "Þér Við Hlið", while Friðrik Ómar took part both in 2006 with "Það Sem Verður" (3rd) and in 2007 with "Eldur" (2nd) (the former two songs have also been featured on their Myspace page).

Songs written by Paul Curtis were pretty ubiquitous in SFEs of the early 1980s peaking with four in 1984. Two years earlier, he had three songs in the SFE and chose to sing one of them himself, "No Matter How I Try". That entry came equal fourth with another of his compositions, "Different Worlds, Different People" performed by Lovin' Feeling. His versions of both songs can be found on his 1982 LP "Invisible Man" (RCA PL 28512), which was produced by writing partner Graham Sacher and seems to have been released in Germany only.

Finally, Les Reed, who co-wrote songs for the 1965 and 1989 SFEs, has been collaborating with Eddie Seago (who wrote songs for Clodagh Rodgers in 1971 and the New Seekers in 1972) on a musical operetta. Entitled "That Woman", it is about the lives of King Edward VIII and Wallace Simpson. If anyone spots anything further about this musical, please let me know. ■

Thanks this month to Richard Crane and Nic Culverhouse



Famously, one of Lulu's selection for the 1969 Song for Europe was an early song by the fabled songwriting team of Elton John and Bernie Taupin. **Marcus Keppel-Palmer** takes a look at the career of the lyricist

Bernie Taupin, the self-proclaimed Brown Dirt Cowboy, is well-known as the words to Elton John's music, a poet to the latter's melodies and co-writer of scores of great songs all fashioned in the now famous "two rooms" writing style. Born during May 1950 in Lincolnshire, Bernie grew up on a farm, which seems to have been a permanent inspiration for his lyrics. He attended a Catholic Church (another lyrical influence) but found school less to his liking and dropped out aged 15. In 1967, as a budding poet, he responded to an advertisement in the

New Musical Express for songwriters and found himself linked with the young Reg Dwight under the tutelage of Dick James. The first recorded collaboration between the pair was a song called "Scarecrow".

Taupin and John worked quickly, churning out songs in an easy-listening mode. One of these was "I Can't Go On (Living Without You)" for Song for Europe, which was slated by Bill Martin in the press and came ignominiously last. With hindsight Lulu and others now suggest that it was the best song of the selection. Shortly after, Elton released

his first album, "Empty Sky", to general indifference but this led to the pair redoubling their efforts and they would hit the jackpot with "Your Song" in 1970 off the "Elton John" album, both of which hit the top 10. The second Elton John album of 1970, "Tumbleweed Connection", showed off Bernie's fascination with Americana and the Wild West, themes to which he would continuously return.

In 1971 Taupin married for the first time to Maxine Feibelman, on whom the song "Tiny Dancer" was based, and also released a spoken-word album "Taupin" on which he recited several of his poems. The 70s saw a time of great output between Elton and Bernie, although the former spent a lot of time touring, while the latter moved to live in California, buying a ranch. In 1973, as a companion piece to the "Yellow Brick Road" album, Bernie released a coffee-table book of his lyrics and poems. In 1976, Taupin and John split for a while and Bernie started to write with other composers, including Alice Cooper, collaborating on the "From The Inside" album.

In 1980, now remarried to Toni Russo, Bernie released his first album as a singer, "He Who Rides The Tiger", but it failed to find an audience. However, songs like "We Built This City" for Starship and "These Dreams" for Heart meant he still enjoyed success. The early 80s saw Bernie re-collaborate with Elton and they have worked together almost constantly since. 1987

saw Bernie release a second solo album called "Tribe", while the following year he released an autobiography. In 1991 he published a book of poetry and one year later Bernie and Elton were deservedly inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame.

Marrying in the mid-90s for a third time, Bernie branched out from writing and ranching to owning a restaurant in LA and also painting. He formed a band called the Farm Dogs in 1996, who released two albums influenced by the Tumbleweed Connection era, and some of those songs were included in songs Taupin produced for Willie Nelson's Grammy-award winning album "The Great Divide". In 2004, Bernie married for a fourth time to Heather Kidd and,

at the age of 55, became a father. Taupin has recently won a Golden Globe Award for a song he contributed to the film "Brokeback Mountain", and he

and Elton have also recently revisited past themes in their most recent album "The Captain And The Kid". The pair have also collaborated in writing the Broadway musical "Lestat".

