

vision

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RUNNING TO VICTORY!

ELL & NIKKI WIN IT FOR AZERBAIJAN

Affiliated to Organisation Générale des Amateurs de l'Eurovision

Vision

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All contributions for issue 86 of **Vision** should reach the Editor no later than
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EDLINES

As some readers will know, my current employment situation remains uncertain and Eurovision has not received the attention it deserves this year. However, a few evenings ago I decided to watch the DVD of Düsseldorf and found it to be much more entertaining than my memories of the live performance on 14th May. Blue did the United Kingdom proud and, although the juries may not have agreed, the four guys deserved a much higher placing than they received.

Personally, I found it no surprise that Azerbaijan won the 2011 contest, and had already seen this as a potential winner from the moment I first heard the MP3. Since taking the Eurovision stage for the first time in 2008, there has been continual and consistent commitment shown by the Azeri people, who can now celebrate the rewards of such effort. Baku 2012... here we come!

Of course, the final did surprise me in other ways, not least a second placing for Italy. Like many Eurovision stalwarts, I had completely under-estimated the appeal and power of this song which is now among my favourite entries for this year. I hope that such a good result will see Italy remain in the contest for many years to come, as past entries from the Italian nation have always been well received across the continent.

The next big event is Eurobash in October, followed by the 2011 OGAE Song Contest which is being hosted by OGAE UK. Soon after, the selection process for the next Eurovision Song Contest will begin all over again. Doesn't time fly when you are having fun?!

Gordon Lewis

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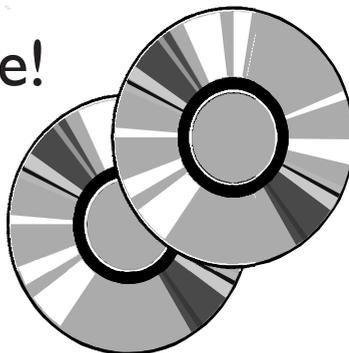
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KATHY KIRBY

1938-2011



Singing sensation and former Eurovision star, Kathy Kirby, has died at the age of 72. Her family announced that she died suddenly on 19th May 2011 after a short illness. The family added "she will be greatly missed by her family and her many friends who have stood loyal over the years."

The blonde bombshell, who was often compared to Marilyn Monroe, had a string of hits in the sixties, the biggest and best-known of these being *Secret Love*. In 1965 she was selected to sing all six songs at A Song For Europe and went on to represent the United Kingdom with *I Belong*.

Kathy achieved a commendable second place at the tenth Eurovision Song Contest broadcast from Naples, coming behind Luxembourg's France Gall and *Poupee De Cire, Poupee De Son* by just six points under the old voting system. *I Belong* went on to achieve success throughout Europe, but stalled at a lowly 36 in the British charts.

Born in Ilford, Essex, Kathy's career was guided by bandleader Bert Ambrose, who paraded her on the club circuit before securing a recording contract with Decca Records that resulted in a run of five singles. When her chart days were over, Kathy appeared on a

number of television variety shows, before choosing to disappear from the media spotlight.

Ambrose was Kathy's lover, but she also claimed to have had a fling with Bruce Forsyth during the sixties which led to her manager turning down work rather than risk losing Kathy to another showbiz personality. Following Ambrose's death in 1971 and without any sense of personal direction, she chose to withdraw from public life and was declared bankrupt.

Kathy's last public appearance was 30 years ago when she was asked to perform a reworking of the Charles Aznavour song *She*, which was retitled *He* to make it more suitable for a female vocalist. Towards the end of 2004, Kathy granted permission for **Vision** to publish a special issue that documented her life and career, proving to be a huge success when published in 2005.

Her musical career may have been short lived, her personal life was overshadowed by many dark clouds, but Kathy Kirby will always belong to the Eurovision Song Contest and its army of British fans.

Gordon Lewis



SEAN DUNPHY

1937 – 2011



The Irish singer, Sean Dunphy, passed away unexpectedly on 17th May 2011. He had previously represented Ireland at the 1967 Eurovision Song Contest with *If I Could Choose*, coming second to barefooted Sandie Shaw and *Puppet On A String*. Sean was also the first Irish singer to record in Nashville, Tennessee.

Sean first became famous in his home country as the lead singer with The Hoedowners, led by trumpeter Earl Gill. Between 1966 and 1973, 14 singles entered the Irish charts including the two Number Ones *Lonely Wood Of Upton* and *When The Fields Were White With Daisies*. During the late seventies, Sean enjoyed a further two hits as a solo artist.

Despite undergoing a quadruple heart bypass operation in 2007, Sean continued to give live performances and, in 2009, sang many of his greatest hits in a one-off concert at Dublin's National Concert Hall. Sean's last public engagement was at a charity event 24 hours before his death. He died at home in Baldoyle, County Dublin.

Gordon Lewis

HOW EUROPE VOTED

FINAL

	Albania	Armenia	Austria	Azerbaijan	Belarus	Belgium	Bosnia & Herz.	Bulgaria	Croatia	Cyprus	Denmark	Estonia	Finland	France	Georgia	Germany	Greece	Hungary	Iceland	Ireland	Israel	
Azerbaijan	8		8		6	3	8		10	8		8	5	6	8		5	7	8		4	
Italy	12	6	6	1	3	6	6			1		6	3	8	7	3	10	4	3	5		
Sweden		4		3	4	4	5		4	10	10	12	6	10	1		6	10	7	4	12	
Ukraine	3	12		12	10			8	5	5				7	10		7				7	
Denmark					1			7		3		10				6			12	12	10	
Bosnia & Herz.	7		12					2	7					5		7	3					
Greece	10	7		8		8		10		12					6	10		8				
Ireland			4			7	2	3			12		10			8		4				
Georgia		10		10	12			1				3					8	5			2	
Germany			10		8	5	3		1		8				3		4		6			
United Kingdom	6	2		5	2			12		4	3				1		2		2	6	1	
Moldova			5	7	7	1								4	5	4				8		
Slovenia			3					12		12	6	7	2			1		6		2	3	
Serbia	1	1	7				10		8				2									
France	2	5				12	4		6	7			4		2		12					
Russia	4	8		4	5			4		2		5			4	5	1	3	1		8	
Romania			1	6		10		6			4	1						1		1	6	
Austria		3					7	5	3		1		1		3	12		2				
Lithuania									2						12					10		
Iceland							1											12				
Finland											6		8									
Hungary			2	2							5	7				2						
Spain	5											4		12	2				5			
Estonia						2					2		7								7	5
Switzerland																						

SEMI-FINAL ONE

	Albania	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Croatia	Finland	Georgia	Greece	Hungary	Iceland	Lithuania	Malta	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Russia	San Marino	Serbia	Spain	Switzerland	Turkey	United Kingdom	Total	Ranking
Greece	10	10	10	8	4	7	10	10	7	8	10	10	7	12	6	6	7	7	7	4	8	133	1
Azerbaijan	5			10	5	12	7	7	8	10	10		8	7	10	5					4	122	2
Finland		6	3	3				6	12	7		12	10	8	12		3	4	10	1	6	103	3
Iceland		2			10		6	12		8		10	4	10	3		8	12	8		7	100	4
Lithuania		4			2	10	4	5	2			8	12	6	7		1	5	3		12	81	5
Georgia		8	8		1		10	1		12	8		5		5	2	4			10		74	6
Hungary				6	12		5		7		1	5					10	10		6	10	72	7
Serbia	2			12	7				5	3	3	7	6	1	4	3		2	12			67	8
Russia	3	12	5	5	3	5	3	3	3	5		4		3		1	6			3		64	9
Switzerland		3		2	6			8	6	6		6	3	5				2	6		2	55	10
Malta	6	7	7	4		6		2		1		2				12	5			2		54	11
Armenia						8	8		4		7		2		8	7		3		7		54	12
Turkey	12		12		3						2				2	10			5	1	47	13	
Albania			2	7			12							4		8			6	8		47	14
Croatia		7	4						1		12				1	4	12					41	15
San Marino	8	5	6	1		1	2				6									5		34	16
Norway	1	1	1		8				10		4		1	2					2			30	17
Portugal	4					2	1										8	4			3	22	18
Poland					4		4			2		3									5	18	19

The top ten countries went through to the final. While not performing, Spain and the United Kingdom also voted

HOW EUROPE VOTED

	Italy	Latvia	Lithuania	Macedonia, FYR	Malta	Moldova	Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Romania	Russia	San Marino	Serbia	Slovakia	Slovenia	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	Turkey	Ukraine	United Kingdom	Points	Ranking	
		2	8		12	10	6		8	8	10	12	10		7			3	1	12	10		221	1	
		12	10	1	10	6	3	10	10	10	6	12	12	2	10	3	12		4		4	1	7	189	2
	7			7	4	8			2	7	2	10		6	12	6		2		7		3	159	4	
	4	6			5		12	7	3				4		6	8		10				5	134	5	
	2			12	3	1	8	4					12	12		12		8	12	10			125	6	
		10		6	8		5		1	6	8	8	8	3				7	12	2	6	12	120	7	
			12		7			7	7			6	7		8		7	12			12	119	8		
	6	8	2			7	5	4				6	7			7	3	6	8	3	8	12	110	9	
	10	5	3	5	7	4		1		3		4	2			1			3	6	3		100	11	
	8	5	4							5	12	7			5						7	8	97	12	
	3	3	5	10	3		2			1	4	5	1	10	1					2			96	13	
	1	1			1	2	3	6	6			5	5			10	4		6				85	14	
			6			5				2		3	3								5		82	15	
	12				12	4								4							8		77	16	
				2	2		1								3	5		8		5			77	17	
		7					3	12			1	2		7				4	7	1		2	64	18	
	5						8			4							2	1				6	63	19	
			1			12	5										7	7	10			4	61	20	
											7			8			6	5			4		57	21	
				4						12	5							5				1	53	22	
	4	7				6		2							2	2			3		2		50	23	
														5	4							10	44	24	
																							19	25	

SEMI-FINAL TWO

	Austria	Belarus	Belgium	Bosnia & Herz.	Bulgaria	Cyprus	Denmark	Estonia	France	Germany	Ireland	Israel	Italy	Latvia	Macedonia, FYR	Moldova	Netherlands	Romania	Slovakia	Slovenia	Sweden	Ukraine	Total	Ranking
Sweden	10	8	12	5	12	12	12	12	12	1	8	12	3	7	2	3	12	7	7	5	5	5	155	1
Denmark	7	4	7	1	12	6	10	2	10	12	10	12		12		2	7	5	3	10	12	3	135	2
Slovenia	8			12	8	7	8	5	5	3	6	6		4	10	4	8	10	8				112	3
Romania	6		10		1	8	6	6	8	6	3	7	12	5	4	12	4		6		7		111	4
Bosnia & Herz.	12	5	4			7		10	7			4	2	12		10			12	12	8	4	109	5
Ukraine		12		4	3	5	1	7				8	6		6	8		2	10	6	3		81	6
Austria				7	10	4	5	2	1	12	2	1	5				3	5	7	4	1		69	7
Ireland			5	3	7		10	3		8				10			1	6	2	1	10	2	68	8
Estonia	5	1	6		4		3		4		10	5		8							6	8	60	9
Moldova		10			2					5	4	4	7	1	5			12	4				54	10
Belgium	1			8	6	2		1	6			2	2	3		6	6	8		2			53	11
Bulgaria	2		1			10	4		3	4	1		10		1	5	2		4	1			48	12
Slovakia	3	3	3	6							5					3	7	3		3		12	48	13
Belarus				2		3		4					6	8	10		1	1				10	45	14
Israel		6	2			1			7				1		7	5	4				5		38	15
Macedonia, FYR		7		10								3				1				8		7	36	16
Latvia		4	2				2	8			7		8								2		25	17
Cyprus										2												6	16	18
Netherlands				8		5																	13	19

The top ten countries went through to the final. While not performing, France, Germany and Italy also voted

BOOM BOOM DA DA DAM HABA HABA DING DONG!*

Liam Whelan gives his personal views on the special night that saw relative newcomer Azerbaijan emerge as winner from the world's greatest musical show

Photographs by David Elder, Robin Scott and Liam Whelan



*With thanks to David Elder for the headline idea



Warming up the crowd!

