



vision

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Affiliated to Organisation Générale des Amateurs Eurovision



Vision

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ED LINES

A New Year brings new changes, and I must begin this issue by thanking Richard Crane, Thomas Latham and Malcolm Whitehouse for their valuable input during these past years. Without them OGAE UK would not be the organisation it is today. I would also like to welcome Paul Marks-Jones, Dean Asker and David Ransted to their new positions, and more will be written about this elsewhere.

And in the way that OGAE UK needs to adapt to changes, both planned and unplanned, Eurovision too is facing new challenges as the contest moves to Moscow. Sir Terry Wogan has officially resigned as the BBC's commentator, ending months of speculation, whilst Graham Norton is certain to bring his own imitable style to British viewers watching at home.

In addition to these changes on the home front, the European Broadcasting Union has also announced that 2009 will see the introduction of split jury and televoting, with each being weighted equally when the final scores are confirmed. This revised process was used at the recent Junior event, but arguments continue as to whether this will have any impact on perceived eastern domination.

And so as we begin 2009, all that remains is for me to wish each and every reader a very Happy New Year, with Eurovision tunes old and new to help us all survive the economic crisis!

With best wishes,

Gordon Lewis

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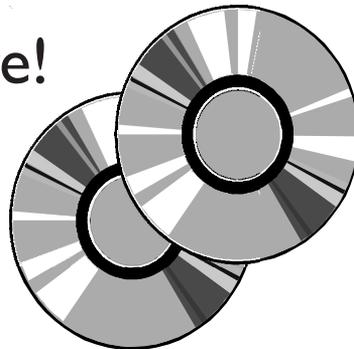
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THINGS YOU DIDN'T
KNOW ABOUT
**ANDREW
LLOYD WEBBER!**

The UK Eurovision world has been all a-twitter since the BBC announced that Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber was to select the UK's representative for Moscow and to write the song for the winner. Here **Marcus Keppel-Palmer** takes a look at 10 pieces of trivia about the Lord



For 2009, the BBC took the unusual and bold step of announcing their pre-selection plans well in advance: a contest called “Your Country Need You” to run over a series of Saturday nights to select a performer who will sing a song specially written by none other than the King of the West End musical himself, Andrew Lloyd Webber. The high points of Lloyd Webber’s career are reasonably well-known – long-running musical hits (“Jesus Christ Superstar”, “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat”, “Evita”, “Cats”, “Starlight Express”, “Phantom of the Opera”, “Whistle Down The Wind”, “Aspects of Love” to name but many); theatrical impresario and owner of a number of theatres through his Really Useful Company; discovery of many stars of the current musical firmament from Elaine Page to Connie Fisher; and most recently star of Saturday night BBC TV thanks to casting shows to find Maria, Joseph and most recently a Nancy and Oliver in the forthcoming production of “Oliver”.

But as we put the UK’s Eurovision future into the Lord’s hands, here are some pieces of trivia that you might not know.

1 It is a myth that Andrew Lloyd Webber has collaborated frequently with Tim Rice. Although the former solicitor’s clerk, Rice, contacted Lloyd Webber as a 21 year old, their collaboration only lasted 10 years

and saw only three musicals written and staged. Admittedly these were the very successful trio of “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat”, “Jesus Christ Superstar” and “Evita”. If anyone has been Lloyd Webber’s major lyricist, it has been Don Black, former manager of Matt Monro, who has collaborated with Lloyd Webber for more than 20 years.

2 Andrew Lloyd Webber was always destined for a career in music and theatre; it was in his genes. His father was composer, William Lloyd Webber, who composed a lot of church music, particularly for organ. His mother was the concert pianist, Jean Hermione. Andrew’s younger brother, Julian, is an acclaimed cellist who recorded the theme for the long-running ITV show, “The South Bank Show”. Andrew’s aunt, Viola was an actress as well. Is there any surprise at his choice of career?

3 “Cats” was the longest running musical in both the West End and Broadway, until being overtaken by “Les Miserables” in London and Lloyd Webber’s own “Phantom of the Opera” in New York. Although much of the musical directly uses the poetry of TS Eliot’s “Old Possum’s Book of Practical Cats”, the major hit from the musical, “Memory”, had lyrics written by Trevor Nunn, the show’s director, albeit based on an Eliot poem. Tim Rice had



submitted lyrics but they were rejected. Kikki Danielsson, Swedish entrant for Eurovision 1985, recorded a Swedish version of the song.

4 Lloyd Webber had a number six hit single with a version of the theme from the computer game "Tetris" under the artistic name, Doctor Spin, with his long-time musical producer Nigel Wright, who also works on "X-Factor". Another novelty hit that Lloyd Webber was involved with was the Timmy Mallet hit "Itsy Bitsy Teeny Weeny Yellow Polk Dot Bikini", number one under the name Bombalurina.

5 Andrew Lloyd Webber has also composed two film scores aside from films of his musicals. These were at the start of his career, being "Gumshoe" and "The Odessa File". The former was a comedy-drama set in Liverpool and starring Albert Finney as a detective. The latter starred Jon Voigt, fresh from "Midnight Cowboy", and is set in Hamburg, where Voigt, a newspaper reporter, investigates post-World War Two Nazi organisations. Listening to the score now reveals it to be a work-in-progress which will flourish as "Evita".

6 Lloyd Webber is an avid art collector and has exhibited his Pre-Raphaelite collection at the Royal Academy in 2003. His

collection comprises principally works of Victorian era artists such as John William Waterhouse, Frederick Leighton and John Roddam Spencer Stanhope.

7 Aged 3, Andrew appeared on the front cover of the magazine, "Nursery World".

8 Three of Lloyd Webber's songs have hit number one in the singles charts. The first one was "Don't Cry For Me Argentina" by Julie Covington, followed by Jason Donovan's recording of "Any Dream Will Do" and then most recently Boyzone with "No Matter What" from the musical "Whistle Down The Wind". Perhaps his Eurovision song will be the 4th?

9 Andrew has married three times and has five children. His most famous marriage was to Sarah Brightman, the former Hot Gossip dancer, whom he cast in "Phantom of the Opera" as Christine. That marriage, however, produced no children.

10 One of the last songs ever recorded by Elvis Presley was the Lloyd Webber/Rice song "It's Easy For You", which appeared as the last track on Elvis' "Moody Blue" album. Elvis had been the inspiration for the Pharoah's Song in "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat." **▼**

OGAE UK

ELECTION STATEMENT

Regular readers would have received a flier announcing the forthcoming OGAE UK election and seeking nominations for the role of President, Treasurer/Membership Secretary and Member Representative for a period of three years. Due to the unexpected resignation of OGAE UK's current President and the fact that only one nomination was received for each advertised post, it has been deemed appropriate for the three nominees to be appointed without the need for a costly election.

Paul Marks-Jones will replace **Richard Crane** as OGAE UK President, and Paul will also continue to act as Events Co-ordinator. Richard has decided to step down after seven years and has been an active supporter of OGAE UK for almost two decades. His enthusiasm for all things Eurovision has been second to none and his contribution to the organisation will be missed. OGAE UK would like to send Richard the very best of wishes for his future in whatever he decides to do.

Simon Bennett will continue for a further period in his current role of Treasurer/Membership Secretary. His professionalism, dedication and financial knowledge have been a vital addition to the committee, and OGAE UK is extremely pleased that he has decided to serve a further term.

Thomas Latham, who has served as Member Representative for almost five years, had already announced his intention not to stand for re-election and will be succeeded by **Dean Asker**. Best wishes are also offered to Thomas and his new career, whilst thanking him for his valuable input to OGAE UK since 2004.

Malcolm Whitehouse, who has conscientiously served as Ticket Co-ordinator since 2003 has already been replaced by **David Ransted**. Due to the sensitivity of this particular role, OGAE UK chooses to appoint this position rather than seek an open election, as this approach seeks to maintain impartiality at all times. Once again, best wishes go to Malcolm as he hopefully enjoys a life with less ticket-induced headaches!

Gordon Lewis will remain as Editor, which is also an appointed role to ensure the continuity of **Vision**. He will continue to be assisted by **Hassan Yusuf**, who will start to take a more active role in producing the magazine during the coming months and years.

Finally, OGAE UK and Vision would like to thank all its members and readers for their support, and look forward to this continuing in the future.

Signed by **Gordon Lewis** on behalf of OGAE UK

1st January 2009

THE WOGAN FACTOR

With Sir Terry Wogan now retired from his commentating duties, Alasdair Rendall explores the voice of British Eurovision

Mention the word Eurovision to anyone in Britain, and chances are the first name that comes to mind isn't Bucks Fizz, Gina G, or even ABBA, but Terry Wogan. The veteran broadcaster has been inextricably linked with the Eurovision Song Contest for over three decades now. However, following his announcement that he is to step down from his commentating duties, it's perhaps time to step back and take a look at what the real impact of "the Wogan factor" has been.

Wogan, who started working at the BBC in the mid-1960s, helping to launch the "happy sound" of Radio 1 in 1967, first took on TV commentating duties for the BBC's coverage of the Eurovision Song Contest in 1973 which was held in Luxembourg. By that time he had been moved to the high profile breakfast show of the more relaxed sound of Radio 2. 1973 saw his oft-quoted anecdote about the over zealous security services in Luxembourg, threatening to shoot anyone who stood up to applaud.

One more one-off presenting duty came in 1978, when Terry filled the commentary role in Paris, with the rest of the late 1970s contests being commented on by such luminaries as David Vine or Michael Aspel. In 1980, however, the BBC returned to "El Tel" starting a run of 28

years behind the microphone criss-crossing Europe from Zagreb to Bergen, and Belgrade to Brussels. In his first regular contest in 1980 in The Hague, Netherlands, his biting wit was already in evidence, and he ruffled a few feathers with his jibes about the Turkish effort "Petr'Oil" by Ajda Pekkan, reading out the admittedly odd lyrics in his inimitable style.