It cannot be denied that Taupin's song for Lulu was very early in his career

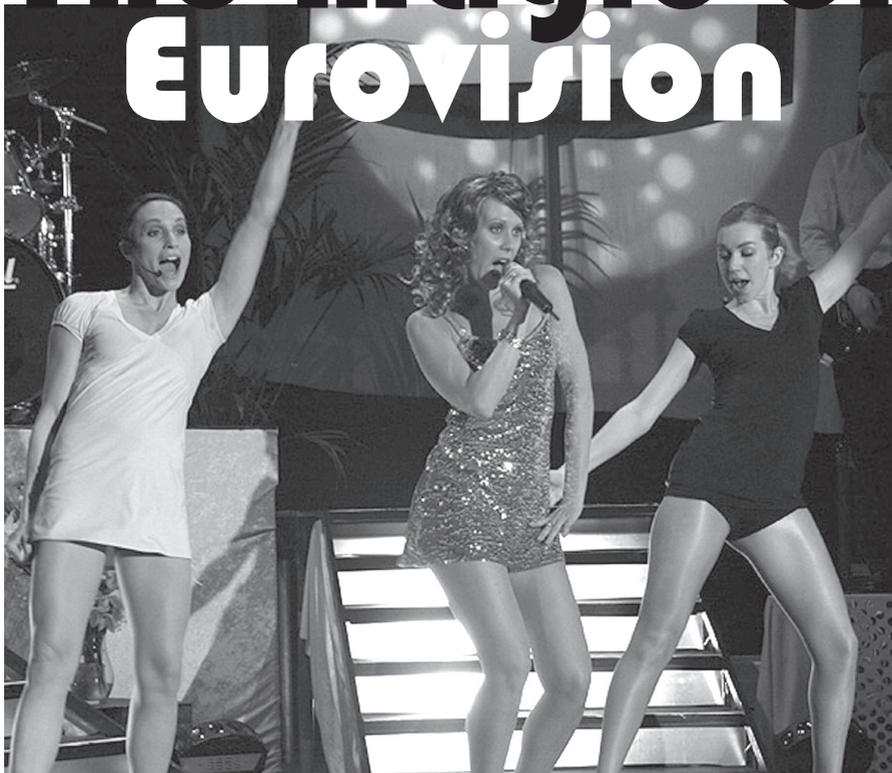
and is not reflective of later songs. However, from that small seed Bernie Taupin has created a great big garden, successfully growing songs in all corners, based earthily in California and looking out on the flamboyant world his main songwriting partner has inhabited these past 40 years. ■

Bernie and Elton were inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame



Bernie and Elton: Now and then

The Magic of Eurovision



A bright, fun and new Eurovision tribute theatre show is set to tour the United Kingdom in 2008. To find out more, **Marcus Keppel-Palmer** talked to the show's Eurovision consultant, none other than 2000 entrant Nicki French

So what's it all about, Nicki? As usual, she is the personification of bubblyness and hastens to explain about the show. "Basically, it'll be a colourful and visual show recollecting mainly the halcyon days of the contest we all know and love. There will be a live band on stage with five musicians and then there'll be a MC and five or six performers, who will be singing the

Eurovision favourites. The MC will be linking it all together."

So, I hazard, will it be like the show 'Mamma Mia'? Nicki sets me right. "It's a fun show, not a message show. It's a tribute show, not really a play with a story. It'll be a fun revue with singers and dancers. It's a tribute to the ESC. Kelly and Gail, who came up with the concept, did lots of surveys of people to find out

the type of songs people wanted in a show like this. So it will lean towards the older favourites like 'Volare', Brotherhood of Man, Dana, Teach-In, Johnny Logan and 'Diggi-loo Diggi-ley'. I am pushing hard for 'Diva' to be included. There will, of course, be some modern songs and it will mix UK favourites with songs from other countries."

It sounds like a fun nostalgia show. So will it be re-creations of the original performances? "No," says Nicki. "The show will hint a lot at the original for the real fan, but it's more about feel. We are getting costumes that are similar to the ones worn by the original performers, but will also hint at the era. Similarly, the dance routines may be similar. On some songs, there will be completely new arrangements and dance routines to spice things up."

How did Nicki get involved? "Well, Gail and Kelly were putting together a show-reel to publicise the production and I was brought in to do backing vocals with Emma Robbins, sister of Kate Robbins from Prima Donna. Unfortunately, Emma couldn't do one of the days, so I ended up doing most of the vocals. I had just come out of doing 'Menopause the Musical', so I had more theatrical experience and just seem to have become more involved – a bit like

a Eurovision consultant. One thing that we want is to have a special Eurovision guest at each show; a performer who will perform their own song. I hope to be involved in that capacity as well."