DE



OGAE UK gets ready for Eurovision 2011!

DE

Saturday 14th May 2011. Esprit Arena, Düsseldorf, Germany. 20.45 local time.

Audience ‘warm-upper’ (yes, that’s his actual title and dot com!) Marco Laufenberg spoke to the 36,000 spectators before Düsseldorf went live to the world and asked us to hum *Te Deum*.

The award for best version of the European Broadcasting Union theme however falls to the Belgians who treated us to their rendition during their press conference. The second acapella group to perform in the history of the contest would not be performing tonight as they failed to reach the final by one point from the second semi-final the previous Thursday. Suffering the same fate from the first semi-final was Malta and at the after show party the colourful Glen Vella vowed he would return to the contest to get that one point.

It was no longer Witloof Bay’s or the crowd’s turn. The real *Te Deum* played alongside the EBU’s vignette and the crowd cheered. Cheering is probably an understatement; such a colossal number of fans screaming, clapping and flag-waving at the same time is totally overwhelming. And the OGAE UK fans were mostly seated in two blocks near the front (I was allocated Row 1, Seat 3 – I would have blown the performers kisses, but I had eaten garlic in a Kartoffelsuppe on my way

to the arena) with Union Jacks, Blunion Jacks, a collection of glittery Union Jack hats and even a Prince William and Kate commemorative flag! And one heart-shaped cushion brought by yours truly to match the slogan of this, the 56th consecutive running of the contest, ‘Feel Your Heart Beat’.

The vignette for the slogan inspired by Lena’s “I ♥ you” (though it was Tom Dice who made that gesture first during the voting in Oslo last year) played next. It was not as enticing as last year’s slogan ‘Share The Moment’ – and we laughed as we struggled to get through sentences without mentioning those very same words.

The sound of a beating heart filled the arena before the presenters spoke. It also played before each song, as it did in the Bulgarian national selection, and as votes eight, ten and 12 were announced. Unfortunately Bulgaria did not make it through their semi-final. I described the song as “my guilty pleasure” and used those exact words to describe *Na Inat* to some strangers I shared a cab with on the way to EuroClub after the opening party. One of my fellow travellers introduced himself as David Bronner, co-writer of the song! Sitting to his left was press conference co-host Sonia Kennebeck (2008 green room co-presenter Branislav Katić being the other press conference host this year.)



The terrific trio

DE



Lena invades the stage with 43 flags!

DE

You may remember Marlene Charell in Munich, presenting in three languages, designing the flower arrangements to compliment each country's flag and even making an appearance during the interval act. Well, Stefan Raab gave her a run for her money. He was the first of three presenters – and as well as speaking in German and English (and Norwegian, fantasy French and what he hoped was Greek), he played the drums, guitar and sang in the same evening. Many locals saw him as a god of the entertainment world while others found him downright annoying.

German newsreader Judith Rakers was the second presenter who also appeared during the draw of the running order earlier this year. "We are diverse people for a diverse contest" she said when describing herself and her fellow hosts.

For the third time in the history of the contest we had three hosts. The third and final presenter was multi-award-winning Quebec-born comedienne Anke Engelke. Engelke moved to Germany with her parents in 1971 and was discovered in 1978 at a performance of her school's choir. From 1979 to 1986, she was a presenter of a children's television show, with none other than Désirée Nosbusch (who presented ESC 1984).

It would have been the shortest

introduction to the contest in years, with thanks sent to "the friendliest Vikings of all times" for hosting last year, and greetings in German, French and English (and Australian English) until Raab proceeded to pick up a guitar and perform *Satellite*. He was accompanied by The Heavytones, the band from his show TV Total and ESC 2004.

For the third time in Eurovision's history a winner would defend her title and this was the reason given for Stefan Raab's intervention. Lena appeared anyway to sing with 43 flag-waving Lenas (who were spotted in limousines all over Düsseldorf earlier that day.) The 43 flags represented all nations competing in this year's contest – a record number matching that of 2008.

As BBC One commentator Graham Norton asked, what was the point of it all when Lena turned up eventually? This was Norton's third appearance as commentator. Meanwhile the BBC3 semi-finals were covered for the first time by BBC Radio Ones' Scott Mills and Sara Cox.

ITV on the other hand sent Loose Women's Denise Welch who performed a sketch with two of the 500 volunteers at this year's contest, escorting her off the 13-metre diameter main stage, one of whom being the fantastic Vera who visited our desk daily.

As usual the contest would not have been possible without this amazing



A running track for the *puff* puff* press!



The world awaits Paradise Oskar

group of volunteers, who received a bespoke watch as gratitude for their hard work. Before the live shows Engelke paid special tribute to those working behind the scenes each night and the many weeks beforehand.

Six weeks of transforming the Esprit Arena was shown in 90 seconds in time lapse before Raab joined his co-presenters back on the smaller 'satellite' stage (inspired by last year's winning song) that was connected to the main stage by a catwalk. Nobody claimed it to be a ground-breaking design but everyone agreed it was impressive, as was the work that went into it.

23 German cities ordered the terms of tender from broadcaster Norddeutscher Rundfunk (NDR). Eight of these showed interest in hosting but four (Berlin, Düsseldorf, Hamburg and Hannover) officially tendered. On 12 October 2010 the Esprit Arena in Düsseldorf was announced as the venue. A mobile arena was built next to the main arena and was used for three football matches. The press working area seemed to be located inside a running track.

As with last year, phone lines were opened before the first song. As with every year since 1957 it was not possible to vote for your own country. After a quick reminder of the above and another punch from Engelke to Raab (this time with correctly-synchronized

sound effects, unlike the first semi-final) the show began.

Before each postcard we caught a glimpse of the performer(s). Smiling to the camera was 20-year-old Axel Ehnström, who adopted the stage name Paradise Oskar from children's book Rasmus & the Vagabond, where Paradise Oskar is a vagabond who plays the accordion (but on stage this Finn played the guitar.)

Each postcard featured someone from the country about to take to the stage who lived or worked somewhere in Germany. They featured everyday people like students from Ukraine on a treasure hunt at Englischer Garten in Munich; some better-known faces like Maltese tenor Joseph Calleja performing at the renowned Deutsche Beliner Oper; and even the famous crossed-eyed opossum Heidi at Leipzig Zoo (visited by a family from Macedonia). "Feel Your Heart Beat" was spoken or written in a native tongue at the end of the postcard.

Anna Sydämesi Sykkiä! Many felt Finland had the best backdrop of all on the magnificent stage designed by Florian Wieder, who previously styled the appearance of shows such as X-Factor and MTV Europe Music Awards. A 60 metre wide by 18 metre high LED wall with over 500 light elements provided a gigantic blank canvass for each performance.



Apples, apples applies. But no cider in sight!

DE



Denmark: Tut, tut, tut...

DE

Oskar sang about saving the planet wearing a shirt made from recycled materials. And in case you were wondering, the feathers in Ukrainian singer Mika Newton's dress were indeed real. She was asked to clarify this – but the asking journalist admitted it was a silly question and dedicated it to Jedward.

Osjeti Otkucaj Svog Srca! Next up was Bosnia & Herzegovina, probably the best chance in years we have had of shifting the second spot curse. Edin Dervišhalidović, better known as Dino Merlin, wrote the first national anthem of his country as well as Bosnia & Herzegovina's first Eurovision entry in 1993. For someone so experienced in the contest, also performing in 1999, he was surprisingly nervous on stage but most charismatic at the press conferences. Just as charismatic was his fellow countrywoman Jasmina. Jasmina was a member of the catering staff who offered free apples in the press centre every day (sponsored by METRO Group, based in Düsseldorf and an official partner of this year's contest). Complimentary apples are commonplace throughout Germany.

Føl Dit Hjertes Rytme! Recycled materials and feathers in clothes were not all that made headlines – what was missing from clothes, namely a back from A Friend In London's lead singer/ guitarist Tim Schou's T-shirt also

got much attention. Schou continued to make headlines after the contest for his comments to Frizzle Sizzle's Mandy Huydts who announced 12 points to *New Tomorrow* from the Netherlands: "I want to **** you!" (muted from the official DVD.) He later apologised profusely for the profanity and Huydts was reported to have found the incident hilarious.

Unfortunately Huydts was the only appearance made by the Dutch during the final after a disappointing last place for 3JS in the second semi-final. For the duration of their stay in Düsseldorf the male trio lived on a house boat.

I am convinced the song 3JS penned themselves was Engelke's favourite entry. During the second semi-final (where this time I sat at the back) I turned around to see her dance enthusiastically to *Never Alone*. She warmly greeted passers-by and agreed to pose for photographs and sign autographs. In fact, now that I think of it, I looked more at Engelke than I did at the stage during the second semi-final.

Pajusk Savo Širdies Ritma! Another lady I could not take my eyes off was Evelina Sašenko for Lithuania. Her disappointment was evident when she drew '4' at the press conference after the first semi-final where all qualifiers picked their starting position for the final. Sašenko has become known as the lady whose voice and violins make me



feel like I am wrapped in a fluffy cloud and gently kissed on the forehead.

Érezd A Szívverésed! Fan favourite Hungary next. Kati Wolf, 2010 finalist in Hungary's X-Faktor is a self-confessed Michael Bublé fan and admitted to missing her two daughters very much. And welcome back Hungary! Italy's return seems to have over-shadowed any others. However, Finland was welcomed back in the first semi-final by Engelke despite not going anywhere last year. The original script actually read "welcome", not "welcome back".

Perhaps the worst faux pas this year was our own Antony Costa speaking about fellow Eurovision: Making Your Mind Up 2006 competitor Daz Sampson, "who is no longer with us." It caused a flurry of gasps and whispering as people rushed to Wikipedia on their 'Handys' (German for mobile telecommunications devices) to check his page.

Perhaps the funniest faux pas from any press conference this year was Georgia's feisty head of delegation Maia Baratashvili telling listeners success for her country would be "the icing on the cream"!

Éistigí Le Do Chroí! Sixth to perform was Ireland. There is nothing more I love in life than to be proved wrong. I was not a Jedward fan before the contest, but when I saw them at the press conference with the tricolour, tears



came to my Irish eyes. What amazing ambassadors! Before meeting journalists for the first time in Düsseldorf they admitted behind the scenes that it was their first ever press conference. For the semi-final winners' press conference the twins ran along the table to reach their seats and said qualifying got them one step closer to meeting Britney Spears! Was this a good idea when *Lipstick* has been compared to *Womanizer*? This was not the only reference they made to chart competitors, shouting *Never Say Never* (Justin Bieber) after their semi-final performance and *Born This Way* (Lady Gaga) after their performance in the final.

Fans could have hair exactly like John and Edward by wearing a cardboard cut-out of the infamous fringe and declaring themselves 'Jedheads'. The cut-out Derek Mooney wore as he announced the vote from Dublin was in the style of a later shipment of 5,000 additional cardboards sent to meet the high demand.

Universal Records were reported to push for the best possible staging for Jedward. Norway's confetti, similar to what Jedward used, reportedly cost 100,000 NOK. I just shivered at the mention of Norwegian Kroner, thinking about the expense of last year. It was nice to now be in a city where I could afford to eat, and indeed much healthier as well with lots of salad (even cucumber and



I'm Still Alive!) I honestly thought we would be back in Norway next year and *Haba Haba* would be another *Fairytale*. I love how after 56 years we are still having firsts, this time with Swahili. I also love how we can learn as many facts and figures as we want about the contest but still be surprised by results. Stella Mwangi charmed everyone at the press conferences and confirmed the idea behind the song was as simple as the lyrics suggest – wisdom from her grandmother.

Norway performed second in the first semi-final, between running order draw wildcard winner Poland and Albania. Many predicted all three countries to qualify for the final. This was Aurela Gaçe's third time winning *Festivali i Këngës* and she performed third on semi-final one, but it was not a case of third time lucky for her. Fans blamed commentary audio problems occurring during the first half of that semi-final (which producers apologised for the next day in a specially-organised press conference) for so many upsets in the results of that show.