Since that night in The Hague, Wogan has brought the contest to life for millions of viewers across the country, and has many fans outside of Britain. Some of his comments on the songs, the dresses and of course the presenters (who could forget Dr Death and the Tooth Fairy in Copenhagen, 2001) have gone down in legend.



Many comments are repeated year on year to the extent that the more obsessive fans look out for his regular anecdotes. We all know about his need for drink as the show wears on, or that Ralph Siegel has written the German entry "since God was a boy", and of course "he's wearing that for a bet" whenever some of the more outrageous costumes are on show.

Yet comments that get a laugh out of many viewers sometimes cause annoyance for some of the contest's biggest fans. A particular bug-bearer for many has been the occasions when he has talked over the start of songs, for example in 1994 pointing out that purple was obviously that year's colour in Estonia, over the first few bars of Silvi Vrait's effort. But in many ways this is part of Wogan's appeal, and it would have been hard for any commentator to resist having a mid-song dig at some of the more bizarre entries, such as the "steady woman" during Maja Blagdan's histrionics in 1996, or his remarks on the leather-fest that was Paul Oscar's 1997 effort. Perhaps some fans could be accused of being too sensitive to criticism of the contest, yet other commentators, such as Radio 2's own Ken Bruce, manage to give a humorous commentary but without resorting to some of the more mocking elements.

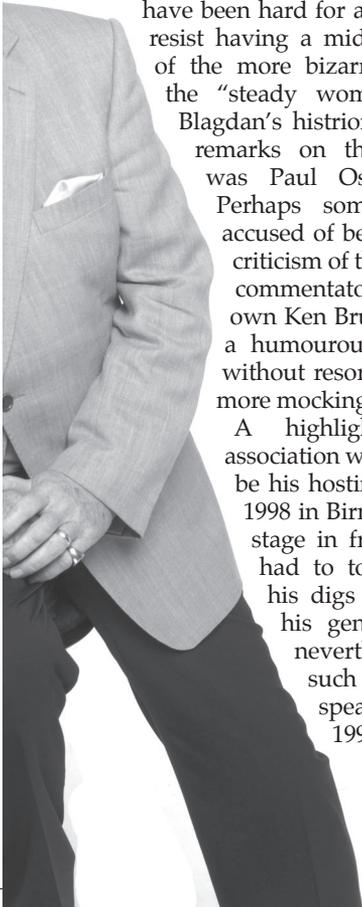
A highlight for Wogan's association with Eurovision must be his hosting of the contest in 1998 in Birmingham. Here, on stage in front of millions, he had to tone down some of his digs at the contest, but his genuine humour was nevertheless on show, such as his attempts at speaking French. The 1998 contest has gone

down as a fan favourite and Wogan's contribution must play some part in this.

Of course, it's not just the Eurovision itself that is associated with Wogan, for the Song for Europe, or whatever it's being called these days, has been hosted by the Irishman for many years now, apart from a few years at the turn of the century when "stars" like Katy Hill and Dale Winton stepped up to the camera. However, being in the same room as the participants and having to be balanced in his coverage, he resorted less to taking the mickey out of the songs (although a few raised eyebrows at some of the more bizarre entries such as 1981's Unity and 1982's Q-Feel were much in evidence) and more to making jokes out of the contest itself.

Although his jokes got laughs out of the audience, regular viewers soon became aware that his range of jokes were often recycled. Phrases such as "I sometimes wonder if this isn't getting all a bit too exciting for you" were heard year on year. Nevertheless, his usual professionalism ensured Song for Europe maintained a primetime slot with good viewing numbers, despite some rather dark years for the UK in terms of the songs on offer. Of course there were glitches, most notoriously in 2007 when he read out the wrong winner of Making Your Mind Up, leaving poor Cyndi in utter confusion (the actual winner was Scooch). Wogan has tried to laugh the matter off in interviews since, but it was undoubtedly an embarrassing moment for such a professional.

In recent years the voting patterns of the contest, particularly since the expansion of the contest in 2004, has moved his comments on from the usual mickey-taking to something nearing general annoyance and frustration. Many people say he is too quick to blame "political voting" for the UK's failures, but it has



to be said that his comments often reflect the general opinion by the casual viewer. He's been heard to quip in many an interview "we won the Cold War but lost the Eurovision". The vaguely jingoistic undertones to comments such as this have certainly caused some discomfort amongst many of the contest's fans. The question has to be asked whether the viewers' opinions are influenced by what Terry has to say, or vice versa? What many people seem to take as "fact" may just be the effect of the comments made by Wogan over the years – "it's all political", something that the actual facts themselves do not bear out.

In the last couple of years many viewers have commented that Wogan has sounded less enthusiastic with some of the jokes sounding ever more laboured. This all came to a head during the voting in Belgrade last year with more "friendly" voting between some of the ex-Soviet states. His general annoyance spilled over into his revelation that he would have to take a long hard think about whether he wanted to come back in 2009 and take on commenting duties. At first this could have seemed to be a somewhat heat of the moment remark, but in an interview with the Radio Times in August, he said that it was "very doubtful" that he would be heading to Moscow, adding that the contest was "predictable" and "no longer a music contest", something of course that he has been saying for years. It looks like the planned changes to voting, including bringing in a jury,

couldn't persuade Terry to change his mind. It could be argued that after being in the commentary box for many, many years he is quite simply tired of the whole thing, although he has said in a number of interviews that "they'll have to carry me out of here in a box".

So as this really is the end of the Wogan era at Eurovision, what does it mean for the future of the UK's interest in the contest? Many fans in Britain need to accept that for the majority of casual viewers, it is Wogan himself that is the main attraction, rather than finding out who's representing Malta, or whether Belarus will give 12 points to Russia. There is, however, a vicious circle that needs to be broken; Wogan's acerbic comments have caused the British viewing public at large to treat the contest as a bit of a joke, and this has deterred big-name acts from representing the UK, which could go some way to explaining the generally poor results that the UK has suffered in recent years.

However, with Wogan stepping away from the microphone and attitudes towards the contest start to become less cynical and mocking, will this be at the expense of viewing figures? Will the Legions of Wogan fans want to watch Eurovision with someone else's voice and humour in evidence? We will soon find out with Wogan's replacement Graham Norton. A Eurovision without Wogan, whatever one's views on his commentary style, will be a strange experience, but will it work? Watch this space ... **V**



EURO QUIZ

It was 20 years ago today And so Martin Faulkner and Marcus Keppel-Palmer quiz you on the 1989 Contest

1. "Conquistador" was Portugal's entry this year, but who had a UK hit with a song of the same name?



2. Swiss entrants were Furbaz; what does that Romanche name translate as?

3. Germany's entrant, Nino de Angelo once had a UK hit. With which song?

4. Dieter Bohlen wrote the music for "Flieger". Which other song in the 1989 contest did he compose?

5. Maggie Parke, born in the USA, was lead singer of which group?

6. Who was the youngest performer in the 1989 contest?

7. Dutch entrant, Justine Palmelay, had previously backed which Dutch entrant on stage?

8. Winning composer, Rajko Dumic, had composed how many of the previous Yugoslav entries?

9. One song in 1989 scored nil points. In which country was the singer born?



10. Spain's entrant, Nina, was involved in the Spanish entry in 2002 and 2003. In what capacity?

Answers on inside back cover

OGAE PREVIEW VOTE 2009

All members are invited to take part in the OGAE UK preview vote in readiness for the next Eurovision Song Contest.

When all of the songs for 2009 have been selected and confirmed, most likely during March or April, those who have registered to vote will be contacted and asked for their top ten songs for the Moscow contest ... in the traditional voting fashion of course.

These votes will then be accumulated to give the official OGAE UK Preview Vote for 2009. Many other OGAE clubs will organise a similar vote and this will provide a clear view of what international fans are considering as the best songs. The votes will also be published on various websites, including our own www.uk.ogae.net

Last year over 80 members took part, so why not join in the fun and vote for the best song of 2009. The email address to register your interest is previews.2009@btinternet.com



CROATIAN ROSE BLOOMS IN SPANISH SUN



Franka Batelic

Results of the OGAE Song Contest 2008

Held in the Spanish city of Zaragoza, OGAE Spain welcomed no fewer than 29 entries for the 23rd annual OGAE Song Contest. Having come second in 2007, the United Kingdom were hoping that a second successive song from Take That would be enough to bring the title home, but it was not to be. Although "Rule The World" started to do just that in the early stages of voting, Croatia's sexy Franka Batelic forged ahead to take an undisputed first place, forcing Take That to be content with second place once again. Translated as "Rose In The

Stone", "Ruza U Kamenu" is a rocky pop number that captured the imagination of OGAE members across Europe and was consequently voted to the top. Further down the voting table controversy reigned when it was revealed that discrepancies had occurred, with some points not registering on the Spanish scoreboard. Although the missing votes have since been added and failed to change the overall result, OGAE International are seeking to ensure that such problems do not reoccur when Croatia hosts the 2009 event.