Nicki also explains that she will be involved in the audition process – happening as you read this – to select the performers who will be in the show. The first shows are already pencilled in for April in Ilford (20th April – Kenneth More Theatre) and Radlett (25th April – Radlett Centre), with proposals for a tour later in 2008 and then hopefully a transfer to a West End theatre. But that is still some way off. Nicki and I discuss why this idea hasn't been

attempted before. "Yes, it is strange nobody has done this before. I am certain this sort of concept will work. There have been some plays before, but I don't think they really succeeded. In fact, I had an idea for this type of show back in 2000, but at the time I didn't have enough contacts in the theatre business."

If 'Magic of Eurovision' has only half of Nicki's bubbly enthusiasm for the project, it'll be a giant success. Any last words? "Yes, make sure everybody comes out to see the show and has a fun time". Of course, we will. ■



Quiz Time

Marcus Keppel-Palmer brings a Dutch flavour to the ever popular Vision quiz

1. What was the winning song of ESC 1957?
appeared at Eurovision, albeit only in the name of a group?
2. Which European city did Maggie MacNeal sing about on the Eurovision stage?
3. Who has appeared in two contests singing songs with "World" or "Earth" in the title?
4. Who conducted 14 entries at Eurovision, starting in 1972?
5. Which group appearing at Eurovision featured lead vocals by Getty Kaspers?
6. Appearing three times at Eurovision, what is the surname of Sandra, who first appeared performing in the duo Sandra & Andres?
7. Which Nobel Prize-winning scientist has appeared at Eurovision, albeit only in the name of a group?
8. Who wrote the lyrics to the 1959 Eurovision winner (and indeed lyrics to entries in 1960 and 1961)?
9. What is the mythical land created by novelist James Hilton and sung about by Gerard Joling?
10. What is the surname of the performer who sang "De Mallemolen" at Eurovision?
11. What was the title of Linda Wagenmakers' Eurovision entry?
12. By taking the first letter of each answer, find a word that links the answers to all of the previous 11 questions.

Preview Vote 2008

For the first time ever, OGAE UK will organise an official preview vote on the songs taking part in the 2008 Eurovision Song Contest and it is hoped that as many Vision readers as possible will participate.

Once the songs have been made available in March/April 2008 at www.eurovision.tv all those wishing to take part in the vote will be contacted by e-mail and given the opportunity to vote for their top 10.

Votes will then be collated and shared with OGAE branches across Europe who will also be holding their own respective preview vote.

If you would like to participate in this exciting initiative, please e-mail previews.2008@ntlworld.com and you will be contacted in due course.

Let's see if OGAE UK can pick the winner for 2008!

If you have already expressed your interest to take part in the preview vote, you do not need to take any further action at this stage. You will be contacted when the previews are available.

Richard's Round Up

What's new from OGAE UK President **Richard Crane**

While Robyn was THE success story of the summer, the latter half of 2007 belongs to Michael Ball. Following acclaim for his recent roles in "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" and "Kismet", Michael Ball seemed a strange choice to play Edna Turnblad, but his portrayal of the down trodden wife and mother in the West End revival of "Hairspray" has earned him unanimous praise from British critics. In the original 1988 movie, infamous drag queen Divine starred as Edna and in the recent film re-make John Travolta was an unusual choice for the role, but managed to pull it off. Now Michael Ball, and the rest of the cast, have given "Hairspray"

a whole new lease of life and provided theatre-land with a bona-fide hit. Expect a cast recording soon. Meanwhile, Michael has also returned to the album charts with "Back To Bacharach" (Universal 1748686). It's his 16th chart album and the 11th to make the Top 20. Robyn followed up her number one with the Top 10 single "Handle Me".

It's getting more difficult to find physical singles these days, with both record companies and artists offering tracks for download rather than a commercial release. While this has led to some strange entries in the Top 75 singles chart, this new strategy has had mixed results for two Eurovision artists recently. With the physical release being withdrawn, Celine Dion fans downloaded "Taking Chances" as a single track sufficiently for it to peak at number 40. Cliff Richard fans purchased enough copies of the CD single "When I Need You" to place it in the Top 20, but less than 500 people downloaded the song pushing it down to number 38 on the combined sales ranking. In an effort to encourage fans to download Cliff's recordings, EMI made his new "Love Album" collection available to download for as little as £3.99. The actual album started off at £7.99 but the price reduced depending on the amount of pre-orders EMI received. At the time of printing the result of this experiment was unknown, but the album had peaked at number 13 and was awarded a silver disc with sales of over 60,000.