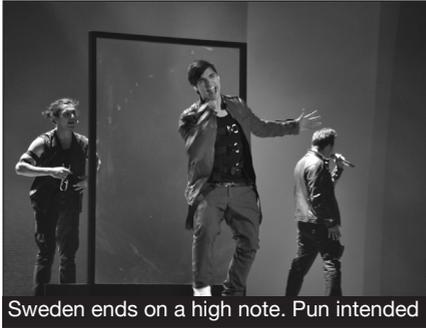
John and Edwards' hairstyles turned heads everywhere they went in what was already a busy year for hair. Gaçe admitted she never liked to keep her hair the same for long and did not like it natural. Sponsors Schwarzkopf ran The Look of Music competition and I



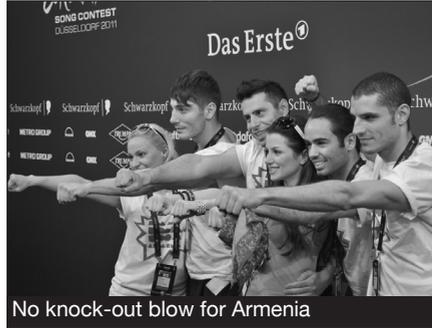
had a chance to meet James (surname withheld), a winner from the UK, who received VIP tickets and professional styling after coming top of the photography competition as voted for by the public.

The other singing twins, Daniela and Veronika Nízlová, appropriately named TWiiNS, were left behind in their semi-final. When asked if they would go on a date with Jedward, the Slovaks, who celebrated their birthday at the after show party along with Glen Vella, said John and Edward were too young for them. The Nízlová twins claimed they achieved the best results to date for their country. First song in English in six appearances, yes – but best result? No. It topped off a series of silly rumours and claims infesting Düsseldorf during my 17-day stay. Perhaps the silliest rumour suggested next year's contest would be held in Liechtenstein, irrespective of the winner. An Australian radio journalist tried to match it by suggesting San Marino collaborate with his country in hosting the 2012 contest if Senit were to win!

Hör Ditt Hjärta Slå! Lucky number seven was drawn by winner of the second semi-final, Sweden. It all got a bit too much for me with the glass. Will it break? Will it not? This glass is German; the Swedish glass broke perfectly every time. There was even an extra rehearsal



Sweden ends on a high note. Pun intended



No knock-out blow for Armenia

allocated specifically for the glass. However, it ended on a high note as this was Sweden's best result in 12 years. Of course breaking glass was not the only prop in this year's contest. Armenia had a large boxing glove for Emmy to sit in (while the Latvians sat on chairs from IKEA) and even though the boxing ring concept was new, there were yet again more ribbons from the Caucasian nation to construct it.

Belarus seemed to have more pyrotechnics than everyone else combined. Anastasia Vinnikova originally had a large microphone stand like her backing singers but this was changed to a standard size when producers realised Vinnikova could hardly be seen behind it.

And once again the strangest prop award goes to Turkey for having a contortionist in a cage ball. A competition was held to design clothes for Leilani Franco and Edmonton designer Genette Salgado's Phoenix costume won. The body artist from Cirque Éloize never made it out of the ball until final dress rehearsals. This was the surprise promised in press conference. Though our eagle-eyed Editor did spot the surprise during rehearsals as a camera had to focus on the outfit for a colour check. There were a few red faces at the press conference when he mentioned he spotted some wings! Also at the press

conference we were told what the ball meant: a new beginning, new life. Almost as ridiculous as the reasons explaining its presence were the criticisms: "This is misogyny!"

The majority of props and pyrotechnics were left behind in the semi-finals this year though a handkerchief... wait, now it's a baton... made it to the final.

Kuula Oma Südame Häälit! How did Estonia's Getter Jaani do that magic trick? I think people were more amazed at her bad placing than her magic trick. Estonia television interviewed me and our distinguished Editor after the final asking why they placed so badly. The most memorable interview this year was in EuroClub by Austrian radio where they told me I was the biggest contest fan and my German was excellent! Nummer acht. Estland. I spoke so much more German than I thought I would have had the chance to and locals were very patient.

Νιώσε Την Καρδιά Σου Να Χτυπά! Greece won the first semi-final without any help from Cyprus as the Hellenic nation was in the opposite semi-final this year. However Cyprus' 12 points to Greece in the final were met with the usual boos from the audience. Greece could not return the favour as Cyprus did not make the final. Christos Mylordos told me how much he wanted to go to the final when I met him at the opening party before



A Sparrow and his dog...



...And a Corsican who just spotted a penguin!

a recital from Düsseldorf Symphony Orchestra. Cyprus was one of the few countries to use the 'satellite' stage. Croatia's Darla, one of the few to use the catwalk and by far the tallest lady in this year's contest, also failed to qualify for the final.

I think I fell in love with the Greek song when I heard the story behind it at press conference. The fusion of hip hop and contemporary laïkó styles combined with lyrics in Greek and English, old and new – but both predominately about survival.

Почувствуй Биение Сердца! Russia, performing tenth, also mixed old and new. Alexey Vorobyov (who is set on changing his name to Alex Sparrow after the contest) wanted to sing in English to reach a wider audience, but later changed his mind to include some Russian lyrics at the start of the song to remember his roots. I thought the dog by the actor's side during the opening party was only for show, but Elvis is actually Vorobyov's own. He proved this when the Pembroke Welsh Corgi tried to run away, but Vorobyov quickly reprimanded him.

Macedonia's song about a Russian girl had two words of Russian but did not make the final.

Ecoute Ton Coeur Battre! For only the second time we heard an entry (and the first time that entry was sung entirely)

in Corsican by the youngest tenor in the world. Never before had a host city seen so many French journalists and fans. France was ready for victory. I was ready for victory for France and left the arena in shock when *Sognu* placed so badly. Then I visited YouTube and heard the performance. It is very hard to know what comes across on television, sitting in an arena built for sport, and surrounded by tens of thousands of cheering fans.

One of the highlights of this year's press conferences was when Amaury Vassili stood up and burst into a chorus of *Le Papa Pingouin!*

Senti Battere Il Tuo Cuore! I wish I could say Italy's Raphael Gualazzi performing 12th was as spontaneous as Vassili, but it is safe to say he was the shyest man in Düsseldorf. The Italian delegation needed to fly two more people to Düsseldorf to cope with the workload. Things have changed a lot since 1997.

The Eurovision broadcast in Italy was like none other. Raffaella Carrà presented the show to which Eurovision was simply a backdrop. Italy's chosen spokesperson for Düsseldorf and her panel spoke over presenters and postcards alike and audience members spoke over the voting! It is rumoured the EBU allowed this for one year and one year only and apparently the Italian public didn't approve of this format.



A most serene Senit



Beg, steal or borrow that Blue badge!

Welcome back San Marino! The baby of the bunch in terms of area and number of previous Eurovision participations, yet the oldest nation in the contest, gaining independence in 301. The Most Serene Republic of San Marino did not qualify for the final. Panini produced Senit's first album and came to Düsseldorf giving press members sticker albums and on subsequent days stickers to fill them with. Other gifts showing up in pigeon holes this year were tea from Georgia and beauty products from Greece.

12 songs down and time for a commercial break, or in our case a chance to meet Dino Merlin again through the lovely Missus Rakers in the green room.

The evening after Bosnia & Herzegovina's first press conference I changed trams at Heinrich-Heine-Allee (one of the busiest interchange underground stations in Düsseldorf) to find South African fans photographing anyone who would stand still for long enough with Merlin's spectacle frames, as seen here during his green room interview. In his second press conference Merlin spoke about Heinrich Heine, one of the most significant German poets of the 19th century, and put some of his work into song.

A quick visit to the Danish box. A quick look at that T-shirt. A quick toast to all participants and on we go to hosts

and winners of the inaugural contest, Switzerland.

Gschpür Din Härzschlag! Senta Co Tes Cor Batta! Senti Il Cuore Battere! Ecoute Ton Coeur Battre! Unlucky for some, 13. Should we consider Anna Rossinelli unlucky for coming last in the final or relish the fact she was the first Swiss act to qualify for the final since Vanilla Ninja. Statisticians among you will count Basel-born Rossinelli unlucky for drawing the position after the commercial break, notorious for not doing entries any favours in the past.

Feel Your Heart Beat! What can be said about Blue that has not been already said? Simon, Lee, Duncan, and Antony did us proud. Everywhere I went I met fans who remembered them from when they were younger, who were so eager to catch a glimpse of them in Düsseldorf. At least once every day a volunteer approached me begging for my Minipop Icon badge of the group created by the ingenious Ben Morris (see elsewhere in this issue for all of Ben's designs).

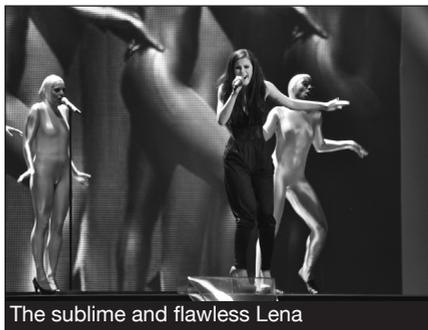
A highlight of my trip was the OGAE UK and OGAE Ireland night at O'Reilly's Irish pub where Blue made an appearance. It was great to catch up with friends I had not seen since Eurobash (and drink Guinness!).

Another fan get-together was on the EuroBoat – the first official Eurovision



Those kushmas looked dangerous!

RS



The sublime and flawless Lena

DE

fan club event on the Rhine. Onboard the MS RheinFantasie, the new ship of the Köln-Düsseldorfer, we were treated to performances from the one and only Nicki French (UK 2000), Igor Cukrov (Croatia 2009) and Wind (Germany 1985, 1987 and 1992).

Simte Bataia! Moldova performed 15th, and ladies and gentlemen it is time for some trivia: grandma Lidia Bejenaru was replaced by 21-year-old circus artist Tatiana Ilescu riding the unicycle. The hats are called kushmas, especially created for the contest and made of a synthetic material –Tatiana allowed me to touch her’s at the opening party! (*Lucky him – Editor*) The ‘trumpet’ is a decorative hybrid created from two trumpets especially for Düsseldorf. Both participations of Zdob și Zdub in the contest were sporadic decisions and they do not rule out a third.

The cheers for the next song were so loud they drowned out the final chorus of *So Lucky* as the performers made their way to the side of the stage. It was time for the host nation. Interestingly the UK, Moldova and Germany were also together on the end scoreboard, but in a different order.

Fühl Dein Herz Schlagen! When Unser Song für Deutschland 2011 co-presenter Sabine Heinrich (“the lucky fairy” as described by Rakers – she has such a gorgeous way with words, pointing at

the stairs to the stage for the winners and exclaiming “It’s your stairway to heaven!”) drew ‘16’ for Germany in the draw for the running order in March, photographers got very busy. Spain had already picked ‘22’ as the wildcard of the Big Five because it was Lena’s winning position in Oslo. Lena would now start from a position no country had ever won from before.

In rehearsals Lena was sublime and flawless and never failed to make us laugh. She seemed to run through the song more times than any other country rehearsing. There was laughing in the press centre at the sound of breaking glass at the end of her song as we thought about what Saade was going through.

I think it is very humble for any past winner to return to the contest and I was pleased Lena (with her bobsleigh team as locals called them) achieved a top ten position for the home side, even if Germany did knock the UK down to 11th on the very last country’s vote!

Newspapers the day after the contest ran headlines thanking Germany’s second winner for an amazing year and wishing her a well-deserved break. The other past winner on stage in Düsseldorf, Dana International, did not fare as well, failing to qualify from the second semi-final. Israel’s *Ding Dong* diva cancelled her first press conference but turned up for her second and made the press laugh



Romania – not everyone can wear stripes

DE



Nadine won the beating hearts of many

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with her effortless sense of humour. Security was high in Düsseldorf with rumours of delegations regularly moving hotels. Dana International reportedly left the capital city of North Rhine-Westphalia the day after her semi-final and we were warned Mossad agents were present at the Israeli party.

Asculta Ti Inima! After Germany came Romania. Founding member and lead singer David Bryan hails from Newton Aycliffe. I did find it quite ironic he told press he travelled to Romania to assist building an orphanage, fell in love and stayed – when he was all over Romanian media weeks before the contest for his alleged infidelity and there was even a debate on Romanian television to decide whether or not he should represent his adoptive land at all!