| Country | Song title | Performer | Results |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| CROATIA | "Ruza U Kamenu" | Franka Batelic | 164 points |
| UNITED KINGDOM | "Rule The World" | Take That | 137 points |
| GREECE | "Stous 31 Dromous" | Sakis Rouvas | 130 points |
| RUSSIA | "Opium" | Serebro | 108 points |
| FRANCE | "Je Suis Un Homme" | Zazie | 107 points |
| SPAIN | "Europa" | Mónica Naranjo | 105 points |
| ISRAEL | "Kshe'Halachta" | Shiri Maymon | 104 points |
| ITALY | "L'Amore" | Sonohra | 83 points |
| SERBIA | "Aspirin" | Seka Aleksic | 75 points |
| AUSTRIA | "Ich Mach' Die Ausnamhe Mit Dir" | Petra Frey | 71 points |
| TURKEY | "Zeynep Dizdar" | Sana Güvenmiyorum | 58 points |
| IRELAND | "You Must Have Had A Broken Heart" | Westlife | 53 points |
| LEBANON | "Ayami Beek" | Elissa | 51 points |
| SWEDEN | "Stockholm I Natt" | Peter Jöback | 43 points |
| FINLAND | "Ihmisten Edessa" | Jenni Vartiainen | 37 points |
| ESTONIA | "Ingel" | Rolf Junior | 34 points |
| NETHERLANDS | "Kijk Omhoog" | Nick & Simon | 32 points |
| REST OF THE WORLD | "All I Ever Wanted" | Brian Melo | 28 points |
| GERMANY | "So Soll Es Bleiben" | Ich & Ich | 28 points |
| DENMARK | "Ramt I Natten" | Lizzie | 25 points |
| AZERBAIJAN | "Oyuncaginam Senin" | Kerim | 19 points |
| PORTUGAL | "Ai Linda, Ai Linda" | Xaile | 16 points |
| BELGIUM | "Kusjesdans" | K3 | 14 points |
| POLAND | "Czas Nie Bedzie Czekal" | Blue Café | 14 points |
| NORWAY | "Bare Du Som Bet" | Geir Ronning | 12 points |
| LITHUANIA | "Leisk Sau" | Aiste Pilvelyte | 11 points |
| ANDORRA | "La Vida Perfecta" | Lexus | 7 points |
| FYR MACEDONIA | "Cresa" | Tose Proeski | Disqualified |
| MALTA | "Alone Today" | Miriam Christine | Disqualified |

If you would like to nominate your favourite track for the 2009 OGAE Song Contest UK Final to be held early summer, now is the time to send your suggestions to Martyn Clarke, 237 Argyle Road, Ealing, London W13 0AY or e-mail martyn237@yahoo.co.uk **Please note, you do not need to supply audio files at this stage.** All songs should be original compositions that have been written, composed and recorded by British nationals. Chart hits and little heard album tracks are both acceptable, but absolutely no Eurovision entries, cover versions or sampled melodies. No song should have been released in any format prior to 1st January 2008 and your nominations should reach Martyn no later than 28th February 2009. For anyone wishing to take part in both the national or international voting process, or if you just want to find out more about OGAE's own song contest, Martyn is also the person to contact.

Gordon Lewis reflects on the recent Junior Eurovision Song Contest and the continued dominance of Eastern voting patterns

FUN IN

Promising a show full of surprises, the sixth Junior Eurovision Song Contest was broadcast live from the Spyros Kyprianou Arena, Lemesos, Cyprus, where delegates from 15 countries were able to enjoy some fun in the Mediterranean sun before returning, in many cases, to their more wintry homelands!

Once again UNICEF were the financial beneficiaries of the televote, but with appeal videos scattered throughout the show one could be forgiven for thinking it was Junior Live Aid! Although the United Kingdom remained absent once again, there were recorded greetings from David Beckham, Robbie Williams and American actress, Whoopi Goldberg.

Hosted by Alex Michael and Sophia Paraskeva, with Sophia living just ten minutes from the venue, rehearsals commenced a few days before the live show that took place on 22nd November 2008. As always, the European youngsters were enthusiastic in their performances and eager to experience the thrill of hearing the words 'douze points'.

Separating the performances from the voting was an extended interval that featured Evridiki, Dimitri Korgialas and a young choir singing the contest theme song, "Fun In The Sun". Russian superstar and Eurovision winner Dima Bilan, who performed a combined version of "Number One Fan" and



THE SUN

“Believe”, followed the Greek-Cypriot stars before the interval concluded with all Junior contestants joining together for the UNICEF commissioned “Hand In Hand”

With two thirds of the entries representing Eastern Europe and just two countries from the geographic West taking part, even a new voting procedure that saw scores equally split between jurors and viewers could not prevent dominance from the East once again. Only Malta managed to provide some Western competition in the early stages, with Ukraine ultimately coming second



to Georgia’s wasp-clad singers, Bzikebi, and their somewhat annoying entry “Bzz ...”.

And so it’s off to Kiev, or should that be Tbilisi? Unlike the main event that sees the winning nation host the next contest, the Junior show is open to bids from participating countries and the 2009 event has already been awarded to Ukrainian broadcaster NTU. So whilst Ukraine welcomes Europe to its capital for the second time since 2005, Georgia will have to wait a little longer before staging its first Eurovision Song Contest. ▼

THE RESULTS

| Country | Song Title | Performers | Score |
|----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------|
| Georgia | “Bzz ...” | Bzikebi | 154 points |
| Ukraine | “Matrosy” | Victoria Petryk | 135 points |
| Lithuania | “Laiminga Diena” | Egle Jurgaityte | 103 points |
| Malta | “Junior Swing” | Daniel Testa | 100 points |
| FYR Macedonia | “Prati Mi SMS” | Bobi Andonov | 93 points |
| Belarus | “Sertse Belarusi” | Dasha, Alina & Karina | 86 points |
| Russia | “Spit Angel” | Mihail Puntov | 73 points |
| Armenia | “Im Ergi Hnchyune” | Monika Manucharova | 59 points |
| Romania | “Salvati Planeta” | Madalina & Andrada | 58 points |
| Cyprus | “Gioupi Gia” | Elena Mannouri & Charis Sawa | 46 points |
| Belgium | “Shut Up” | Oliver | 45 points |
| Serbia | “Uvek Kad U Nebo Pogledam” | Maja Mazic | 37 points |
| Netherlands | “1 Dag” | Marissa | 27 points |
| Greece | “Kapoia Nychta” | Niki Yiannouchu | 19 points |
| Bulgaria | “Edna Mechta” | Krestiana Kresteva | 15 points |

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...

CHARLOTTE HENRY and MAX MILLIGAN

Marcus Keppel-Palmer finds out what happened to 2001 Song For Europe entrant, Charlotte Henry and her co-composer of "King Of Love", Max Milligan

For a few years, the UK pre-selection was a two-stage affair with the Radio 2 listening audience whittling down the songs chosen for A Song For Europe (SFE) to the four that would compete in the televised final.

In 2001, amongst the eight songs that the Radio 2 audience voted on was "King Of Love" co-composed by Charlotte Henry and guitarist, Max Milligan and sung by Charlotte herself. "King Of Love" was a shuffling jazzy song, sung with Charlotte's husky countryish voice, with a lovely saxophone motif.

Max was born in January 1955 and has always loved playing guitar. In 1973, he formed his first professional rock band (albeit whilst at school), called Gondolin, after Tolkien's lost city of the elves in Lord Of The Rings. Bassist, Robert Felton, still plays from time to time with Milligan. The group toured playing mainly covers

of Groundhogs songs. Max gained further experience with many styles of music with members of the Royal Air Force Southern Band based in Henlow playing various festivals and functions on airbases as The Frontliners.

This led him to be chosen as the resident guitarist at The Nite Spot, a 650-seat theatre on the Bedford embankment, where between 1976 and 1978, he backed numerous British and American artists including Matt Monro, Diane Solomon and Georgie Fame. He then joined The

New Dakotas backing the Merseyside 1960's legend Billy

J Kramer, who by this time had moved into cabaret, still singing his number one hits, "Bad To Me" and "Little Children".

During the 1980's, Milligan joined the soul/funk band from Bedford called Ocean, and played all over the UK, mainly at US Airforce bases, supporting bands like The Real Thing, The Foundations, Carl Douglas, and Jimmy James & The



Vagabonds. Max still plays regularly with the lead singer of Ocean, Denny McCaffrey, as the duo The Oblivious Brothers. During the 1980s, Milligan spent a lot of time as a session musician working with producer Barry Upton (ex-Brotherhood of Man) on many projects some involving Hazel Dean, Steps, Waikiki and Shane Richie.

In the 1990s Max started teaching at the Guitar Institute based in Acton, west London and continued to play in live bands like Nasuna, a jazz/funk outfit, appeared on stage in the musical 125th Street and also wrote songs with various other writers including Charlotte Henry.

Charlotte had been interested in music from a very early age and started studying at the Central School of Ballet in London. She then joined the Brian Rogers Performers School, run by Brian and Jan Rogers, who were in the 1976 SFE with the group, Champagne. After three years of studying, Charlotte joined the Brian Rogers dance troupe and performed on a variety of stages, including the London Palladium, as well as appearing on several ITV shows.

She later toured the UK with the cast of Barry Manilow's 'Copacabana' starring Michael Praed. She also played in 'Summer Holiday' alongside Darren Day which ran for two years. The stage experience was a valuable proving ground, but Charlotte wanted to write songs and so teamed up with Max Milligan, whom she had met in a touring group. One of the first fruits of their collaboration was the aforementioned "King Of Love" which gave Charlotte

some exposure, albeit not on television. Undaunted and with a bag full of demos, Charlotte flew over to Nashville, USA to see what the capital of country music would bring. She secured a deal with an independent production company and the publishers at Everyday Music. They began producing her debut album in 2002, but which was never released.

Charlotte's next venture was to join a cruise company, spending six months as the lead production singer in two Las Vegas style shows. She then spent a further six months in New York where she met music producer Mark Wolfson. They decided to record an EP at The Mothership (Steve Vai's Studio) in Los Angeles with music engineer Neil Citron. This was seen as a new recording start and Charlotte returned to the UK to

write the rest of her album with Max Milligan, who by now was playing in a jazz/funk band and working with Cherry Lee Mewis, a R&B singer. Max was always busy composing incidental music for TV companies, writing songs and teaching guitar at The Guitar Institute in London. The album 'Charlotte Henry' was released in 2004. Ever

the nomad, in 2008 Charlotte moved to Spain and is now performing there.