Next year Sir Cliff will be celebrating his 50th year in music with a "50th Anniversary Time Machine Tour"



Michael Ball in Hairspray



Cliff Richard

during November and December 2008. Cliff's former producer, Bruce Welsh, has just published a new book entitled "Cliff - An Intimate Portrait Of A Living Legend". Within its pages Bruce reveals that Sir Cliff resorted to telephoning the American embassy to clarify the meaning of the term 'honky tonk angel' before deciding to withdraw the single in 1975. According to Bruce, listening to the song more than 30 years later, Cliff agreed with him that it was still a great record. Cliff fans can now have a personalized Cliff e-mail address by going to his new MyCliff site, so if you want to be Ian@HonkyTonkAngel.com or Ann@YoungOnes.co.uk then now's your chance!

Although Celine Dion's "Taking Chances" single peaked at number 40 as already mentioned, the album entered at number five giving Celine her 17th UK chart album. It was also her sixth consecutive Top 5 English language studio album (excluding compilations, re-issues, live and Christmas albums). Celine has also just announced two UK tour dates for 2008. Tony Christie is putting the finishing touches to his

new album that should be in the shops in January, while Frances Ruffelle releases "Live At Ronnie Scott's" around the same time. With the TV version apparently shelved, it seems that the Kathy Kirby story is now going appear on the stage although the transition is not going smoothly. According to the Daily Express the reclusive star is said to be furious over changes made to the forthcoming production. Among the issues are the show title, its lack of music and its deviation from the autobiography written by James Harman. If these problems can be resolved then the show should open next year with Suzi Jari in the starring role. For further details check out www.kathykirby.co.uk and www.secretlove.info

Get writing now! A campaign has just started to petition for Petula Clark to be made a Dame. Petula already has a CBE, but in 2009 she will celebrate her 70th year in show business. With her musical career seemingly abandoned, Kym Ryder (nee Marsh) won her fourth award in 12 months at the National Television Awards as Best Newcomer for her role in "Coronation Street". Anthony Costa



Petula Clark

will be touring in February and March 2008 with "An Audience with Anthony Costa". Apparently the tour will consist of songs from his time with Blue, as well as solo material and a question and answer session. Check press for more details. He was also due to appear in a Christmas special for ITV alongside Kim Wilde. EMI subsidiary Odeon have just issued "Billy Fury - His Wonderful Story" on DVD (ODNM007), including contributions from Vince Eager and Alvin Stardust. Dean Collinson has recorded a new song for "Joseph & The Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat: Special Edition" (Universal 1746352). The original 1991 Cast Recording is now joined by Lee Mead's version of "Any Dream Will Do" alongside "King Of My Heart" by Dean.

Cherry Red have issued a compilation of Jackie Lee's Pye recordings, "End Of A Rainbow - A Pye Anthology" (Poker DECKCD 107). Although it doesn't



Jackie Lee

include her Song For Europe entry, it does feature a version of the rejected "Something Borrowed, Something Blue" and the seminal "Rupert" (in English and German!). The same label has also issued the Bay City Rollers fifth and sixth albums on CD for the first



Lynsey De Paul

time. "It's A Game" (7T's GLAMCD35) just scraped into the Top 20 in 1977 and contained the hit title track and their final chart single "You Made Me Believe In Magic". "Strangers In The Wind" (GLAMCD 45) was originally issued in 1978, but failed to chart. The group's career was in a downward spiral and, in an attempt to stem the decline, their name was abbreviated to The Rollers on this album. Lynsey De Paul has just launched a self defence DVD aimed at women. "Taking Control" is available from www.takingcontrol.tv As Vision went to press the new single from Uniting Nations was due to hit the shops. "Do It Yourself" was scheduled to be issued on CD (Gusto GUS55) and 12" (12GUS55), and is Daz Sampson's first commercial release since "Teenage Life". An album by Uniting Nations is also ready for release. According to the Daily Express, Tinka Milinovic (CH06) is being blamed for the break-up of French President Nicolas Sarkozy's marriage.