Fühl Dei Herz Schlog! Welcome back Austria! Swarovski sponsored Austria in the contest again, hence the presence of so many crystals: in clothes, on the backdrop and the pedestal. In fact Nadine Beiler had a choice of dresses, all of which were embellished with crystals. Beiler was not the only one who had a choice of gowns – Miss International held an online poll to help her make a final decision on which Jean Paul Gaultier dress to grace the stage with.

Out of all the contestants perhaps Senit and Nadine were spoken of most dearly by their respective delegations

for their hard work and dedication. Both ladies were known to enjoy rare moments away from the spotlight but would return refreshed.

As the days passed the press centre got busier and busier and louder and louder. However during Austria's first rehearsal there was complete silence, followed by a flurry of typing as observers checked betting odds! Nadine's press conferences were among the busiest. In her second press conference she revealed she brought some lederhosen for Stefan Raab and her backing singers moved all those present with their version of *Hallelujah* while Nadine herself impressed us with her take on *Marija Magdalena* (and not her fellow countryman's *Maria Magdalena*!)

I had the pleasure of meeting Nadine at the opening party where she asked me if I thought she should leave her nose stud in or out when she went on stage. Nadine won the hearts of many during her stay in Düsseldorf and had time to speak to everyone, be they press, fan or participant. One of her biggest fans was fellow competitor Mika Newton. Mika often insisted on being photographed with Nadine or gave her the spotlight and spoke about how much she loved her music.

Ürəyinin Səsini Duy! Not since 1980 have we had twins in the contest and this year we had three sets: Jedward



Slovenia back in the final and all booted-up!

DE



Iceland: "My love is you"

DE

and TWiiNS on stage and Kamilla and Djeila touring the medieval town of Rothenburg ob der Tauber with Night Watchman Hans Georg Baumgartner for Azerbaijan's postcard.

Zacuti Utrip Srca! "Wadde hadde ichde da? I have results from Slovenia!" The voting outweighed the song for me one hundred fold though I was pleased Slovenia made it to the final after failing to qualify since 2007. I would love to have seen more interaction between Klemen Slakonj and Engelke. His words "Anke, danke!" may have been in jest but a show of the same name did exist. Engelke was shocked to learn from spokesperson Leon Menkshi how her television series *Danke, Anke* was even popular in Albania.

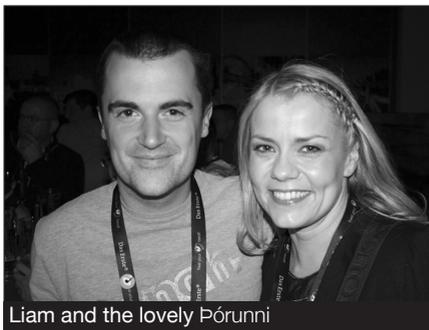
Back to the green room with Rakers, this time in the French box, with a reminder of the voting numbers and reading of a queue card with Vassili who was the favorite to take the Grand Prix. This year's official CD and DVD were promoted along with, for the first time, Blu-ray.

The official scarves were another new addition to the merchandise catalogue this year and available in the colours of all participating nations. Unlike last year the coin was not sold from shops in different packaging to the website.

Finndu Hjartsláttinn Pinn! Iceland was, for the third consecutive year, announced last as a qualifier from their semi-final. Many saw this song as the darkest horse to ever enter the contest.

I have stated many times I am not a star spotter and I would prefer to meet a cameraman than a singer. Singers, cameramen, caterers are all normal human beings, but together they create the contest I am so passionate about. However, it was incredible to meet Þórunni Erna Clausen (the widow of Sjonni and lyricist) and have my picture taken with her. Every night she and Sjonni's Friends attended EuroClub. She recalls when she initially heard the song she told her late husband it would go to Düsseldorf and she believed in it. "My love is you." The song was only too symbolic for a member of our group who could not come to Düsseldorf with us this year and who was missed very much.

Siente Latir Tu Corazón! *Que Me Quiten Lo Bailao - They Can't Take The Fun Away From Me* breaks the record for the longest title of a song if the official title of the song is what appears on the album (CD and download), website, programme (soft and hard cover) and on-screen caption (not that the latter is anything to go by – remember *An Ban Nee Bee* in 1978?) Linguists among you have been asking if the title is a direct



Liam and the lovely Pórunni

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Spain: That sinking feeling?

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translation recognising *baila* as ‘dance’ (the masterpiece *Bailar Pegados* and the, well, unforgettable *Baila El Chiki-chiki*). The answer is no, the Spanish title is an idiom translating literally as ‘may they take away from me what I have danced’. Other sources including the press information booklet list the English title as *I’m Over The Moon*. Well I’m confused and all I want to do is dance to what was a magnificent entry. Despite the arguing (again this year) at the national final the atmosphere in the arena during Spain’s 51st entry was fantastic and the philosophy of the song a great one. If I had been on the Titanic when it went down, this is what I would have been singing.

Good on Spain for once again bringing their beautiful language to the contest and not singing in English like so many opted for again this year. 12 well-deserved points from Portugal, who did not make it to the final, but again, stayed true and sang in Portuguese. The struggle is joy! I spoke to lead singer Nuno Duarte ‘Jel’ (Neto), who formed the group with his brother Vasco Duarte (Falâncio), about a reintroduction of the language rule and at the same time thanked him for bringing so many languages on stage via the placards in a year many were lost in translation. “No!” he exclaimed “No rules! The people must decide!” I then realised I

could not have chosen a worse topic of conversation with this man.

The group was disqualified from Festival da Canção 2010 as their song of a similar title and message *Luta Assim Não Dá* had been previously performed and was therefore in breach of the rules. Their appearance in Festival da Canção 2011 was also met with controversy with fans leaving the national final in protest during the reprise. Homens da Luta were in sixth place after the jury vote in Lisbon but the public vote won them the ticket to Düsseldorf in what many saw as support of a political idea as opposed to musical talent.

The Homens da Luta we saw on stage in Lisbon were different to the Homens da Luta we saw in Düsseldorf – as all members of the group had a chance to appear on stage. The characters played are caricatures of the revolutionary singers of the time after the Carnation Revolution. Every question at the press conferences was answered in song. Neto spoke while the others hummed and once Neto finished speaking the group burst into chorus before the next question was asked.

Відчуй Як Б’ється Твоє Серце! 23. Ukraine. There was so much of a delay before this song even the tape of the heart beat ran out. Perhaps this was because there was so much chuckling backstage in remembrance of the final



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dress rehearsal that someone forgot to start the backing track. Engelke, who is the voice of Marge in *The Simpsons* (German version), treated us to her version of *Angels* in 'reprise'. It is one of the funniest things I have seen this year and if you have not yet watched it I recommend you get on YouTube (after you finish reading this article of course!)

Locals told me Engelke was chosen so viewers could erase the stereotype that all Germans are serious. A script of the first semi-final had her describe each country of *The Big Five* by imitating to drink for each country, sipping for the first country, building up to drinking most aggressively for Germany and slurring her remaining lines. This went down a treat in rehearsals, but was not used for the live show.

Another stereotype I had in my head as I departed for Düsseldorf was everything ran on time without exception in Germany. We were shocked to find rehearsals and press conferences were up to an hour behind at times. I remember second rehearsals last year often practiced continuity of song, postcard, song. This never happened in Düsseldorf. In fact the first dress rehearsal for the first semi-final was quite frightening. On the other hand, rehearsals are rehearsals and a platform for mistakes to be made. Some of the

criticism Germany received was too strong and I am glad this delay before Ukraine was one of the only visible mistakes in the final product.

One mistake television viewers may not have spotted was in the sand art. A wing of the bird smudged towards the end of the performance but Ukraine's Got Talent winner Kseniya Simonova managed to fix it before it was in shot again. Simonova confessed at the semi-final winners' press conference how she out of everyone was most pessimistic about qualifying and thanked everyone who voted. Sand art also played a part in a vignette of Ukraine's (ever controversial) national final.

Осѐти Ритаѐ Срѐца! Serbia's Nina never failed to give a good performance in rehearsal or live show. *Caroban* has a distinct sixties style but when asked what her favourite song from the decade was she said she was too young to remember but did love 'retro'. Serbia was the first finalist to be announced in their semi-final and was this year's penultimate song in the final.

შეიგბრძენი შენი გულის ცემბა! I was sitting beside a group of Georgian journalists as Eldrine drew number 25 in the semi-final winners' press conference. Their cheers were deafening. So, why did the group win the Barbara Dex award for worst costumes? They looked and sounded amazing, from the very



LV

Nina likes retro, especially her shoes!



DE

Unusual outfits for Georgia, but a great song

first rehearsal. Sophio Toroshelidze was a backing singer in Oslo last year and was asked to be lead singer in Düsseldorf after the national selection when Tamar Vadachkoria decided to leave (of her own accord, as reported at a press conference). Group members were proud of the fact and saw it as an omen that soccer team FC Dinamo Tbilisi won the Cup Winners' Cup on 13 May 1981 in the Rheinstadion, which was demolished in 2002 to be replaced by the Esprit Arena in 2005.

Raab and Engelke were back again to present the voting numbers and remind viewers there were only 15 minutes left to vote and we saw a reminder of all 25 songs.

A reminder of the numbers again, this time with a montage of postcards to the tune of Gary Go's *Wonderful* (another tick for the UK) introduced by Raab and Rakers. The song was already familiar to a German audience, being previously used as the title song for the film *Männerherzen* (2009) after which a new music video was filmed on a Berlin rooftop.

The montage might be something special to replay now but it was aired in all three shows and became somewhat repetitive, especially when one is anxious to know results. Our distinguished Editor and I rummaged through our press bags during another reminder

of all songs to find gifts of fruit gums in the shape of cart-wheeling children, the symbol of Düsseldorf. According to legend, upon hearing their city had won the Battle of Worringen in 1288, children performed cartwheels in celebration and later performed the same at urban boulevard Königssallee (nicknamed Kö by locals) to earn pennies.

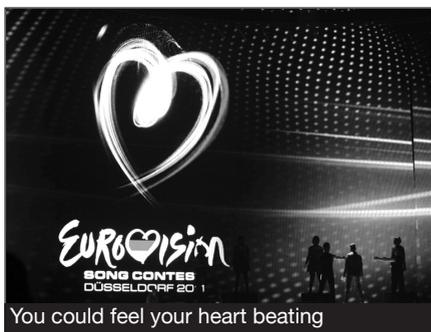
Thankfully Raab learned his numbers in English in time for the final countdown after embarrassingly confusing his words in the second semi-final. The lines were closed.

Hamburg's Jan Delay with his group *Disko No.1* was the interval act for the final of ESC 2011. Delay, who also sang in an interval act of *Unser Star für Oslo* 2010, performed *Oh Jonny* (2009) and *Klar* (2006) wearing his signature hat and sunglasses. Many OGAE UK members were caught on camera dancing, all looking fantastic!

It was time to speak to Jon Ola Sand, new Executive Supervisor of the EBU who claimed there were so many televotes he needed more time.

Raab and Engelke did get up to a lot of mischief during rehearsals so it was only appropriate he carried her over his shoulder to the voting table.

In an interview with *Magazin*, the magazine of the official airline to ESC 2011, Lufthansa, Engelke revealed the first contest she remembered was 1974.



LW



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Waterloo was one of the past contest hits she performed with Raab (but to the tune of *Smoke On The Water* – and if you think that is random they also performed *Macarena!*) in a pre-recorded medley for the second semi-final. Another medley they pre-recorded together was at the opening party, teaching *Mein Vater War Ein Wandersmann* to delegations as they arrived at Tonhalle Düsseldorf, built in 1926 as a planetarium, the biggest in the world at the point of construction. This was aired during the first semi-final.

It was only too symbolic the large LED screen acting as a backdrop during performances for the first Eurovision to be held in Germany since German reunification was suddenly referred to as a wall that needed to be taken down so everyone could be together for the voting. “No more walls!” Raab marked the transformation by getting out his guitar again.

Thumbs up from Sand and it was time to call the first spokesperson. There was no draw for running order of voting this year. The order was decided according to how juries voted in the jury final the night before in an attempt to make the voting more suspenseful.