A curious partnership between a journeyman guitarist and a singer/dancer from stage and cruise ships is emblematic of the quality of artist and song entered into the UK pre-selection for Eurovision in the early noughties. But behind that lies a story of hard craft and aspiration. ▼



EUROVISION PANEL

From time to time the Eurovision Panel of fans and experts convenes to discuss the issues of the day. In this edition, the panel comprises **Paul Marks-Jones**, OGAE UK's new President, **Alasdair Rendall** from the BBC, **Michelle Apostolides** moderator of the Eurovision General Yahoo group, **Ole Topholm**, commentator for Danmarks Radio, and **Hazel Ford** from Orpington

First up, is the return of the juries to Eurovision good or bad?

Paul Mark-Jones: The return of the juries will be a good thing so long as it is well controlled. We don't want a repeat of countries 'buying' and 'selling' the douze points as [allegedly] happened in 2002. I think if the jurors are chosen correctly then it will give a truer result. Unfortunately though, some countries will suffer due to ingrained prejudices. I think the next step has to be limiting the number of times a particular phone number can televote.



Michelle Apostolides: Well, it depends how it is actually handled on the night, or nights. Televoting is a 'good thing' clearly, because it enables everyone to participate actively. But it does lend itself to neighbourly voting. In principle, adding a jury is a good thing. But it will only work if the jury members have some expertise to judge the music itself and also if their vote is given due prominence in the overall process.

Alasdair Rendall: It's certainly an interesting move, although it's important to note that many of the people who are calling for a return to jury voting are the same people (for example, many people in the UK and Germany) who led the

way with televoting in the late-1990s. Although juries may be less biased than the public at large it could be argued that their opinions are out of step with the viewing public across Europe, such as in Belgrade saving the relatively dated sound of Charlotte Perelli ahead of the more contemporary entries from FYR Macedonia and Bulgaria. I would prefer the public to have the upper hand and the juries to act as a counter-balance to any overt political bias (so, for example having the balance between televoting and juries at 70-30). It doesn't do anything to prevent the real problem of ALL participating countries being able to vote in the final, which I would argue has been one of the leading contributors towards recent voting controversies. We saw how removing this aspect in the two semi-finals in Belgrade caused a more popular and even spread of finalists –and it's time that this moved to the final as well.

Hazel Ford: This is something that I've been saying for a long time: half jury and half televoting, like they do on shows like "Dancing On Ice". The jury should be a different one in the semi-final to that in the final, if the country gets through. Of course, to make it really fair, there shouldn't be any Big Four, only the country that won the previous year and is therefore hosting

it, should be given an automatic right to the final, and have voting/jury rights to one of the semis as well as the final. But of course, this isn't going to happen. If it did, then the UK would get much better results each year.

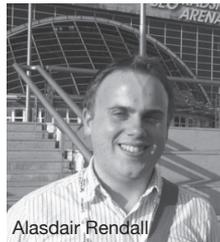
Ole Topholm: I think that Russia and Ukraine were some of the best songs in 2008, but the return of the jury in the Eurovision is great because a jury can evaluate every song and not only the winning song like the viewers. I think the result with the new rules will be fair. I also think that the UK now will get some more points because of the new rules and it is also a good thing for Scandinavia. The losers of the new system are countries like Turkey and Russia because they now have an advantage with their diaspora in the rest of Europe – and with a jury the diaspora is going to lose some of its influence. But I still think the best song is going to win irrespective of which country it is – and if the best song is from Russia it is fine with me.

Secondly with Terry Wogan announcing that he is stepping down from Eurovision, looking back over his many years, what legacy does he leave the contest with?

MA: Wogan was a good choice when he started out because it showed that someone from one country can commentate for another. And he was very entertaining at his best. But I think it's necessary for broadcasters to ask themselves if it is a good thing for one person to commentate over many years and still keep themselves fresh and amusing. In some respects, it

might be worth considering what the purpose of a Eurovision commentator is after fifty years.

OT: Terry Wogan was great in the old days. But now he belongs to a group in the old generation who do not accept the fact that the Eastern European countries are equal participants in Eurovision – and that is too bad. It is like the European Union: all the old member countries think it is a good idea to have the former communist countries in the club – but we will not give them too much influence, and that is not a fair mentality. I wish Terry Wogan a happy retirement.



Alasdair Rendall



Hazel Ford

HF: In my opinion Terry Wogan was the reason that the contest lost its credibility in the eyes of the British public. The British media and therefore the British public just love him on Eurovision. At the beginning he did say things and made pointed remarks about the less credible entrants that were a bit amusing, but over the years, because he has been given more or less carte blanche to say whatever he likes (though drawing the line at being downright nasty!), he has made the show a laughing stock for the British, and therefore no decent and/or well known artist is going to risk their career by representing the UK, unless they are trying to make a comeback like Katrina did. It was very different in the days of Sandie Shaw, Cliff Richard and Lulu. Most of the other countries, especially the Eastern Europeans put their top artists forward, or if they are just upcoming singers who won their national finals, then this would be seen as a serious launching pad for their careers. For the last few years Wogan has replaced the 'humour' with carping,

particularly at the Eastern Europeans all voting for each other, which as we know, isn't always the case and they only do it because the contestants are well known in their neighbouring countries anyway. Sometimes he sounds really ignorant and bigoted, especially when going on about Putin and the oil! He never made any attempt to do his 'homework' even when it was all written in front of him!

AR: Wogan leaves both a positive and a negative legacy. On the positive front, the high viewing figures that the contest receives year-on-year in the UK must in no small part be down to Wogan. Outside of the hardcore fan community, his idiosyncratic commentary draws people to their TV sets and if Wogan is no longer involved with the contest many of these people may decide to give the contest a miss. However, to the general perception of the contest in the country at large, I would say he's had a damaging effect. There's a lot of truth in the argument that the fact that Eurovision is treated as a bit of a joke by much of the viewing public is down to his witticisms and general irreverence. Similarly, and possibly more damaging, is the fact that the general perception that nowadays "it's all political" is in no small part due to Wogan's increasingly bitter comments. The viewing public's opinions may seem irrelevant, but if these general perceptions become the norm it's one of the key reasons why the UK fails to attract big name acts to represent us.

PMJ: From a UK point of view it's a disaster. He has gradually taken away any credibility the contest had by his jibes and comments about songs, countries and the contest as a whole. This is now etched on people's memories and it'll

take a long time for people to change their views on the contest. I mean, he even got name checked in the entry by Dustin the Turkey – his whole Eurovision career is just seen as joke. And employing Graham Norton is not a good move – it's really just like continuing with Terry. Norton has no interest in Eurovision and sees it as a joke – that was clear at the Eurovision Dance Contest. It's like having Trinny & Susannah commentating on the football – insulting.



Finally, do you think that Andrew Lloyd Webber and his show will save the UK?

AR: Can he save the UK? Yes. Will he? Hard to say. The changes have the possibility to be hugely successful, especially as the early selection process allows time for proper publicity and exposure of our entrant across Europe, something that the UK have been woefully inadequate in doing in recent years. There is always that feeling at the back of people's minds however that whatever the UK does, there just isn't the support across Europe for people to vote for us at the moment. Giving song-writing duties to Andrew Lloyd Webber will certainly ensure a strong song, and after a number of years of failed up-tempo efforts it's high time the UK did well with a ballad. There needs to be a clear focus as to what he's writing for and writing a 'musicals' style song - which is his obvious forte - would be an error. Similarly the voting public during the weekly shows need to have a really clear idea of what type of singer would do well at Eurovision, which is not necessarily the same type of performer who would have done well in the Joseph and Maria shows. One thing we can say with certainty is that if the Lloyd Webber experiment fails miserably, then the future

of the UK in Eurovision is the bleakest it's been for many years.

PMJ: I am not sure whether it will save the UK, but it will certainly get the nation behind whichever act we choose, which I think is one of the things we've lacked in recent years. Not only because Lloyd Webber is involved, but also due to the multi-show format of the competition next year. So long as Lloyd Webber tries to write a great song and not just what has been deemed a 'Eurovision' song and provided they get rid of the so called 'experts' influencing people to vote, we should be in better form for Moscow. Surely it has to have a positive impact on our result – decent song, well performed and well promoted – we can then stop 'blaming' political voting rather than actually admitting the recent entries we have sent have been way below the quality offered by many other nations.



MA: I don't think we should even be talking of saving the UK, unless you mean that we may not compete if interest continues to wane among the general population. I understand that Andrew Lloyd Webber has been chosen for his prominence in the recent trend for shows picking relative unknowns for lead roles in musical revivals. I personally have doubts because his background is show music and also, he's not necessarily going to know so very much about what's current in music. Eurovision as a whole can only survive if the music is contemporary. As for the format, I am not Graham Norton's greatest fan and I generally don't like televised talent shows. I know, you could say that Eurovision is the greatest of them all with over fifty shows! However, if it generates enough interest and enthusiasm amongst the general population, I will be

delighted. If you think about the level of support the national football teams get, it would be fantastic to see that happen for a Eurovision entrant and entry.

HF: I think this is an excellent idea. I know that Andrew Lloyd Webber will write an excellent song - after all "I Don't Know How To Love Him" from "Jesus Christ Superstar" was originally "I Love The Kansas Morning" and was originally going to be a Song For Europe entry; also "Herod's Song" from the same show. All I hope is that the eventual winner will receive a good record deal and promotion as well as just representing the UK at Eurovision, because after all if that was just the prize, given what I said above about the contest's reputation in the UK, then we won't be encouraging good singers to come forward. The show should be on a few successive Saturday nights and have the contestants try out several types of songs. Although I'm against having Graham Norton doing the actual Eurovision commentary, he'll be ideal for presenting this. What the winner has to do, of course, is after they have done this show, is to go on an extensive and exhausting promotional tour to most of the participating countries.