Salvo has just reissued two albums by The Move, whose line-ups included Roy Wood and Carl Wayne. Their



Jools Holland

self-titled debut album (SALVOCD 207) has been expanded into a double CD with a running time of 90 minutes and "Shazam" (SALVOCD 012), which was issued in 1970, now includes nine bonus tracks. To celebrate Radio 1's 40th Anniversary, Salvo has also re-issued "Flowers In The Rain" on CD single and as a 7" (SALVOSCD002/V5002). As well as joining Jools Holland on his current tour, Lulu is the co-vocalist on one of two new numbers on Jools' new album, "Best Of Friends" (Rhino 514246662). "Where Have All The Good Times Gone" was written by Lulu together with her brother, Billy Lawrie, and Jools Holland. It was promoted on radio as "the

Lindsay Dracass and the Paul Carrack Band



forthcoming single" but has yet to appear in this format. Lulu's recent television advertising campaign for Morrisons has been credited as one of the contributing factors in the store's upturn in profits!

Lindsay Dracass will be joining Paul Carrack on his current European tour that continues until February 2008. Check out www.carrack-uk.com for more details. Booty Luv issued their album, "Boogie2Nite" (Hed Kandi HEDK 073), in September and the next single is due to be "Some Kinda Rush". EMI Gold has issued a triple CD set of "Matt At The Movies" (5099852). I've also seen mail order adverts for an album called "Matt Sings, Nelson Swings" which appears to be a reissue of "A Touch Of Class", previously only available as a CDR from the Nelson Riddle Appreciation Society. I'm not sure if this advert is referring to a re-packaging of the CDR or the CDR itself, so approach with caution. My quest to find more info on Terry Bradford's activities since leaving Co-Co lead me to a Dominic Kirwan CD single called "Gift Of Love" (Rosette ROSCD322). Issued in December 2005, the song is written by Terry and Sussie Arvesen. He also plays guitar on the track and provides backing vocals.

Finally, I have picked up two CD's by a 26 year old Estonian singer called Hannah. Apparently her second album, "Ballads", is Estonia's biggest selling release and her new album is called "Everything Is Changing". I have an album sampler and a single titled "You Are", both of which are issued on Snowdog Records. Does anybody know if this is the same Hannah who sang in the Estonian pre-selections? Any info will be welcomed at the usual address. All that remains is for me to wish you all health and happiness in 2008. ■

Record Reviews

COMMITMENTS, THE

Original Motion Picture Soundtrack – Deluxe Edition

Universal 1735802

It's 16 years since Alan Parker's film hit the big screen, producing two successful soundtrack albums that have now been joined together by Universal. A further five tracks taken from Andrew Strong's solo album, "Strong", issued in 1993 have also been added to this collection. Unfortunately, unlike all of Universal's other deluxe editions, there are no previously unreleased or alternative takes, making this purchase of little value. Although it's good to see Niamh Kavanagh's name credited on eight tracks, it is really annoying that David Nathan fails to acknowledge her contribution or her later achievements in the sleeve notes. It is stated that only Andrew Strong and Glen Hansard (who became lead singer of the Frames) "would achieve musical success after the movie." Perhaps Niamh's profile would have been higher had she cashed in on her Commitments recordings. Instead she recorded with the Dubliners, won Eurovision and recorded an album in Nashville. Although it's great music, most Niamh fans will have brought these albums already, but hopefully she will receive royalties from this release as she deserves every penny! **RC**

CELINE DION

Taking Chances

Sony BMG 88697081142

Arriving indelicately quickly after "Delles", "Taking Chances" is a diva trying

to reclaim her crown. It has been three years since the cloying "Miracles", and "Taking Chances" makes it clear that Celine is not going to give up without a fight. The title track (co-written by Dave Stewart from The Eurythmics)



needs repeat listening to fully appreciate, while the obligatory cover version is Heart's "Alone" and is very much 'Celine-by-numbers'. Elsewhere there is the gospel tinged "New Dawn" and the uptempo "Eyes On Me" (where she sounds like Shakira!). "Surprise Surprise" is reminiscent of a Christmas song and she strays into Madonna territory with "Shadow of Love". This album is an eclectic mix with a range of emotional highs and lows, yet "Taking Chances" still pays off. "A Song For You" sounds extremely personal, but it's the bluesy "That's Just The Woman In Me" which will be of interest to Eurovision fans as it is written by Kimberley Rew. This is Celine's best album for several years, but the awful pictures make her look painfully thin. Although that should not detract from the music, it is slightly unsettling. **RC**