Perhaps the highlight of the voting was 12 points to the UK from Bulgaria, the second country to vote. Our hearts sank when the cameraman moved away from us after that 12 was announced.

No less than 11 countries voted before the recipient of 12 was repeated (Denmark, announced by Miss Iceland 2003 Ragnhildur Steinunn Jónsdóttir) and on the very last vote Sweden and Italy swapped second and third place. It really was a thrilling conclusion to a wonderful show and a wonderful stay in Germany.

In previous years the scoreboard was not so visible to spectators inside the arena but this year it was splashed on the side panels of the magnificent backdrop. That’s a 59 foot Dima Bilan waving hello from Russia! The scoreboard of 40 years ago boasted eight-inch-high printed letters!

It was mentioned more than once how the Azerbaijani delegation was asked not to boast as much as they did in previous years, hinting at amounts of money spent and dropping names of choreographers and other crew members. It was obvious they listened to this advice. Their first press conference was the smallest and most intimate of all press conferences, with only Ell & Nikki represented.

Eldar Gasimov is the great-grandson of Azerbaijani actor couple Honoured Artist of Azerbaijan SSR Abbas Mirza Sharifzadeh and People’s Artist of USSR Marziyya Davudova, and grandson of People’s Artist of Azerbaijan SSR actress Firangiz Sharifova. He has been singing from an early age. Nigar Jamal has



RS



DE

been living in London since 2005 and described herself as English at the press conference. And she shops in Enfield Town as does our distinguished Editor! Both singers appeared in Milli Seçim Turu 2011 separately, Gasimov in Heat 6, Jamal in Heat 7. The jury selected them to represent Azerbaijan on February 11th of this year. It was a shock to most as the competition was originally intended to choose a soloist. Some months later the duo were reintroduced as Ell & Nikki and they presented their song.

Running Scared was written by Stefan Örn and Sandra Bjurman (writers of last year's *Drip Drop* with Anders Bagge) from Sweden. Ell & Nikki were joined on stage by four Swedish backing singers: Melodifestivalen 2011's Shirley's Angels Jessica Marberger (who also backed *La Voix*) and Vera Prada with Lisa Stadell and Åsa Engman.

The prize-giving was emotional as Lena awarded Ell & Nikki the crystal microphone trophy, the same as she received in Oslo but now bearing her country's tricolour, accompanied by simple bouquets of white roses. All three presenters bade us good night and we heard *Running Scared* one more time.

At the winners' press conference Sand gave the Azerbaijani delegation an invitation to Geneva for June to start work for the 2012 Eurovision Song Contest. He promised he would supply

Azerbaijan with all the support and information needed "to make the next Eurovision Song Contest, if possible, even better than Eurovision Song Contest this year." He then presented the delegation with champagne and told them to relax and enjoy "before the serious work starts".

This is the furthest east the contest can ever go. A country that has so desperately wanted to win has achieved its dream. In the short history Azerbaijan has had in this contest it has made some errors, followed advice, learned from those mistakes and is now reaping the benefits. The contest we love so much is in good hands. A modern song won in a year where we had some of the best presenters in quite some time, one of the best stages the contest has ever seen and pretty exciting voting. Italy is back and Europe voted its contribution into second place so hopefully the country is back to stay. And when it was all over I was taken to McDonalds and got a balloon. The 56th Eurovision Song Contest was indeed a success and we have so much to reflect on and look forward to!

● *The winner of the Istanbul pin from Issue 83 was Paul McKenna. If you would like to win an accreditation lanyard from Düsseldorf then get in touch and share some memories from this year's contest, wherever you watched it: liam@goodeveningurope.com. Thanks for reading!*

DÜSSELDORF PHOTO DIARY

Photographs this page by
David Elder and Liam Whelan



EURO QUIZ

This issue's quiz, set by **Ben Robertson**, has a summer theme. We used to have summers once

1) What is the latest date in the calendar year that the Eurovision Song Contest has been held?



2) *Another Summer Night* was Fabrizio Faniello's entry to Eurovision in 2001, but how many times has he competed to represent Malta?



Iceland in Eurovision 2000. What position did they finish in?

3) Which Eurovision song has the opening lines 'Weeks go by, summer scents expire?'

4) How many venues in the history of the Eurovision Song Contest have been used to stage events at the Summer Olympic Games?

5) Who arrived all brown, tanned by wind and weather?

6) Spain is the top summer tourist destination for British holidaymakers – but when did the country first enter the contest?

7) August and Telma were the entrants for

8) Who heard their song first in the summer sun, but is unsure if this was in Lisbon, Paris, Oslo, Trinidad, or floating above the sea in a hot air balloon?

9) Which 2011 entrant revealed in her press conference in Düsseldorf when answering the question about what was the best ice cream flavour as 'Vanilla?'

10) Who threw a tennis ball into the crowd in the Eurovision semi-final in 2008?

For answers see inside back cover

01.10.11

Eurobash is now fully booked. A full report on the event will appear in the next issue.



EUROBASH 2011 MANCHESTER

2012 TICKETING FOR BAKU

Even though Düsseldorf seems quite fresh in all our minds, it's already time to turn our attention to arrangements for next year and, as usual, OGAE UK will be trying to secure contest tickets for our members.

For those of you who are new to OGAE, the host broadcasters have traditionally set aside a block of seats for fans from across Europe. They are not required to do this, and we have not yet received confirmation that the Azeris will follow recent practice. However, in anticipation of receiving a ticket allocation, we will be following our usual process.

Tickets are always in great demand and we are never too sure how many we may be allocated, and so OGAE UK operates a ballot process in relation to fan tickets. As in previous years, the ballot is open to anyone who was a member of OGAE UK as at the date of the last contest (ie. 14 May 2011). Any members who have joined since this date will be added to a waiting list, in the order in which they joined OGAE UK, and allocated tickets if we are able to secure sufficient numbers.

In order to participate in the 2012 OGAE UK ticketing process, you will need to submit an application by 31 October 2011. Anyone applying after this date will be added to a reserve list, in the order in which they apply, and allocated any tickets that may be available after distribution to the ballot participants and waiting list.

When applying for tickets it is important to consider the following:

- Tickets are issued at the discretion of the host broadcaster.
- You must be a current OGAE UK member to use fan tickets (ie. you must also be a member in 2012).
- You must have a valid OGAE International membership card at the time of next year's contest.
- Tickets are usually issued as a package (one for each semi and the final) and OGAE UK cannot split them.
- In recent years, fan tickets have cost around £200-£250 per package.
- A deposit is payable at the time you apply

for tickets. This is refundable if you withdraw your application before OGAE UK commits to a ticket allocation.

- Members are responsible for making their own visa, travel and accommodation arrangements.
- Full payment for tickets will probably be required in January 2012.
- In recent years, we have been able to negotiate tickets for everyone on the main ballot, waiting and reserve lists. However, we cannot guarantee that this will be the case in 2012.
- Ticketing arrangements are unlikely to be finalised until January at the earliest, but we will do all we can to meet the demand for fan tickets.
- Tickets are usually distributed to members in the host city just before the contest.

Given the complexities and costs of travelling to Azerbaijan, it is ESSENTIAL to have an idea of your travel and accommodation arrangements prior to committing to buy tickets, as it is not possible to return them once arrangements are finalised.

If you would like to apply for 2012 ESC tickets, please write to our ticket coordinator, David Ransted at djanners@yahoo.com and request an application form (this will include the detailed terms and conditions). Please remember that your completed application and deposit must be received by David no later than 31 October 2011.

In order to assist members with their plans, we have been in contact with a reputable travel agent specialising in the region. They are working on a number of options including flight only, flight and accommodation and excursion packages, as well as visa arrangements. The agent understands our ticketing timetable. We had hoped to have some preliminary details to share with members at this stage, but the staging of the ESC represents quite a challenge for the Baku tourism and visitor infrastructure, and the agent is still trying to gather information and prices. We will distribute information about any travel arrangements as soon as we have the details.

ESC 11 ANALYSED

Simon Bennett looks at this year's contest and gives his impressions and analysis of the show and voting

Photographs by David Elder

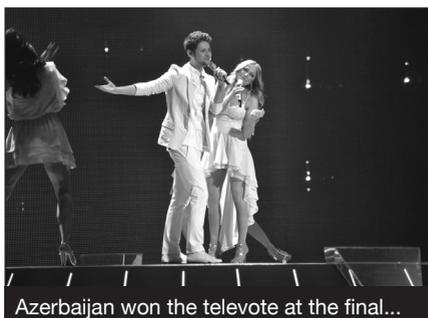
We've become used to big venues in recent years but Düsseldorf's Esprit Arena was in a league of its own. The stadium complex is massive and very impressive indeed, particularly sporting the huge Eurovision logos that had been painted on the sides.

Crowds gathered early on the evening of 10th May for the first semi-final and, given the very thin audiences at recent semi-finals, it was very refreshing to see so many people milling around

the arena. Somewhat surprisingly, the actual admission process was a little chaotic, with a huge crowd jostling and pushing their way towards the turnstiles. Progress was very slow indeed, causing some concern that people would not get to their seats in time. It soon became clear that the problem was caused by security staff individually patting down each person before letting them in! Security is always tight at Eurovision nowadays, but the local police had received a threat in

Final results						
	Jury and televoting		Jury only		Televoting only	
1	Azerbaijan	221	Italy	251	Azerbaijan	223
2	Italy	189	Azerbaijan	182	Sweden	221
3	Sweden	185	Denmark	168	Greece	176
4	Ukraine	159	Slovenia	160	Ukraine	168
5	Denmark	134	Austria	145	United Kingdom	166
6	Bosnia & Herzegovina	125	Ireland	119	Bosnia & Herzegovina	151
7	Greece	120	Ukraine	117	Russia	138
8	Ireland	119	Serbia	111	Georgia	138
9	Georgia	110	Sweden	106	Germany	113
10	Germany	107	Germany	104	Ireland	101
11	United Kingdom	100	Bosnia & Herzegovina	90	Italy	99
12	Moldova	97	France	90	Moldova	98
13	Slovenia	96	Romania	86	Serbia	89
14	Serbia	85	Greece	84	Romania	79
15	France	82	Moldova	82	France	76
16	Russia	77	Georgia	79	Spain	73
17	Romania	77	Finland	75	Hungary	64
18	Austria	64	Estonia	74	Denmark	61
19	Lithuania	63	Iceland	72	Iceland	60
20	Iceland	61	Lithuania	66	Lithuania	55
21	Finland	57	Hungary	60	Finland	47
22	Hungary	53	United Kingdom	57	Slovenia	39
23	Spain	50	Switzerland	53	Estonia	32
24	Estonia	44	Spain	38	Austria	25
25	Switzerland	19	Russia	25	Switzerland	2

Source: esctoday.com



the days running up to the first semi-final and so were taking no chances.

The interior of the arena/stadium was understandably vast (as it usually functions as a football stadium). Unfortunately, the signposting left something to be desired since it had not been updated to reflect the installation of seats on the playing field, which resulted in some fans going round in circles trying to find their seats. However, once located, the seating itself was positively luxurious compared to recent years, with

wide aisles, plenty of space between rows and unobtrusive security. The only drawback for those seated in the blocks immediately in front of the stage was that the organisers somewhat inexplicably switched off the big screens either side of the stage.

Initially the stage did not look too impressive and it was interesting that for the first time in many years there were seats arranged on three sides of the performance area. A long curved runway led out to a smaller stage in the middle

Semi-Final One voting results

	Jury and televoting		Jury only		Televoting only	
1	Greece	133	Lithuania	113	Greece	154
2	Azerbaijan	112	Azerbaijan	109	Azerbaijan	124
3	Finland	103	Iceland	104	Finland	111
4	Iceland	100	Serbia	102	Russia	93
5	Lithuania	81	Finland	86	Georgia	90
6	Georgia	74	Malta	84	Iceland	79
7	Hungary	72	Switzerland	76	Armenia	75
8	Serbia	67	San Marino	74	Hungary	73
9	Russia	64	Greece	74	Norway	56
10	Switzerland	55	Hungary	65	Turkey	54
11	Malta	54	Albania	61	Lithuania	52
12	Armenia	54	Turkey	58	Switzerland	45
13	Turkey	47	Georgia	51	Serbia	42
14	Albania	47	Croatia	49	Albania	42
15	Croatia	41	Armenia	33	Portugal	39
16	San Marino	34	Russia	31	Croatia	32
17	Norway	30	Norway	29	Poland	25
18	Portugal	22	Poland	13	Malta	24
19	Poland	18	Portugal	6	San Marino	8

Source: esctoday.com

of the audience, although this feature wasn't used very much during the shows (the 'satellite'). Once the screens came on behind the stage, the whole arena was transformed and the effect was every bit as spectacular as in Moscow.