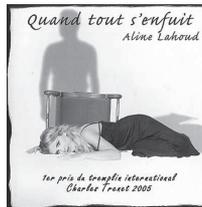
OT: I think it is very fine to have Andrew Lloyd Webber in the Eurovision – but I still think it depends on who is going to sing and how the show is staged. And then he has to write a fantastic song – otherwise UK is going to lose again. But I hope the best for the UK and I wish your country good luck in Moscow – I will see you there.

*So that's it for this panel with some tough talking there. If you want to get involved next time, please contact **Vision**. *

ESC ONLINE

Welcome to another edition of your guide to everything that's Eurovision on the World Wide Web!

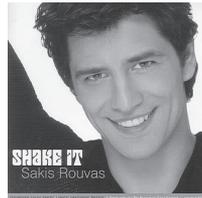
Welcome to the latest trek through the world of Eurovision on the internet. There's really only one place to start this time – namely, with Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber's much heralded involvement with the UK's next entry.



Webber's ESC search in due course (as it did for the Maria, Joseph and Nancy/Oliver shows), the extensive news sections on the aforementioned sites – which can also be subscribed as RSS feeds – look set to keep us informed in the meantime. The archived stories are also well worth digging into.

The man himself has an official site at <http://www.andrewlloydwebber.com>, which takes an extensive look at his

Of course, a composer as accomplished as Lloyd Webber will inevitably have his



A SELECTION OF COVERS FROM WWW.EUROVISIONCOVERS.CO.UK

shows, songs (including an overview of his biggest chart hits), film and art – the latter referring to his extensive collection rather than any tendency to pick up the paintbrush himself! Meanwhile, his company The Really Useful Group can be found at <http://www.reallyuseful.com>, a site that offers similar information but with a far more colourful, photo-laden and public-friendly face. Of course, the past and present casts of the shows in question contain more than a few familiar names from the world of Eurovision.

While one would expect the BBC to launch a dedicated website for Lloyd

followers, and the internet reflects that fan-base with a number of dedicated sites. One worthy of note is <http://hem.passagen.se/musicals>, which provides biographies and other lovingly gathered information on our Eurovision white knight, as well as Björn & Benny and Boubilil & Schönberg, whose Les Misérables memorably provided the big break for our very own Frances Ruffelle. Some of the links don't seem to be working any more, but it's still a nice piece of work.

It would be lax of me to conclude this brief look at the interface between



musicals and ESC without giving you an opportunity to spend some money, and there can't be many better online shops out there than Dress Circle (<http://www.dresscircle.co.uk>) – just type the aforementioned Ms. Ruffelle's name into the search box if you want proof of the depth of their stock!

Moving on to more general matters, it was brought to my attention recently that the Guardian newspaper has a dedicated Eurovision section (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/eurovision>), archiving all of its past news articles, commentary pieces, blogs etc. on the contest. It's interesting reading, and will no doubt remain so throughout the coming season.



Douzepoints (<http://www.douzepoints.com>) is a general ESC site that I hadn't encountered before – which is a shame, because it delivers a cheerfully off-beat look at the contest in all its gory glory (A to Z and country by country), as well as some surprisingly sensible party ideas. Frankly, it's worth a visit for the straplines alone – “a site that pub sings Let's Get Happy” and “a site that knows the Junior Eurovision is dog poo” giving you an idea of what to expect tone-wise...

For something completely different, check out <http://jugozvuk.blogspot.com>, a blog that's dedicated to uploading old

and/or obscure albums and songs from the former Yugoslavia. While the ESC content is often tangential at best, the number of familiar names is remarkable – proving that the region often sent (and still sends) its biggest stars to the contest – and once you overcome the language barrier, you never know what you might find. It's like rifling through the vinyl section of a Belgrade charity shop but without the prohibitive air fare!

And finally, since we're on the subject of vinyl and nostalgia, here's one of my favourite finds of the year: <http://www.eurovisioncovers.co.uk>. The URL says it all – this is quite simply a photographic archive of the record and CD covers

of pretty much every ESC entry ever, ordered by country and year. Does it serve a practical purpose? Probably not. Is it comprehensive? Not particularly, since it makes no differentiation between the various releases of each song, choosing one image for each entry in a seemingly arbitrary manner. Is it the kind of site that makes the internet so wonderful? Absolutely!

That's all for this time. As always, do get in touch if you have any recommendations or queries - the address to use is m.d.faulkner@hamburg.de. Happy surfing! ♥

NICOLA KERR

IN CONVERSATION WITH **NICOLA KERR**

Marcus Keppel-Palmer met up with Irish Eurovision star and former New Seeker Nicola Kerr to talk about lullabies and Broadway – possibly

Resplendent in pink, and with a dog cutely running about, Nicola Kerr welcomed me into her south coast home. I was somewhat trepidatious to be in the presence of one of the stars of the Irish show band era, a former Irish ESC participant (as part of the Swarbriggs Plus Two) and then one of the New Seekers. But I felt instantly at ease as I sank into her very comfortable sofa. We started by talking about her latest project, the CD release of an album of lullabies, which Nicola explains is not new.

“Actually, I made the album about 14 years ago, and I sold “Sleepytime Lullabies” directly to WH Smith. I then left it for seven years as I went to live abroad and work as a session singer, and it was only last year that I picked the project back up, and decided to re-market it. Originally, the album was on cassette, but I wanted to transfer it to CD, and I have to say it sounds so much better. But marketing it was more time consuming. We decided to sell it in-house via the internet, which was fine in the UK, but a nightmare in the US. Because of the Patriot Act (post 9/11), to sell something in the US, you need an American Bank account! So to get onto

Amazon.com, I had to go to Dallas in Texas, set up a company there, and get a bank account organised. The bank weren’t sure about me, so they played the album over their speakers! But it’s been worth it!”

So how did the album come about I asked.



Nicola explained that she had the idea when she was looking after the three young children. "I collected lullabies and those that had been lost. And I got the idea of programming them with noises of heartbeats and noises from the womb. I wanted the music to be non-dynamic, so there is no bass or drums, but has harps, mandolins and other sounds. The CD is programmed to send a baby to sleep." She goes on to explain that she has many more lullabies collected and would love to record more, possibly even in Spanish. But too many lullabies are upbeat. "I'd love to record an album for adults to relax to as well", she mentioned.

We moved on to talk about Eurovision.

How did that come about?

"Well my first Eurovision experience was backing Red Hurley in The Hague in 1976. I thought Brotherhood of Man would win. It was such a classically British pop song. Well, after that I started doing session work for RTE [the Ireland broadcaster], so I was well known to Bill Whelan

(who arranged the 1977 song) and then also to the Swarbriggs. RTE asked Alma Carroll and I to join Tommy and Jimmy Swarbrigg on stage, and so we became the 'Plus 2'. It was an amazing experience, especially as we were on first. There was a really charged atmosphere. Backstage, I made a faux pas. I sat next to a girl and asked her when she was on. It was the Belgian singer, and she had literally come off stage! Back in those days, we only had three days of rehearsals, and there were few parties to go to – at least I only went to a few. The Irish party had Guinness and smoked salmon. In the end, we finished third behind France and the UK, which was a fantastic result

and we got a great reception back in Ireland."

So did "It's Nice To Be In Love Again" lead to more gigs with the Swarbriggs? "I think that might have been a good idea, but whilst we did some TV immediately on returning, Tommy and Jimmy went back to Limerick and didn't invite Alma and me to join them" she replied. "I think this was a mistake on their part and it made front page news. Anyway, within a few months I had moved on, moving to London and joining the New Seekers."

I asked Nicola about her background in the Irish music industry. She told me she had left school at the age of 17 in order to join the show band Chips – this was in the age of the Afghan coat. Chips

is well known as being the start for Linda Martin, but as Nicola joined the show band circuit, the industry was rocked by the tragedy of the bombing of the Miami Show Band during the Northern Ireland troubles. "When I joined, Linda Martin had just left to form Lyttle People, and the band decided to

leave Belfast and move to the south to Slane" she explained. "It was a period of change as the sound of the band moved from rock to pop. It wasn't a safe time to be in a show band – we always had to watch out for where we were working. Chips fragmented, I left to play Mary Magdalen in "Jesus Christ Superstar" while Linda rejoined Chips. She was great, a real grafter, but was better doing pop than rock in my view. Everywhere she travelled, she brought her dogs along!" Nicola would then rejoin Chips, singing alongside Linda in 1974, but only stayed for a year. "I met up with Linda again, doing the National Song Contest in 1977. By then, she was

"In the end, we finished third behind France and the UK, which was a fantastic result and we got a great reception back in Ireland"

with Louis Walsh, who is lovely to work with - as is Johnny Logan. I did backing vocals for Johnny, and he had the most amazing voice as a teenager."

So I asked Nicola how it came about that she joined the New Seekers. "Well I had done a lot in Ireland, what with Chips, Eurovision, musicals, a jazz band called Stacc, and I was over in London for a weekend when Nicky Graham - then with EMI - invited me out to do 'lunch'. He took me to see the New Seekers, who at the time were looking for a new singer - we literally popped in on the way to lunch - and Nicky suggested I sing. So I sang "I Got The Music In Me" and then went off for lunch. I was about to take the plane home when I got a phone call inviting me to join! I went straight into touring and recording with them, so I never went back to working in Ireland. I have no regrets I guess. In Ireland, you had to sing cabaret, whereas I wanted to do more, so being in the New Seekers gave me that chance."

Nicola only stayed with the New Seekers for a year, recording three singles including "Tell Me" which was disqualified from the 1980 Song For Europe, as having been performed in public in advance. Nicola told me: "During that time, we were travelling non-stop. We were trying to be a Radio 1 band and update the group's style. Making some new recordings might have helped, but the group couldn't shake off its early 1970s image." On leaving the New Seekers, Nicola mainly did session work, although 1981 saw her back in the Irish National Final as a soloist. One of her competitors was Tony Kenny, who had played opposite Nicola in "Jesus Christ Superstar".