LULU

The Atco Sessions 1969 – 1972

WEA/Rhino 8122799488

When Lulu started her career she recorded American soul and R'n'B cover versions, but was steered into pop by the legendary Mickie Most. While it provided Lulu with hits, she was never comfortable with the material she was given. Within months of Eurovision Lulu had left Mickie Most and Columbia records, signing to Atco (part of Atlantic records) and recording new material. The first result from these sessions was the single "Oh Me Oh My (I'm A Fool For You Baby)" which reached number 22 in America and 47 in the UK. In February 1970 the album, appropriately titled "New Routes", was released and in America it made the Top 100 album chart, viewed as a major success at the time and in retrospect. There were no further singles from this album but, by April, "Hum A Song (From Your Heart)" returned Lulu to the American singles chart. The album "Melody Fair" was issued in July but it failed to chart, as did two more singles taken from it. "Everybody's Got To Clap" (written by former husband Maurice Gibb and brother Billy Lawrie) was released in 1971, and was followed by "Got To Believe In Love" and "It Takes A Real Man (To Bring Out The Woman In Me)" (USA only). The final release was the superb "Even If I Could Change" in 1972. In less than three years Lulu produced some of her most critically acclaimed music,

yet it was a commercial failure and she parted company with Atco. For years these recordings have commanded high prices from soul collectors and Lulu fans alike and they are finally available on CD for the first time. The first CD features the original albums in their entirety while the second CD is a treasure trove of singles and unreleased recordings.



Highlights include "In The Morning" (written by Maurice), "Mr Bojangles" which is a stunning version of The Beatles' "Good Day Sunshine", and "Sweet Memories". But it is the second disc that really shines. The previously unreleased "Bury Me Down By The River" (written by Barry and Maurice Gibb), Elton John and Bernie Taupin's "Come Down In Time" and "Love Song", composed by Lesley Duncan, are all gems. The alternative takes are also refreshing and there is even an Italian version of "Oh Me Oh My". This must be the best reissue of 2007, fantastic attention to detail, excellent and informative booklet and amazing music! Worth buying just for "Even If I Could Change" alone, but if you thought you knew Lulu you haven't heard her at all until you've listened to this collection. **RC**

**MORMON
TABERNACLE CHOIR
& ORCHESTRA with
SISSEL**

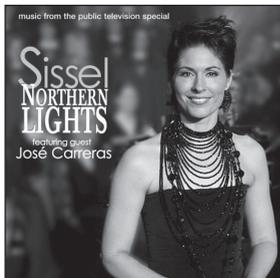
Spirit of the Season
Intellectual Records Inc.
CFN0711-2

Former Eurovision interval artist, Sissel, joins the world-renowned Mormon Tabernacle Choir on this seasonal collection that has recently topped the Billboard classical charts in America for almost two months. Recorded live at Temple Square, Salt Lake City during December 2006, the album combines traditional and contemporary Christmas songs from around the globe, beginning with the French carol "Bring A Torch, Jeannette, Isabella". Sissel features on eight of the 16 tracks and, although the choral pieces are in themselves amazing performances, it is the Norwegian singer who brings an added sparkle to the collection. With purity and sincerity, Sissel adds her unique style to, among others, favourites such as "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" and "Angels From The Realms Of Glory". Elsewhere she contributes to "Mitt Hjerte Alltid Vanker" in her native tongue, as well as Sissel's own interpretation of ABBA's "Like An Angel Passing Through My Room". Christmas may be over, but this is worth seeking out in readiness for the 2008 festive season that is already less than 12 months away! **GL**

**SECRET GARDEN with
SPECIAL GUESTS**

Inside I'm Singing
Universal 602517552746
Initially commenced as a ten-year anniversary project in 2005, Secret Garden's latest album finally appears after