It now seems to be standard to have three presenters and this year's trio clearly had a good relationship and came over in a very confident manner. Stefan seemed to have forgotten to dress up for the first semi-final and both he and Anke had a bit of a tendency to be loud and to overact. The presentation was quite relaxed but suitably efficient. There was a minimum of introductory chat before Europe was launched into this year's parade of Eurovision entries.

The show moved at a cracking pace, although none of us in the hall were aware of the sound problems that were affecting commentaries. The postcards were a little disappointing and were used over and over again. Similarly, the interval act was not particularly inspired and didn't seem

to really hold the attention of people in the hall.

The voting having been completed, and already slightly running over time, the names of the qualifying songs were announced with a quicker rhythm than in recent years. Most were pretty predictable but, for me at least, the surprise qualifiers were Lithuania and Georgia, and the shock exits were Norway and Turkey. Greece, Lithuania and Georgia all did better than perhaps was expected and Russia did less well. If the scoring had been based purely on the televote, it is interesting to note that Armenia, Norway and Turkey would have replaced Lithuania, Switzerland and Serbia in the final, arguably more in line with fan expectations.

I think Turkey suffered from a ridiculous act involving that poor woman sealed in a round cage reminiscent of some horrific punishment from the Ottoman court. The green costumes didn't seem to go down too well either, and the song failed

Semi-Final Two voting results

	Jury and televoting	Jury only	Televoting only	
1	Sweden 155	Slovenia 146	Sweden 159	
2	Denmark 135	Denmark 129	Bosnia & Herz. 131	
3	Slovenia 112	Sweden 99	Romania 121	
4	Romania 111	Austria 95	Denmark 115	
5	Bosnia & Herz. 109	Romania 85	Ukraine 91	
6	Ukraine 81	Estonia 83	Ireland 78	
7	Austria 69	Ukraine 76	Slovenia 68	
8	Ireland 68	Belgium 71	Moldova 61	
9	Estonia 60	Slovakia 71	Belarus 54	
10	Moldova 54	Ireland 66	Austria 52	
11	Belgium 53	Bosnia & Herz. 65	Israel 51	
12	Slovakia 48	Bulgaria 59	Belgium 50	
13	Bulgaria 48	Moldova 53	Estonia 46	
14	Belarus 45	Macedonia, FYR 47	Bulgaria 43	
15	Israel 38	Belarus 38	Latvia 43	
16	Macedonia, FYR 36	Israel 36	Slovakia 40	
17	Latvia 25	Cyprus 24	Macedonia, FYR 33	
18	Cyprus 16	Netherlands 22	Cyprus 23	
19	Netherlands 13	Latvia 11	Netherlands 17	

Source: esctoday.com



Greece won the public vote at SF1...



...And Lithuania pleased the juries

to really register either with the juries or the public.

Norway was a huge fan favourite, although I was never too sure exactly why. Although good fun, from a musical point of view the song didn't really have much going for it, and so it should have been no surprise that the juries placed it third last, thus sealing Stella's fate.

Similarly, Armenia's boxing theme was a bit perplexing, and the repetitive song failed to score well with the juries despite a seventh place in the televote.

The crowds were equally large for the second semi-final, and thankfully the technical problems that had affected the first show had been resolved. The presenters seemed a bit more self-assured, and the show was just as fast paced. For me, this was the stronger semi-final and it eventually provided five of the final top ten.

Things also seemed to go much more as predicted, the only real surprises for me being the qualification of Slovenia and exit of Israel. The juries and televotes were more aligned than in the first semi-final, and had the scoring been based purely on the televote, it is interesting to note that the only change would have been Belarus replacing Estonia in the final.

The atmosphere ahead of the final was fantastic, with the huge crowd milling around the arena in the evening sunshine. There were even more

costumes and flags on display, with the UK contingent making a particularly impressive contribution. The opening of the show was breathtaking and felt almost more like a finale. The rearranged version of *Satellite*, the crowd of Lenas and the enormous explosions created a real energy around the huge arena that got the final off to a magnificent start. The interval act was good, although the non-Germans in the hall weren't too sure who they actually were. Before we knew where we were it was time for the voting and the spectacular unveiling of the scoreboard and Green Room.

The EBU introduced a special formula this year, using the jury votes to determine the order in which countries voted in order to make the voting more 'exciting'. Broadly speaking this meant that countries doing well at the start of the voting were unlikely to end up in a great position. This was certainly the case for Blue who were actually leading after the first few countries but then appeared to go backwards. Conversely, Italy languished at the bottom of the table for ages before mounting a last minute dash.

The idea was supposedly to stop one country running away with the contest and thus keep the audience interested to the bitter end. This was all well and good, but having announced the use of the formula, the effect was rather mitigated because we knew that the first



Sweden was the public's favourite at SF2...



...While Slovenia made the juries happy

results were unlikely to be representative. The EBU would have done better to keep this ploy quiet, but personally I think they shouldn't try to engineer excitement.

The final result was not really a surprise. Ell & Nikki were worthy winners, and Azerbaijan's determination to bring the contest to Baku paid off after only four attempts. Italy's second place was a real surprise, as was the UK's rather disappointing 11th position.

There had been furious speculation among fans after each semi-final as to the breakdown of the voting. Some claimed to have inside knowledge, and that they had been reliably informed that Jedward had been runaway winners! The initial classification breakdown was released immediately after the final, but we would have to wait several weeks for the full breakdown of the televote and jury scores. The statistics, when finally released, made fascinating reading.

From a British perspective, the shock was that Blue came a dismal 22nd in the jury vote, a respectable fifth place in the televote being undermined by the juries in an ironic twist of fate. The UK was now the victim of the very system designed to dilute the televote that was widely blamed for the poor British results in the early 2000s. Inevitably there have now been loud calls for the juries to be ditched.

I don't think that *I Can* lacked musical merit, but the problem seems to have

been in the way the votes were cast. The juries vote on the Friday dress rehearsal rather than the final performance, partly to make the collation of votes easier, partly to provide a back-up result in the event of a problem on the night. I wasn't at the dress rehearsal myself, but many who were commented that Blue did not give a great performance, and it seems that this was enough to damage their final position.

Elsewhere the points breakdown threw up some very interesting perspectives. One thing was certain, Azerbaijan were worthy winners, consistently performing better than any other song, being ranked either first or second in every popular and jury vote across the week. No other country came near, although it was interesting that only three countries actually gave the Azeris 12 points in the final.

The vote breakdown confirmed what many fans had suspected. Italy's stunning second place was due principally to the juries which ranked it as the runaway winner, a full 69 points clear of Azerbaijan and the rest of the field, but with Raphael only managing 11th place in the televote. Naturally, conspiracy theories abound, but Italy's great showing will certainly do no harm to the chances of their return becoming a more permanent fixture.

With the exception of Italy, the votes for the top six countries seem to stack up



Belarus would have qualified by the public



Jedward were thought to have won SF2

as expected, with the only surprise being Denmark's poor 18th place in the final televote when they had managed fourth in the televote and second place overall in their semi-final.

Greece finished in a very respectable seventh place, but I am personally baffled by the breakdown of their votes. They came an amazing third in the final televote, and topped the popular vote in their semi-final. Given that I thought this was a song that would do well with the juries rather than the public, it was very interesting to see that the juries only ranked it 14th in the final.

The next surprise for me was Slovenia. I was not alone in having been amazed that Maja qualified for the final, and so I was absolutely shocked to learn that it had finished third overall in its semi-final, actually topping the jury vote. In almost a direct reversal of the UK position, the juries ranked Slovenia fourth in the final, whereas the public placed it 22nd.

Russia may join the calls for the abandonment of the juries, having come a woeful and rather surprising last in the final jury vote, despite a 17th place in the televote. It would be interesting to hear if there were problems with Alexey's performance in the jury final.

Another interesting situation surrounded Lithuania, for me another surprise qualifier. Evelina managed a stunning first place in the semi-final

jury vote, and an overall fifth position, only to be ranked 20th by both the juries and televoters in the final, although finishing 19th.

There were numerous other anomalies between the semi and final results, with many countries doing far less well in the final than they had done in the qualifying round. This is naturally due partly to the elimination of 18 countries, and the expanded electorate, but it is interesting to note that the juries ranked Switzerland 7th in its semi-final but only 23rd in the final, Estonia sixth and 18th, Romania fifth and 13th, Iceland third and 19th, Finland fifth and 17th and Hungary tenth and 21st respectively. These scores were generally mirrored by the televote results, perhaps indicating that these countries all gave stronger performances in the semi-finals.

The analysis of this year's results may call into question the traditional view that the draw plays a critical role in the voting. Five of the top ten actually sang in the first half of the draw, and only two of the last five songs performed managed a top ten finish. Opening the show is still the kiss of death, Poland finishing 19th, Finland 21st and only Bosnia & Herzegovina bucking the trend in its semi by finishing fifth.

The dominance of the English language has continued with only seven of the 43 songs sung entirely in other languages,



The juries gave the Swiss conflicting votes



Poland opening SF1 was a kiss of death!

only three qualifying for the final. Both Italy and Greece had some English lyrics, and so the highest place entirely non-English song was Serbia in 14th.

This year brought its fair share of gimmicks to the contest, although many seem to have backfired. There were quite a few pyrotechnics, particularly in the semis, with Azerbaijan's cascade of fire being perhaps the most impressive. I've already mentioned the Turkish cage and the Armenian boxers, but there was also the Croatian wardrobe changes, Cyprus' giant sling shot, Portugal's placards, and Belarus' dulcimer. More successful were the Russian illuminated shoes, Moldova's hats, Ukraine's Mystic Meg-lookalike sand artist, and of course Eric's amazing exploding glass box! It seems that Europe continues to respond to these attention grabbers so no doubt we'll continue to see them in the future. After all, it wouldn't be Eurovision without a few whacky gimmicks.

Despite the Blue controversy, I think the current 50/50 televote/jury system worked pretty well and is doing what it was designed to do. None of the traditional blocks (Scandinavia, ex-Yugoslavia, former USSR) were particularly evident, and the diaspora vote did not seem to work for Turkey and Armenia. Only Bosnia & Herzegovina seemed to benefit from its diaspora, receiving more 12 points than any other country in the final,

all coming from countries with large Bosnian communities.

The only change I would suggest to the current voting system is that the juries should vote on the same performance as the televoters. This would emphasise the impact of any poor performances in the final, but would help to reduce the discrepancies between the two votes.