"As a session singer, I worked with Murray Head a lot, the brother of Anthony Head, the actor. Because Murray was based in France, I took a job with him. We had a fantastic time and the band was absolutely top. Some of them had played with Eric Clapton. We recorded and toured a lot in France, including playing at the Palais Bercy supporting the great Johnny Hallyday. I remember we did a French version of Rock Against Racism, playing at the Place de la Concorde. Of course, in France I became a great foodie too. I stayed with Murray for six years. When he did "One Night In Bangkok" we had to fly straight from a gig in France to Sweden, do the recording, and then fly back that day for another gig."

It certainly seems from Nicola's beaming smile that those years were her happiest in the music business. Her only regret? "Murray Head should really have been more popular. But the sort of music he recorded was so different to the UK music scene. His lyrics were intelligent and difficult, not just pop. The French loved it of course!"

Our time together drew to a close. Nicola had been a charming hostess and devoted far more time to the interview than she needed to. She had cheerfully picked over her career. "I sung for 20 years or more. Now with "Sleepytime Lullabies" I have found myself interested in the business side. It has been great launching the CD in baby-related shops and elsewhere, and now what I want to do is distribute other people's music in the USA." Who is to say that with her sunny disposition and her drive, this latest aspiration will not be fulfilled like so many others in her career. ▼

BASHED IN BRUM!

Dean Asker, one of the organisers of this year's Euro Bash, looks back at a recent highlight in the OGAE UK calendar

For the third consecutive year OGAE UK held its annual convention – Euro Bash – in Birmingham. On Saturday, 4th October 2008 nearly 100 fans descended on Jury's Inn Hotel for a day of excitement, tension, brain teasing and, above all, fun.

Things kicked off with 'The Number 2s'. And before you think things had already gone down the pan (geddit?), this was in fact a contest devised by Paul Marks-Jones, to give those songs that have performed in the dreaded second position in the running order a chance for glory.

After the original Eurovision performances of twelve songs were

shown on the big screen, the responsibility of who came out on top lay with the juries that the Bash attendees had been split into. In a closely fought battle, Gina G came third with "Ooh Aah Just A Little Bit", Jessica Garlick was second with "Come Back", but victory went to Turkey's Sebnem Paker and "Dinle".

Next up was 'The Big Eurovision Quiz', devised by Euro Bash's answer to Anne Robinson, Marcus Keppel-Palmer. With help from Martin Faulkner, Marcus created a devilishly difficult contest where the first question required one answer, the second question two answers, and so on. Perhaps the hardest question (besides asking people to name



PHOTOGRAPHS SUPPLIED BY PAUL MARKS-JONES

previous members of The Shadows!) was the final brainteaser - to list the songs and acts that came in the Top 12 of this year's contest. It was tight, but after careful scrutiny, John Stanton was declared the winner, with Peter Walsh second and Dermot Manning third.

After a break for coffee, the Bash welcomed two very special guests to talk about their Eurovision experiences - songwriter Bill Martin and one half of Jemini, Gemma Abbey. In a fascinating press conference style event hosted by **Vision** assistant editor, Hassan Yusuf, Bill talked candidly about the contest, the BBC, and his memories of winning with "Puppet of a String" in 1967, and coming so close the year after with "Congratulations". Asked whether he thought the 1968 contest was 'fixed', Bill made it clear that, whether it was down to Franco's [Spain's facist dictator at the time] government or some other reason, Cliff truly was the rightful winner.

Gemma, who was looking great, was relaxed and happy to joke about Jemini's nil points in 2003. She also revealed she was pregnant. Congratulations Gemma!



Another guest who spent the day at the Bash was a researcher from the BBC, who was canvassing fans' opinions on how the UK could do better. She spent the day listening carefully to everyone's

thoughts, and it was agreed that it was great that the BBC was interested in hearing what the contest's most loyal supporters had to say.

After a hot buffet dinner, it was time for the evening's entertainment - 'Stars In Their Eurovision Eyes', which, just

like the television show, gave more adventurous attendees the chance to become their Eurovision heroes, if only for one night! The proceedings began with a look back at the first ten years of winners, starting with the first 'Stars'

contest held at the 1998 Convention in Manchester.

Hosted by yours truly and the inimitable Nicki French, ten acts strutted their stuff, hoping to be crowned this year's champion. Everyone was impressed by the diversity of songs on offer, and the high standard of those performing them. It was, without doubt,



Stars In Their Eurovision Eyes 2008

| | Performers | Original performers | Song |
|--------|--|---------------------|---|
| Act 1 | Alec Parkin | Charlotte Perrelli | "Hero" (Sweden 2008) |
| Act 2 | Daul Hill & Rachel Alexander-Hill | Julie and Ludwig | "On Again, Off Again" (Malta 2004) |
| Act 3 | Juliet Evans | Boaz | "The Fire In Your Eyes" (Israel 2008) |
| Act 4 | Mandy Kerr | Doris Dragovic | "Maria Magdalena" (Croatia 1999) |
| Act 5 | Andrew Moffat | Ani Lorak | "Shady Lady" (Ukraine 2008) |
| Act 6 | Colin Hyde & Lee Martin | Man Meadow | "Viva La Musica" (Polish national final 2008) |
| Act 7 | Eloise Flint | Mary Hopkin | "Knock, Knock Who's There?" (UK 1970) |
| Act 8 | David Onion | Rebeka Dremelj | "Vrag Naj Vzame" (Slovenia 2008) |
| Act 9 | Emily Roberts & Paul Marks-Jones | Duo Datz | "Kan" (Israel 1991) |
| Act 10 | Elaine Dove, Dermot Manning, Iain Hambling & Paul Jordan | Pirates Of The Sea | "Wolves Of The Sea" (Latvia 2008) |



the best 'Stars' ever, and the atmosphere in the room was electric.

When it came to the final vote, it was revealed that 'Stars' newcomers, Colin Hyde and Lee Martin had come third with their knockout performance of Man Meadow's "Viva La Musica" from this year's Polish national final. Excitement was now fever pitch. The envelope for second place was opened, and those pesky pirates from Latvia, better known as Elaine Dove, Dermot Manning, Iain Hambling and Paul Jordan, took the runner's up position with their show-stopping performance of "Wolves of the Sea". Finally, the crowd was put out of its misery as Nicki opened the final envelope to announce the winning act: Paul Marks-Jones and Emily Roberts, who had wowed everyone with their uncannily accurate performance of

"Kan", the Israeli entry from 1991 by Duo Datz. A well deserved winner!

Now it was time for everyone to unwind and party! With DJ Dave doing a brilliant job at the decks, the Eurovision disco had something for everyone, and went on until way past 2.00 am.

Special thanks to all our guests, Gemma Abbey, Bill Martin and Nicki French, as well as DJ Dave, staff of Jury's Inn Hotel, Paul Gurney (for help with ticket selling) and Robin Scott for his absolute wizardry with anything audiovisual! And of course to everyone who came along and made the day such fun!

Euro Bash 2008 was organised by Dean Asker, Marcus Keppel-Palmer, Bryan Manley, Paul Marks-Jones, Gerry Martin, Andrew Moffat and David Onion.

EURO CURIOS

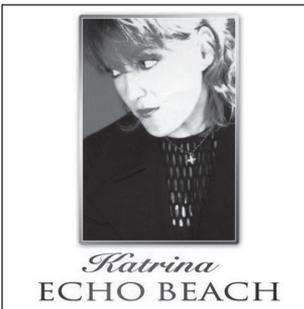
More Eurovision curiosities by Thomas Latham

Cover versions of Song For Europe (SFE) entries seem to turn up when you least expect them and in the strangest of places. Cupol recently released a box set of the albums Agnetha Faltskog recorded for them before and during her time with ABBA. Entitled "Original Album Classics" (Cupol – 88697352352) you get five CDs in card sleeves, which include songs like: the original (pre-ABBA) version of "SOS"; "Försonade" (submitted for Eurovision in 1968); her Swedish-language version of the only ABBA track she co-wrote ("Disillusion" - re-released in 1975 as "Mina Ogon"); and her cover version of "Un Jour Un Enfant" (France 1969) as "Sov Gott Min Lilla Vän". Of the five albums, the only one not to have writer's credits

is "Agnetha Faltskog Vol. 2", which may be why no one seems to have noticed that the third track – "Ge Dej Till Tals" – is actually a cover of Lulu's 1969 SFE

song "Are You Ready For Love" by Alan Hawkshaw and Ray Cameron with Swedish lyrics by Bo Göran Edling. If you want to confirm this for yourself, someone very kindly put it up on You Tube this year at: <http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=jXp8E0S3glk>. For more on the ABBA connections to Eurovision see: <http://www.geocities.com/sunsetstrip/venue/1535/abba.htm>

Katrina Leskanich's 2005 eponymously-titled solo CD has recently been re-released (Best.-Nr.: 4298) in Germany with three bonus re-recordings: "Walking On Sunshine", "Echo Beach" and "Love Shine A Light". The latter



(minus the Waves) is relatively faithful but with greater emphasis on the female backing vocals. The remaining ten tracks, most of which Katrina wrote or co-wrote, are as per the original release. The three additions actually stick out like something of a sore thumb and are clearly there just to boost sales (they were all taken from the recent "Echo Beach EP" - Vanilla OMP). The rest is a very pleasant, mature piece of music, which shows that there are more dimensions to Katrina than just her Eurovision winner. The ballad version of Kirsty MacColl's "They Don't Know" (a bigger hit for Tracey Ullman), which was released as a single is certainly excellent.