two years of production. Recognising the worldwide success of "You Raise Me Up", Rolf and Fionnuala decided to invite international artists to perform newly created lyrics to existing Secret Garden tracks, each of which are renamed for their lyrical versions. It was a brave decision to take and, for the purist, the new full-length vocal version of "Nocturne", performed by Anne Takle, disappoints, but the transformation provided to other melodies is spectacular. West End star, Elaine Paige, sings words to "Song From A Secret Garden" under the title of "The Things You Are To Me", while Swedish singer Peter Jöback provides vocals for a brand new song, "Thank You". Eurovision connections include performances from Tommy Körberg on "If Came The Hour" (Passacaglia) and Brian Kennedy's vocals on the original 2001 recording of "You Raise Me Up". However, it is "Simply You" (Ode To Simplicity) that will capture the attention of most listeners, for it features the vocal talents of none other than 1993 winner, Niamh Kavanagh. Elsewhere international singing sensation Barbra Streisand contributes "I've Dreamed Of You" (Heartstrings), the lyrics of which were penned for her marriage to James Brolin in 1999. Other contributions come from Peter Corry, Tracey Campbell, Espen Grothoim and Steinar Albrigtsen, as well as two recently composed instrumentals from Secret Garden themselves. Already a number one platinum album in Norway and enjoying further success through i-tunes, the international release is due during the spring of 2008. **GL**



SISSEL feat. JOSÉ CARRERAS

Northern Lights
Denon CDZ17661

During the spring of 2007 a very special concert was filmed for broadcast throughout the United States of America later in the year. The filming took place at Roros Church, Norway where singing star Sissel was joined by the Nidaros Cathedral Girls Choir, the Trondheim Soloists and a guest appearance from international tenor, José Carreras. To accompany the television special, an album that oozes spirituality at all levels was also issued, but has yet to have a worldwide or, perhaps more surprisingly, Scandinavian release. Although tracks such as "Sarah's Song" have been included on Sissel's previous albums, "Northern Lights" shows a depth of personal faith and belief that is less apparent on earlier recordings. The Norwegian star provides a unique vocal accompaniment to the choir on "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring", while the deeply moving "When Will My Heart Arise" connects the Christmas and Easter stories in a way that is often overlooked in a more modern and secular age. Elsewhere Sissel considers human mortality and the hope of life to come within the lyrics of "Ready To Go Home", and joins José on an Anglo-Italian performance of "Quando Sento Che Mi Ami". With

the exception of "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen" which seems slightly out of place with its big band style, this is an amazing album from an equally amazing singer. **GL**

VARIOUS

Junior 07 Eurovision Song Contest

CMC Entertainment 1005292

For a second successive year the official Junior album is accompanied by an additional disc that features the karaoke versions of all 17 entries, although most people will no doubt purchase this collection for the original vocal recordings. As always there are those songs that are clearly performed by children, such as the Greek "Kapou Berthefika" by group Made in Greece. However, a number of others, most noticeably by the teenage entrants, display a maturity that would not be out of place in the main contest. Of particular note is the soft rock "Anders" from Belgian band Trust and the Serbian ballad "Pisi Me" emotionally sung by Nevena Bozovic. Sweden's "Nu Eller Aldrig" by Frida Sandén and young Cypriot Yiorgos Ioannides' "I Mousiki Dinei Ftera" are also worth listening to. But the most irritating song has to come from Ukraine and child star Ilona Galitska. At first it sounds like a poor recording, until you realise that the scratchy static sound near the start is actually a very annoying special effect! **GL**

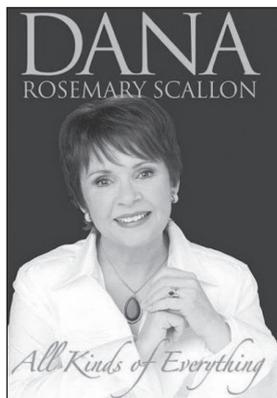
Book review

All Kinds of Everything

Dana Rosemary Scallon
Gill & MacMillan 256 pages
ISBN 0717140652

In March 1970 a teenage singer from Derry became the first Irish person to win the Eurovision Song Contest,

convincingly beating the likes of Julio Iglesias and Mary Hopkin. Throughout the years that followed, Dana would become a household name across the globe, with particular success in Ireland, the United Kingdom and the USA. "All Kinds of Everything" traces Dana's rise to fame and her strong, but often criticised, Christian beliefs that have taken her to the Vatican as well as the White House, and allowed her to enter politics as an Irish presidential candidate and, more recently, a Member of the European Parliament. Between her Eurovision victory and political activity, she has continued with a successful musical career, regularly appearing on Top of the Pops and hosting her own shows on both BBC and ITV. Alongside her singing career, Dana has also been a committed wife and mother, successfully juggling all aspects of an extraordinary life with those family principles that come from her deeply held and sincere faith. Dana may not appeal to everyone, and neither will her autobiography, but there can be no denying the amazing testimony that is sensitively and sometimes movingly recorded here. **GL** ■



Obituaries

Ronnie Hazlehurst (1928 – 2007)