With the return of Italy, the Big Four became the Big Five and there has inevitably been renewed debate about the merits of this arrangement. Only two of the five managed a top ten finish and I must admit that I am not totally comfortable with the Big Five's privileged position. However, I would be loath to change the current set-up as I would be very concerned for British viewing figures and BBC commitment to a Eurovision final with no UK entry. That having been said, I think that serious consideration should be given to having the UK, France, Germany, Spain and Italy perform their songs during the semi-finals, perhaps as part of the interval act. Extracts of the videos are shown during these shows but, regardless of the various rehearsals, it must be hard for the artists coming directly into the final without experiencing the atmosphere of the semi-finals, and they miss out on an opportunity to build momentum. I would suggest that the Big Five perform during the show where they are voting. 🗳️

EUROFACTS

Compiled by David Ransted

Finishing positions 1956-2011

	1956 (1)(2)	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	
Albania	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	
Andorra	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Armenia	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Austria	--	10	5=	9=	7	15=	13=	7	6	4	1	14=	13=	--	--	16	5	--	--	--	5	17	15	18=	8	17	9	9=	19	8	
Azerbaijan	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Belarus	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Belgium	UU	8=	5=	6=	6	15=	13=	10	10=	15=	4=	7	7=	7=	8=	14=	17	17	9=	15	8	7	2	18=	17	13	4	18	5=	19	
Bosnia & Herzegovina	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Bulgaria	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Croatia	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Cyprus	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	6	5	16	15	16=	--
Czech Republic	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Denmark	--	3	8	5	10=	5=	10=	1	9	7	14	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	16	6	14	11=	17	17	4	11
Estonia	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Finland	--	--	--	--	10=	7=	13=	7	15=	10=	12=	16=	12	--	8	12	6	13	7	11	10	18=	14	19	16	18	11=	9	9	--	
France	**	2	1	3	1	4	1	5=	4=	3	16	3	3	1=	4=	10	11	15=	S	4	2	1	3	3	11	3	--	8	8	10	
Georgia	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Germany	UU	4=	7	8	4=	13	6	9	13=	15=	10=	8=	6	9=	3	3	3	8=	14=	17	15	8	6	4	2	2	1	5	13=	2	
Greece	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	11	--	13	5	8	8	13	8	S	14	--	16=	
Hungary	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Iceland	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Ireland	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	6	4=	2	4	7=	1	11	15	10=	7=	9	10	3	5	5	1	5	11	--	2	6	--	
Israel	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	4	7=	11	6	11	1	1	--	7	2	2	--	5	
Italy	UU	6	3	6=	8=	5=	9	3	1	5	17=	11	10	13=	8=	5	6	13	2	3	7	13	12	15	6	--	--	11=	5=	7	
Latvia	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Lithuania	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Luxembourg	UU	4=	9=	--	13	1	3	8	4=	1	10=	4	11=	11	12	13	1	1	4=	5	14	16	7	13	9	11=	6	1	10	13	
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Lebanon did select a song for 2005, but this was withdrawn

RETROSPECTIVE 2011

PART 1

Darren Jenkin returns for his annual and sometimes tongue-in-cheek take on Eurovision, with each country ranked to his own personal position

Photographs by David Elder

In 2005 Eurovision saw the Big Four languishing in the last placements of the final scoreboard, so it seemed inconceivable that just six years later one of them would be hosting the show and three of them were considered frontrunners for the crown. Of course the Big Four became the Big Five in 2011 with the welcome return of Italy to the Eurovision family. In the UK interest was at a premium due to representatives most people had actually heard of – and of course the participation of certain siblings from the Emerald Isle. I really hope the BBC maintains the momentum for 2012 with another established act.

Dusseldorf's Fortuna Football Club (Esprit Arena) was astonishingly transformed into a magnificent venue for the contest. It all looked wonderfully huge and spacious and the stage was just about the right size where nobody looked too lost or too crowded. I was glad Stefan Raab was one of the hosts given the great support he has shown the contest over the years. Judith and Anke were the perfect foils to him and personally speaking if Anke could be involved in the semi-final envelope unveiling every year then I'd be delighted as her expressions and singing along were brilliant. This year I'm again doing my ranking's from last to first and bottom of the pile for me in 2011 was.....

43rd CROATIA Just about everything to do with this was wrong. Inspid tune and a totally dated style of performance, I thought. Daria was just too leggy to come across as dainty and her lower range at the start of the song was poor. The guy wandering around in the background gave the appearance of someone that should be on a special register rather than a Merlin the Magician type. *Break A Leg* is what this was originally called. I was thinking of breaking wind.

42nd SAN MARINO It took many listens for me to get a grip on the tune to their entry this year and in Eurovision terms that's not a great thing. Senit seemed to be doing the rounds promoting *Stand By* though and I thought her enthusiasm towards the contest and the promise of her outstanding vocals would bump this up a bit in my rankings. But she was pretty tame vocally on the night and although got an encouraging jury result, San Marino will seriously have to up their game if they are ever going to make a final.

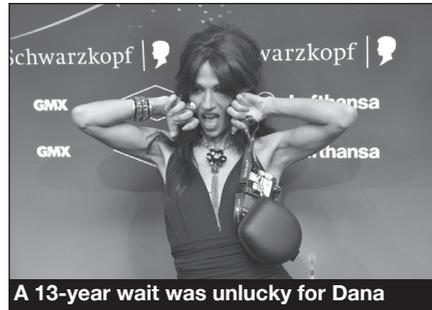
41st SWITZERLAND Although I have placed this very low I must stress how delighted I was to see Switzerland make a Eurovision final again. I feel that they have been cruelly overlooked over the past few years when they have entered some pretty good songs. This year I just felt the song had a mundane plod

to it and seemed much longer than the allotted three minutes. Anna sang well though and I just adored their reaction when it was announced that they had made the final. And it is good to see some of the older countries doing well.

40th SPAIN While four of the five big nations this year made at least some kind of effort to make the upper echelons of the scoreboard, in 2011 Spain seemed to be stuck in about 1996. The song wasn't even annoyingly catchy, it was just annoying and even the really likeable Lucia couldn't help this rather dated and limp entry. Now if ever there was an entry that needed an intruder to spice things up then this was it!

39th ISRAEL So 13 years after her crowning glory, it proved to be an unlucky return for the Euro Diva. Her failure to qualify should not really be seen as a big surprise – like Spain and Croatia this was another totally out of date tune and this Eurovision version was made worse by the fussy style to the chorus. Dana certainly gave a confident performance visually and worked the crowd well, but vocally she was very weak. I only hope her backing singers put in a request for overtime for all the covering they did.

38th FINLAND Many thought of Finland as possible victors after a strong semi-final performance and the luck of having one of the most stunning backdrops in the whole show. Paradise Oskar really did come across as uber smug though in both shows and lyrically this was just about as puerile as it gets. A poor opening to the final and a weaker vocal too saw any chance of a top ten placing vanish. In celebration I chopped down a few trees and used plastic bags on my next shopping trip.



A 13-year wait was unlucky for Dana

37th MACEDONIA, FYR I really liked the preview video that accompanied this song and generally the Eurovision staging was enjoyable too and captured perfectly the idea of the song. Not sure what language Vlatko started out in but he was an assured and competent performer. Unfortunately the song was just not strong enough especially in the tougher of the two semi-finals. After four consecutive semi-final qualifications it's now four consecutive failures for the country. Who said having two semi's makes it easier to get through?!

36th UKRAINE When a couple of the big names failed to qualify from semi-final one I thought that Ukraine would therefore bite the dust in semi-final two. While Mika is undoubtedly an amazing vocalist and the addition of the stunning sand art could only enhance the performance, Eurovision is fundamentally a song contest and *Angels* is not a good enough song to merit the position it garnered. Would somebody making pictures with sand really inspire you to pick up a phone to vote for the accompanying song? Surely not.

35th NETHERLANDS Are the Dutch now the least likely nation to make it out of the semi-finals? Another year and another pretty poor showing and it wasn't all down to the song either which



I thought was pretty good. Lead singer Jan looked incredibly lost wandering aimlessly around the stage. His suit was awful and his hair could've done with a wash too. It all made for uncomfortable viewing.

34th POLAND What on earth happened here? I absolutely loved this going into Euro week and had high hopes for it qualifying, but Magdalena took it upon herself to strip away about 50 per cent of the song's melody and replace it with some really poor ad libbing that kind of car crashed the whole thing. She tried too much choreography which wasn't necessary and rather than just being a Pole she was dressed as if she should be dancing around one. It was no surprise to see it bottom of the pile. Such a shame.

33rd TURKEY Throughout any hearings of this song I can never get The Clash's *Should I Stay Or Should I Go* erased from my mind. So then the unthinkable happened and Turkey failed to qualify from a semi-final. It was richly deserved too as compared with last year when maNga gave an M&S performance straight out of the top drawer – this was more your Lidl's budget version. And surely a man of Kenan's age should know better than to wear those trousers! I think Turkey will be back with a vengeance in 2012.

32nd CYPRUS It was a bit of a struggle to get into this year's entry from Cyprus and it took quite a few hearings before I could remember any of it. In Germany Christos appeared assured in his vocal delivery and was ably backed by some strong wailing from their Shot Put national champion. No real surprises at the poor placing as it's not instant enough, but as time goes on I'm leaning towards its charm more and more...!

31st FRANCE Poor old Amaury. A hot favourite with pretty much everyone before the contest started yet it was a pretty toe curlingly awful three minutes on stage when it really mattered. I found the song started in too low a key for him to be really effective and by the time he had picked it up after the brief musical interlude in the song it was all a bit too late. Maybe it wasn't a good thing to do a 'V' sign at the audience before your postcard either.

30th IRELAND A quiet little entry from our neighbours this year then! Brilliant staging and the backdrop depicted the personality of the Grim Grimes perfectly and their inept concept of choreographically-timed movement along with any notion of singing ability really didn't matter at all. My only real gripe is that *Lipstick* isn't really that good a song. I would've preferred them to have had a much more catchy song. If they had I reckon they would've finished even higher. They want to try Eurovision again, but for the sake of the regulars on ESC internet forums can we really put up with their obsessive fans again?

29th SLOVENIA The surprise winner with the juries of semi-final two was Maja Keuc and her very impressive vocals. I was surprised she was so young at only 19 years old and her contest

outfit was not the best. The intro to the song was very impressive and boded well for a real stomper of a song, but it all kind of fell a bit flat and didn't really go anywhere. Still, great to see Slovenia back in the final and I would welcome a voice like Maja's back too with a better song.

28th ALBANIA A blogger while keeping us non attendees in the loop with his views on the first semi-final rehearsals described Aurela as "coming on the stage and shouting at the audience for three minutes". I think we all knew where he was coming from! This year the switch to the English language didn't really work for me, but the shades of the Albanian flag I saw in her stage backdrop were awesome and she really was a tremendous singer. Congratulations to her as well on the news she is expecting a baby. Let's hope those with her in the delivery room have a strong set of ear plugs.

27th ICELAND It would take a hard heart not to be moved at the story behind this year's Icelandic entry and my utmost respect goes to the six performers and indeed Sjonni's widow, Thorunn, for the dignity and poise shown in Düsseldorf for what must have been such a difficult time. The eerily uncanny lyrics were delivered by the boys with plenty of smiles and Matthias Matthiasson had arguably the best male voice in the whole show. Not my favourite song, but huge respect to all involved for a very fitting tribute.

26th SLOVAKIA This was a much better showing for Slovakia than last time around and rightly so. The juries had them edge the "other" twins and there were a few votes from the public this time around as well. After a couple of

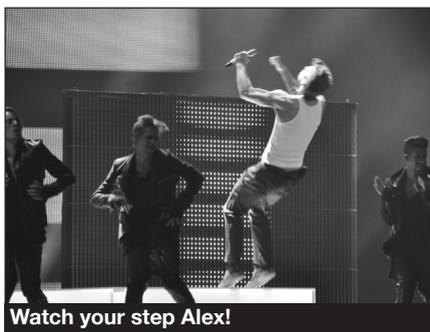


Ear plugs needed for Albania

minutes you begin to get a little weary of the repetitive drum beat and oft repeated chorus but all in all a pretty decent effort from two beautiful girls. I think modeling rather than a career in music may be the way forward for them.

25th SERBIA A retro song in a retro article. Something new brought to the contest from Serbia this year and a song I had much higher up in my rankings at one point. Nina didn't really do it for me vocally on either night. It seemed a bit of a race to get through all the lyrics in time and on more than one occasion she appeared out of breath. The retro vibe was visible in their outfits and in the stunning Austin Powers style backdrop which made the girls look so tiny at one point when the camera zoomed out.

24th DENMARK In a similar vein to that of Nina I thought that A Friend In London's Tim Schou lost a lot of his vocals especially during his run up the catwalk where everyone saw the full horror of the blouse he was wearing. Apart from that though I have nothing but praise for the boys and the endless joy of their Eurovision experience and the numerous fans they have made out of it. I'm a little bored of the song to be honest but I really liked the group and the novel way of saying thank you to The Netherlands for their 12 points!



Watch your step Alex!