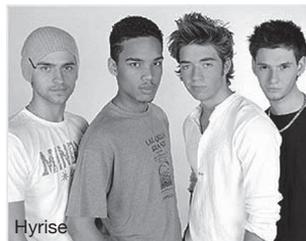
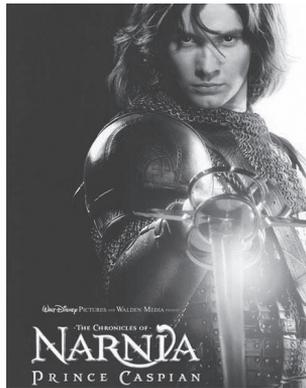
Interestingly, Katrina (pre-Eurovision) did backing vocals on Natalie Imbruglia's 1997 hit "Torn", which was a fairly faithful cover of a 1996 version of the song by Trine Rein (who took part in Norway's pre-selection process as a singer in 2006). But Rein's version was itself a cover of US band Ednaswap's 1995 version, though even that was a sort of a cover of Lis Sørensen's 1993 Danish version as "Braendt" (it was nevertheless written by members of Ednaswap in 1991). More on the interesting history of this song can be found here: http://popeatspop.blogspot.com/2006/09/illusion-never-changed-into-something_13.html

The title role in the recent film "The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian" was played by Ben Barnes, who was a member of Hyrise - the boy band that

came second in the 2004 Making Your Mind Up. Apparently, he's starting to forge a career in films at the moment and, among others, is set to appear in the third film in the Narnia franchise "Voyage of the Dawn Treader". Of his brief flirtation with Eurovision, Barnes is said to have thought the song ("Leading Me On") was "OK, catchy" but does not seem to have a very high opinion of that period saying: "I've done so many musical projects, but it's just unfortunate that the worst and the shortest one is the one that ended up on YouTube. It was just something amusing to do while at college. It was kind of funny at the time, but not so much now." You can find more about the (now) actor at: <http://benbarnesfan.com/>, which is where these quotes originated.

One of the musical arrangers in the first heat of the "Festival of British Popular Songs" in 1957 was Bill McGuffie, who also performed in it with his quintet. In 1968 he released an album of Latin arrangements for popular songs entitled "Latin Overtones" (Living Presence - LPS16001). This LP includes a cover of Robert Farnon's "Country Girl" from Kenneth McKellar's SFE in 1966 (I think it came 3rd). Apparently, McGuffie used to play with Farnon's orchestra, which may explain this rather odd choice for a Latin number.

Nucha, who represented Portugal in the 1990 Eurovision Song



Contest (ESC) with "Ha Sempre Alguem" (it came 20th), released a pop-rock album of songs by the Spanish songwriter Rafel Artesero in 2007 entitled "Regresso" (OVACAO – 577 CD). Artesero wrote the Andorran entries in 2005 (Marian van de Wal's "La Mirada Interior") and 2006 (Jenny's "Sense Tu"), neither of which made much impact on the voting in those years' semi-finals. Both songs make an appearance on the album, the former in Portuguese as "Camnhada Interior" and the latter in English as "It's For You". I ordered my copy direct from Nucha via Ebay (<http://myworld.ebay.co.uk/cristinatrindade>) and she not only sent it straight away but also very kindly sent me a postcard with a personalised message on the back.

I recently came across a copy of the BBC's official press release for the 1989 SFE, which contains a number of pieces of trivia about that year's entrants. Apparently, one of the four members of The Pearls (who came 4th with "Love Come Down") was Emma Robbins, who was the younger sister of Jane and Kate Robbins, who were themselves one-third of Prima Donna at the 1980 ESC. The other Pearls were Sophie Allisstone, Beejay Baddon and Pamela Sheyne (who wrote songs for the 1994 and 1996 SFEs). Incidentally, the writers of their song were Joe and Pauly (not Paul as often catalogued) Ortiz and were a husband and wife team (Pauly being the wife).

Another performer in 1989 was James Oliver (7th with "Can't Stop Loving

You"), who I have mentioned before. At the time he was a teacher in a Glasgow primary school and making his third SFE appearance despite having vowed never to take part again after his microphone had failed him in 1985 and he had come last in 1988. Speaking of coming last in 1988, Linda Carroll (5th in 1989 with "Heaven Help My Heart") had a day job in her local DHSS office in Glasgow, whereas Jane Alexander (3rd with "Shame") was also Women's Windsurfing Champion in Barbados. Danny Ellis (last with "Just For The Good Times") had toured Europe with The Foundations (3rd in 1977 SFE), while Peter May, the drummer in Live Report, had toured with Bucks Fizz (UK 1981).

Sharon D. Clarke, one of the judges on the BBC's recent "Last Choir Standing", was one of the singers in Six Chix, from GBSC 2000. She also plays Doctor Lola Griffin in "Holby City" and originated the role of Killer Queen in the musical "We Will Rock You", which may have been the part Nicki French (who won GBSC 2000) auditioned for as revealed at one of her convention appearances.

If you have any information about releases that may be of interest to others, or even just questions, then please drop me a line: Thomas Latham, Long Close, Prior Park Road, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire, LE65 1BL. ♥

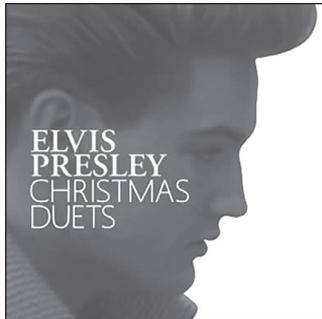


RICHARD'S ROUNDUP

Outgoing OGAE UK President Richard Crane gives us his final news and views

Hopefully you would have all had an enjoyable festive season by the time you read this. The race for the Christmas number one was joined by a late contender when Sir Terry Wogan and Aled Jones entered the fray with their "Little Drummer Boy/Peace On Earth" duet (2564692006). The single raised funds for Children In Need and gave Sir Terry his first chart entry since "The Floral Dance" graced the scene back in 1978. The single also included "Puff The Magic Dragon" by Sally Boazman and The Story's, and features Steve Balsamo. Both tracks are taken from the album "Bandaged", which is available from www.charitygoods.org.

Also making a bid for a festive hit were Hot Leg, the new band featuring former Darkness frontman Justin Hawkins. "I've (sic) Met Jesus" (MX3 BRR0002CD)



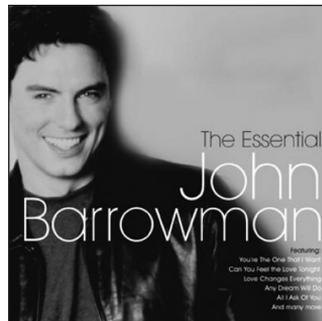
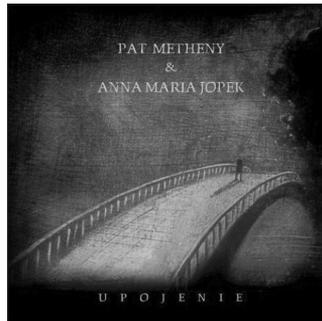
is Justin's first new material to have a commercial release since his failed Eurovision attempt. A track called "Trojan Guitar" was listed as a single in the autumn, but it appears to have been withdrawn. One of the strangest releases at the end of 2008 was Elvis Presley and "The Christmas Duets" (BMG 88697420402). It features seasonal songs recorded by Elvis with new vocals added by a host of country artists, including Olivia Newton John on "O Come All Ye Faithful".

Despite all the publicity, Tony Christie's latest album, "Made In Sheffield" (Decca AUT001), failed to make the Top 75. Even the involvement of the Artie Monkeys, Jarvis Cocker and Phil Oakey could not propel the album higher than number 91. We've had to wait more than two years, but Lordi's new album "Deadache" (BMG 88697388222)

finally hit the shelves in November but, unfortunately, it has yet to make any impact on the UK charts. Sir Cliff Richard's latest compilation, "The 50th Anniversary Album" (EMI 2423892), peaked at number 11. According to EMI, they are currently finalising a DVD focusing on Kathy Kirby, whilst Vocalion have released Karl Denver's first two albums on one CD.

Despite the success of "Bluebirds Flying High" (PLT02), James Fox's latest single "Higher" (Plastic Tomato PLT03) failed to make the Top 100. He also released his debut album, "Rocking Chairs And Lemonade" (PLT04), although this contains neither of his hits. Mihai Traistariu recently made an unannounced return to the UK charts on "Live Your Life" (Atlantic AT0325CD) by T.I. featuring Rihanna. The track samples his vocals from O-Zone's "Dragostea Din Tei" which reached number three in June 2004. Whilst Pat Metheny was performing in Poland during 2001, he was approached by Anna Maria Jopek who said that she wanted to work with him. Pat Metheny was so impressed that they recorded several tracks together during 2002. Seventeen of these tracks have now been released in the UK on "Upojenie" (Nonesuch 7559799098).

Apart from being on the panel in the UK pre-selections, I wasn't sure if



John Barrowman had a Eurovision connection, but on "The Essential John Barrowman" (Union Square METRCD233) he is joined by Catherine Porter for the song "Too Much In Love To Care". The track is one of 16 recorded by John between 1993 and 2004. Despite the failure of the title track to chart as a single, Celine Dion's "My Love: The Essential Collection" (Sony BMG 88697477422) still made the Top 5 albums. It's five years since I last saw his name, but Ben Ofoedu (sic) is the featured vocalist on a track called "Can't Stop" by Phats. At the time of writing the track was climbing the dance charts, but no sign of a commercial release yet. Swedish producer, Christian Falk has joined forces with Robyn for "Dream On". Did anyone else spot "Divine" by Sebastian Tellier as the sound-bed for the new Renault Megane advert?

My thanks to Alan Murrell for pointing out the following Eurovision related releases in his latest Magpie Direct Music catalogue. This includes Clannad and "Beginnings" (Music Club MCDLX095), a 2CD collection of early recordings featuring their 1973 Irish pre-selection entry "An Phairc"; Ken Dodd's "All The

Songs I Love" (EMI 3496272) which is a triple CD including a cover version of Italy 1960 ("Romantica"); and a new Lulu CD "Collection" (2164562) that features both the French and English versions of "Boom-Bang-A-Bang". Although it doesn't appear to have a UK release yet, Ruslana's live DVD "Wild Energy" is now available around Europe.