© Daily Telegraph.com

Cheshire born Ronnie Hazlehurst, who died on 1st October 2007 aged 79, was chiefly involved with the Eurovision Song Contest in his role as BBC Light Entertainment Musical Director. This led him to conducting the UK entry on seven occasions, most famously "Rock Bottom" when he conducted using a rolled-up umbrella. He was also musical director for the Eurovision's staged by the BBC in 1974, 1977 and 1982. At an early age, Ronnie left school and played in a number of Big Bands in and around his hometown of Duckinfield. In 1947, he was called up to do his National Service and played in the 4th/7th Dragoon Guards' band. After leaving, he played trumpet for a number of further bands before moving into the field of arranging with Granada TV. In 1961 he moved to the BBC where he would remain for the next 30 years, composing and arranging many themes for BBC TV programmes including "Last Of The Summer Wine", "Yes Minister" and "The Two Ronnies". Twice married, Hazlehurst retired to Guernsey. In September 2007 he suffered a stroke and never recovered. With his Eurovision career stretching from "Rock Bottom" to "One Step Out Of Time", Ronnie Hazlehurst was an integral part in the UK's success at the contest.

Tose Proeski (1981 – 2007)



With scenes approaching the fervour that followed the death of Princess Diana, the Balkan world was shocked by the tragic death of Macedonian star, Tose Proeski in a car crash. The young singer, who had represented his country in Istanbul with "Life", was honoured by a day of national mourning. Born in Prilep, Tose participated at an early age in song festivals breaking through in 1997. He came third in the 2000 Eurovision pre-selection, but rose to superstardom by winning the Beovizija (now the Serbian pre-selection) in 2003 with "Čija Si", which became his largest hit and led to his participation at Eurovision in 2004. Already good vocally, Tose stretched himself by training his voice operatically too. He worked with many Balkan stars including Zeljko Joksimovic and Esmira Redzepova, toured Australia, had a hit in South Africa and released seven successful albums. "Bozilak" was an album on which Tose interpreted traditional Macedonian songs, while "Igra Bez Granica" was just released in August 2007. Unfortunately, his career was cruelly cut short by a fatal road traffic accident on 16th October 2007. As demonstrated by the turn out at his state funeral, Tose was loved and revered by colleagues and fans alike.

Vision Smalls

FOR SALE

ESC DVDs, CDs and records for sale. CDs and records from 1959 to 2007. DVDs of ESCs 1986-2003 inclusive available. (As a bonus, DVDs of 1993-2003 include the corresponding A Song For Europe and some have other extras). Also DVDs of the ESC Previews from 1994 to 2007 and CDs of all songs for ESC 1956-1999 inclusive. NEW! DVDs of ESC TV SPECIALS, many shown on BBC / C4 in the 90s and 00s, plus DVD of "Congratulations" anniversary show without commentary. E-mail escorders@yahoo.co.uk for the latest list or send an SAE/IRC for printed list to Michael Mullings, 19 Orchard Grove, London SE20 8DN

MISCELLANEOUS

Definitely Dina - the Appreciation Society for Dina Carroll. Find out about Dina's forthcoming album "Affairs of the Heart" and more! Visit www.freewebs.com/dinacarroll or email dinacarroll@sky.com

OGAE UK member Andy Roberts is currently researching a book about UK participation at the Eurovision Song Contest. He would like to hear from other members about their 1) favourite UK entry; 2) least favourite UK entry; 3) favourite Eurovision winner; 4) favourite Eurovision song; and 5) favourite Eurovision year. Any additional comments around these themes would also be welcomed. Andy can be contacted at 15 Abbey Lodge, Landcross Drive, Northampton NN3 3NJ, by e-mail at andyroberts15@tiscali.co.uk or SMS 077 9066 6581. Please send your contributions no later than 31st March 2008.

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Quiz Answers

1. Net Als Toen;
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3. Edsilia;
4. Harry van Hoof;
5. Teach-In;
6. Reemer;
7. Einstein;
8. Dick Schallies;
9. Shangri-La;
10. Lester;
11. No Goodbyes;
12. NETHERLANDS

THE 'LAST' PAGE



Netherlands 1963
"Een Speeldoos"
Annie Palmen



Norway 1963
"Solhverv"
Anita Thallaug



Finland 1963
"Muistojeni Laulu"
Laila Halme



Sweden 1963
"En Gång I Stockholm"
Monica Zetterlund

All received 'nil' points