Two new Matt Monro live CD's appeared in November. "Yesterday" (Night Owl/NOMCD102) was recorded in the Philippines during his 1966 sell out tour, and the 15 tracks include live versions of "Walk Away" and "I Love The Little Things". These are joined by four tracks recorded in 1983. The second CD, "Live In Australia" (EMI), was recorded in September 1984. Frances Ruffelle is releasing a jazz album under the name Frankie Ruff, whilst Scooter join Status Quo for "Jump That Rock (Whatever You Want)". It's taken from the Platinum Edition of their number one album, "Jumping All Over The World", that also includes a live DVD featuring "Jigga Jigga".

Paul Carrack is touring throughout the UK during January and February, so keep an eye open for Lindsay Dracass on backing vocals. His album, "I Know That Name", hit the shops in

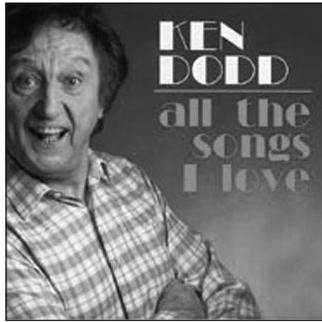
November but I don't know if Lindsay sings on it. November also saw Bernie Nolan touring in a production of "Our Benny".

Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber recently visited Russian Prime Minister, Vladimir Putin, to secure an understanding of why the UK has fared so badly in the contest in recent years, and what can be done to put credibility back in the competition. He didn't appear to come away with any answers, but did apparently secure Mr Putin's pledge to vote for the 2009 UK entry!

Finally, did you know that one of the UK's past Eurovision entries was banned for a while from British radio? What made it all the more surprising was the fact that this song was also one of our winners! My source at the BBC told me he had found a list of about 3,000 songs that were banned from airplay during the Gulf War, including "Give Peace A Chance", "In The Air

Tonight" and "Boom-Bang-A-Bang"!

Well, that's all folks. Thank you for your information and support over the years, and all the best for 2009. ♣



RECORD REVIEWS

ABBA

The Albums

Polydor 1774852 (Box Set)

Following the box office success of "Mamma Mia", Polydor has released this nine disc box set that contains all eight original studio albums, plus a ninth compilation that includes tracks such as "Fernando" and "Gimme, Gimme, Gimme" which were only originally released on ABBA's two greatest hits collections. Also included on the final disc are various B-sides, including "Happy Hawaii", "Elaine" and "Cassandra". Longstanding ABBA fans will already have all of these tracks, either on vinyl or CD, and there is nothing here that wasn't included in the four CD set, "Thank You For The Music", issued a decade or more ago. Neither is there any room for "I Am The City" which has only appeared to date on "More ABBA Gold". However, for the recent convert this is an ideal way to obtain all of ABBA's hits from "People Need Love" (1972) through to "Under Attack" (1982) in one go, as well as countless other tracks from the Swedish superstars. **GL**

CELINE DION

My Love – The Essential Collection

BMG 88697 41142 2

My Love – Ultimate Essential Collection (Special Edition)

BMG 88697 41143 2

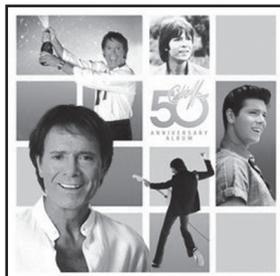
An amazing 20 years after a little known French-Canadian singer dramatically stole the Eurovision crown from Scott Fitzgerald, Celine Dion releases her greatest hits album aimed at the British market. Fans will already know each and every one of the 18 tracks, but for the casual listener who has yet to make a Celine purchase this is definitely 'the essential collection'. Beginning with the Titanic theme, "My Heart Will Go On", and concluding with "There Comes A Time", classic tracks such as "Think Twice" and "All By Myself" reveal how a once shy young girl has matured into an international diva. And talking of divas, Celine is joined by Barbra Streisand on "Tell Him", whilst the Bee Gees accompany her on their own composition, "Immortality". Sadly there is no room for any of Celine's French

hits, some of which were minor hits in the UK, but you will find "Pour Que Tu M'aimes Encore" on the special edition release. In addition to this classic French song, a further 18 tracks are featured on a second disc that begins with an amazing interpretation of "River Deep - Mountain High" that shows Celine's extraordinary versatility. **GL**

CLIFF RICHARD

50th Anniversary Album

EMI 50999 2423892 2



Hot on the heels of his recent and more expensive box set, Sir Cliff Richard returns with his "50th Anniversary Album" that contains 50 tracks documenting an amazing career. Beginning with the first single, "Move It", from 1958 and concluding with the latest and possibly last single, "Thank You

For A Lifetime", five decades of memories and music fill the two disc release. Both Eurovision entries are featured in their usual recordings alongside live versions of "Daddy's Home" and "From A Distance", and the accapella release of "The Millennium Prayer". The first CD is possibly the most listener friendly, featuring classic and more memorable songs such as "Living Doll", "Do You Wanna Dance", "On The Beach" and "The Day I Met Marie". Surprisingly "Visions", a song that Sir Cliff always claimed to be one of his favourites in the early days, is not included. The second disc features more recent material, but these are interspersed with his various seasonal tracks and is more suited to Christmas listening - unless the festive tracks are programmed out. Whilst this is certainly an excellent reflection of Cliff Richard's career, many fans would still welcome the release of a collection to include all A-side singles including the many duets with singers such as Elton John, Janet Jackson and Sheila Walsh. Now that really would document Sir Cliff's enviable career in the music industry!
GL

VARIOUS

Junior Eurovision Song Contest 2008 Lemesos - Cyprus

CMC C00253-2

Released ahead of the recent show broadcast from Cyprus, this double disc set contains all 15 Junior entries in both vocal and karaoke versions. As always there are those childlike voices that fail to do justice to what could otherwise be contemporary songs, but this actually helps the mature vocals of Monica (Armenia), Oliver (Belgium) and Marissa (Netherlands) shine through all the more. Oliver's rocky piano ballad, "Shut Up", is one of the highlights, and watch out for the jive sounds of Daniel Testa from Malta who performs the catchy "Junior Swing". The album also includes the somewhat annoying, yet predictable winner "Bzzz...", with lyrics that would even challenge Massiel's "La La La" for being the most uninspiring of all time!
GL

BANDAGED (feat. SIR TERRY WOGAN & ALED JONES)

Little Drummer Boy/Peace On Earth

Warners 2564692006

In an attempt to prevent another X-Factor winner

claiming the Christmas number one slot, Sir Terry Wogan joined forces with Aled Jones for their version of the Bing Crosby & David Bowie classic, "Little Drummer Boy/Peace On Earth". Raising money for BBC Children in Need, the single entered the charts at number three in mid-December. Sir Terry last graced the music scene 21 years ago, when "The Floral Dance" stalled just outside the top twenty in January



1978. Aled Jones did better in 1985, with "Walking In The Air" reaching number five for the then young chorister. Even though X-Factor queen Alexandra Burke did win over the Wogan/Jones partnership, it's still good to have some last minute excitement injected into the seasonal record race. The remaining tracks on the single are by Claire Teal ("Swing On A Star"), Sally B. 'Traffic' Boazman & The Storys ("Puff The Magic Dragon") and Mark Radcliffe ("Right Said Fred"). GL

GOODBYE

2008



ALL 2008 PHOTOGRAPHS EXCEPT CENTRE IMAGE ARE BY ROBIN SCOTT

HELLO

2009

WANTED

WANTED! A photocopy of pages 29/30 from the 2003 (4th Edition) of the ISO participation ESCoFile. The names being sought run from after Ami Mendelmann up to the last artist before Jose Luis Navarro. A copy of this missing page is urgently needed! Any help would be appreciated. Please e-mail michalou_01@hotmail.com or telephone 01273 580919.

Is it the ensuing winter gloom or the ongoing credit crunch? **Vision Smalls** are the smallest yet, so if you have something to sell or want to buy, why not send an advertisement to the Editor at the usual address (see inside front cover). Advertising is free of charge for all regular subscribers!

APOLOGY

*The financial summary reproduced in issue 74 of **Vision** implied that OGAE UK had been treated unfairly by the publishers of **Eurosong News** in relation to the amount of money still outstanding. OGAE UK wishes to point out that any unfairness was in relation to the increasingly poor exchange rate between the Euro and Sterling. The words used to explain this situation were misleading, and OGAE UK would like to apologise for any misunderstanding or embarrassment that this may have caused to the publishers of **Eurosong News**.*

DON'T MISS THE NEXT ISSUE!

Coming in the next issue of **Vision** - due out April/May - will be information on all the finalists that will be representing their countries in Moscow! Plus all your regular articles with news and views!

Don't miss out on this **bumper** edition! Renew your subscription to your favourite Eurovision magazine - see the centre pages in this issue!

YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS YOU!

Vision would like to wish all the contestants of "Your Country Needs You" the best of British luck!

By the time the time you read this, the BBC 1 show will have started its five week run on Saturday nights. Don't miss your chance to pick the performer to represent the UK in Moscow!

Euro Quiz Answers

1. Moody Blues 2. Rascals 3. "Guardian Angel" 4. "Nur Ein Lied" (Austria) 5. Park Cafe 6. Nathalie Paque 7. Gerard Joling (1988) 8. Two (1987, 1988) 9. Sweden (although Daniel represented Iceland) 10. She was the vocal coach on Operacion Triunfo

THE 'LAST' PAGE



Austria 1961

“Sehnsucht”

Jimmy Makulis

Received one point from
United Kingdom



Belgium 1961

“September, Gouden Roos”

Bob Benny

Received one point from
Luxembourg