The juries were too harsh on Blue

23rd LITHUANIA One that certainly did deliver vocally was the superb Evelina Sassenko. I thought the song got a bit of a raw deal during the pre-contest polls as it was obvious she had a voice to fill an arena as big as the Esprit and given Jade's success of ESC 2009 it was a sure thing that the juries were going to like it. Evelina had a beaming smile pretty much all the way through the song and even gave us a burst of sign language which was most helpful as I couldn't understand a lot of what she was singing anyway!

22nd AZERBAIJAN From *Drip Drop* to just drip and drip. I know the Azeris were desperate to win Eurovision and I'm all for a new nation being victorious, but the innocuous sounds of the CD version seemed to disappear on stage in Düsseldorf. And yet again we have a poorly performed winning entry which many aren't particularly happy with. The studio version of the song is really good – and I do mean that. On stage though, it was a bit bland.

21st SWEDEN I feel exactly the same way about Sweden except for the fact that visually this was in no way bland. Once again the Swedes really did put on a wonderfully staged performance with a slick routine and the glass smashing scenario. What did Eric do with his vocals though? Even Jedward put more

effort into their singing than he did. I could go on but I will conclude that just like the winning song this is one I much prefer from the studio.

☠ **Danger! Adult humour ahead!** ☠

20th ARMENIA How gutted they must be. It would've been humiliating enough not to qualify, especially with the strong diaspora they are fortunate to have, but to then see their fiercest rivals win as well probably had them shaking their apricots in disbelief. I'm not quite sure why I have this as high as I do as I remember nothing but my own annoyance when I heard it. It's just I find it infuriatingly catchy and their boxing theme was original and pretty well executed. Glad it didn't qualify though as it was all a bit tacky. See I never made a quip about being fisted or anything! (I know this will never make the mag!! – *Just this once Darren - Editor*)

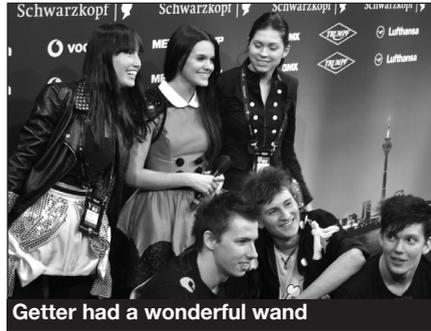
19th RUSSIA Alex was certainly outperformed by Eric and most definitely outscored by him as well. His only consolation is that vocally he was by far the stronger of the two and thus he finishes two places higher with me! I liked the dark intro which led into the more upbeat section. The song was pretty catchy too with an excellent back flip which could've gone so horribly wrong. Shame the dancers didn't go out

of synch and spell out “Axel” as that name would surely have appealed more to the largely German audience!

18th UNITED KINGDOM I wasn't a particularly big fan of Blue during their early successes of the noughties. As a Eurovision fan I watched them on numerous shows promoting *I Can* and have to say I was pretty impressed with the way they handled negative comments about the contest and they honestly felt proud to be representing us. Come the big night though they really weren't quite on the money vocally which was such a shame as the song when powered by Lee's stunning top notes is certainly impressive. Great result off the public but 22nd off the juries was a little harsh and cost us a much deserved top ten placing.

17th ESTONIA Another of the pre-contest favourites to bite the dust was Getter Jaani and her magical wand! Full of colour and vitality it was a Baltic Glee-fest with a brilliant backdrop, stage school choreography and sadly pre-school vocals. It was all a bit shrieky and shouty at times, but the strong chorus should've led it safely into the top 15 at least. I was surprised this scored higher off the jury than the public. Nothing is ever predictable at Eurovision!

16th BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA I know Dino drew first to sing in his semi-final but given how dull the final's opener was I only wish he'd opened that too. To see a slightly older man surrounded by various Balkan eccentrics arm waving and foot changing to a really catchy tune would be a pretty damn fine intro to most things! It was all just enough to make you smile, tap your feet and feel a little bit warmer inside. I'm glad it was the best placed of the former Yugoslav nations.



15th HUNGARY For once I was pretty much in agreement with the majority and had Hungary as one of my picks going into the contest. The drive from the verse into the chorus is always really powerful and Kati while certainly not perfect didn't vocally commit suicide either – although I still think the song is more dramatic in the original Hungarian language. I liked the way the dancers' outfits lit up at times, but Kati's dress was more hen night than sophisticated and the bling was totally over the top.

14th BELARUS If the Ukraine weren't being the Ukraine again with their song choosing fiascos then Belarus could've stolen their crown this year. I definitely preferred this second choice with all its nationalistic nonsense, but surely it's the least likely way of ensuring votes as you cannot vote for yourselves! Anastasiya was the best dressed singer in any of the shows I thought and the 'BelarEnglish' language was used to great effect again as they belted out *I Love Belarus*. In 2011, so did I.

13th LATVIA Well there are love songs and there are love songs and nobody can accuse the Latvians of recycling age old lyrics about hearts and flowers in this tune. Emils had a voice that seemed much older than him and I do mean that in a complimentary way and I still think



this is one of the catchiest entries of 2011. It all looked a little odd on stage with their matching dicky bows but totally different looks. It's as if Judith Chalmers and Elvis Costello had reproduced and these two were born with one each from their gene pools.

12th GERMANY A strong defence from the home team and while maintaining the trademarks of last year I thought this was a sexier, sultrier and much more in tune Lena this year. I preferred the song too, but that's to be expected given the 1980's style this seems to stem from which is very much my era. The staging was too dark and the dancers didn't work for me, but do come back again in a few years, as unlike Dana you will be guaranteed a spot in the final!

11th MALTA While so many songs took a bit of a tumble in my rankings Malta leapt up quite a few places. I always liked the song but the studio version just seemed to get lost among better entries. Full marks to Glen for a really strong vocal presentation on stage. Not so keen on the visual side of things as it was all a bit amateur talent show and I couldn't help but think of Ugly Betty's Justin Suarez throughout the song's duration. My absolute pet hate though was his verbally diarrhoeic bile he was spewing at the



end of the song as if he had just won an Oscar. Just a thank you if you don't mind.

10th BELGIUM I always knew I would like this when I heard it live and thus it proved so. I just love quality acapella and coupled with RoxorLoops stunning beat boxing this has shot up my rankings. If only it was a better song I would be positively moist! Great to see it do so much better than so many predicted and how very typical that the two songs that grew on me the most during Eurovision week both agonisingly failed to qualify for the final by the smallest of margins. Check out Witloof's version of *J'aime La Vie* on YouTube if you get a chance as it's really good.

9th BULGARIA When drawing first in the 2007 semi-final and still qualifying in a field of 28 songs I thought that maybe there was support for Bulgaria in Eurovision. Since then they have not made it out the smaller semi-finals which I believe to be unfair (save for the car crash of Krassimir in 2009). Poli was widely lauded on many fan forums after an excellent performance in Düsseldorf and surely it's songs like this one that the so called professionals on the juries should be promoting to the final. I really think they were harshly treated again this year.



Greece was a perfect fusion of styles

8th GEORGIA Including their banned entry of 2009 I think it's fair to say that Georgia has proved to be the most diverse Eurovision nation over the past five years. After last year's stunning ballad came this rock inspired number with some beautifully pronounced English from lead singer Sophio and rapping that really seemed to fit with the style of song. It was all excellently executed. I'm sure one year they will enter a whimsical mid-tempo slightly out of tune love song and probably win the show by 100 points! I think Sophio had an accident on her dress though just before she went on stage.

7th GREECE Congratulations then to Greece for their eighth consecutive top ten placing in the Eurovision final and I'm glad for them too. Here the modern met the ancient and the fusion of Loukas' superb singing and Stereo Mike's attempt at rap complete with break dancing set among a backdrop of Greek architecture was a welcome break from the standard Greek pop song served up in recent years. This definitely had one of the best choruses of the night. When I was studying music though my teacher had a beard, bad breath and patches under his armpits.....

6th NORWAY Well I bet Grandma never predicted 17th place for poor Stella. Now



Raphael's unassuming nature

I know she wasn't the best of singers in the show but from the opening bars of *Haba Haba*, with its steel band undertones to the dance moves of the chorus, this was just a deliciously catchy pop song. Its semi placing was surely the biggest injustice of the whole 2011 contest and I just felt the final would've been a better one with this somewhere in it. I mean, it was better than Finland.

5th PORTUGAL No such complaints with the position of the entry placed below it in the first semi-final. Protest songs are incredibly difficult to convey at Eurovision especially when sung in Portuguese by escapees from 1974. Given the struggle Portugal has had economically though in 2011 I do understand why they were victorious at their national final and the anthem it became in their homeland. I found the melody ludicrously infectious from the first time I heard it, but I hope to see Portugal back in the final next year with something a little more conventionally Portuguese!

4th ITALY It's a bit of a shock to me that I have Italy as high as this as I'm not really a huge fan of this Buble'esque jazzy kind of style. What sold the song for me though was the effortless transition from Italian into English and the unassuming nature of the performance from Raphael. You get



the impression that he would still be like this if playing to 50 people in a bar in his birthplace of Urbino. A stunning result on Italy's return and in my opinion it was thoroughly deserved.

3rd ROMANIA Lead singer David Bryan had a huge rant at the UK public for not giving Romania a point on his Facebook page before apologising for the drunken outburst said during an emotive time. Good on him I say – the guy seems really passionate about his music and has great determination to succeed. I loved *Change* for its pure unadulterated stab at being Euro cheese and while his stage presence left a lot to be desired, vocally he pretty much nailed it in both shows. Was that Richard Madeley playing the piano?

2nd MOLDOVA This was my favourite entry after I first heard all the songs and it hasn't fallen out of my top three at any stage. The sublimely ridiculous stage performance and outfits were a joy to watch and the song with its changes of tempo and underlying ska tones was extremely well crafted – and I was delighted to see such a high mark given to it from the UK. It's funny because in 2005 I couldn't stand this lot, but if they want to come back again with a song like this then they are more than welcome. And not a granny in sight.



1st AUSTRIA Firstly what seemed to be the issue with Nadine's hair? I certainly couldn't see anything wrong with it. Obviously nobody had any negative comments about her voice as I truly believe that she gave one of the finest vocals ever heard on a Eurovision stage, especially in the final when she was pretty much note perfect. When she hit some of those long notes towards the end of the song I got covered in goosebumps. The song took longer to hit with me – and I appreciate it's not to everyone's taste, but Eurovision 2011 was all about Austria for me. A stunningly awesome performance.

I know it's said every year but once again I must say a huge thank you to all that have sent votes and comments to me for inclusion in part two of this Retrospective. I have already started collating the points and will continue to do so over the coming weeks. Please feel free to send me yours if you haven't already done so and especially if you have anything to say – and you could see your name in the next issue! I can be contacted via post at Darren Jenkin, 11 Fairfield, Ludgvan, Penzance, Cornwall, TR20 8ES or you can email me at ahotspur@hotmail.co.uk. Hope you all have a brilliant summer and I will be back in the next issue of **Vision**. ♡

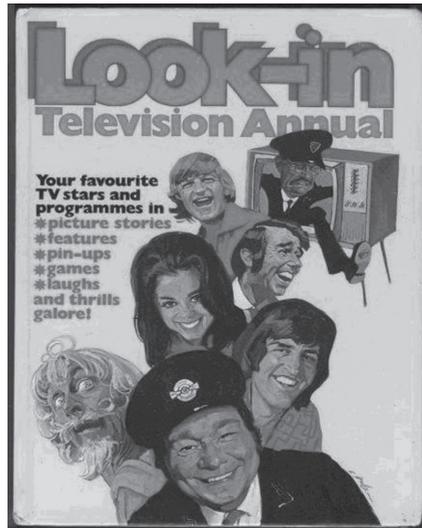
EUROCURIOS

More Eurovision curiosities by Thomas Latham

By complete accident, I recently came across a lovely lady called Dorothy, who just happens to be the ex-wife of Gerry Langley, who co-wrote *Ask Any Woman* for Sandie Shaw's *Song For Europe* (SFE) in 1967. She told me: "In 1967 I think we had the best five entries for the contest than at any other time, and I was very happy to be there at the time and be a part of the whole thing. It really was a great night and the voting was a very close run thing. In the end I think it was proved that the best song won." I'm not sure the voting was quite as close as Dorothy remembers, but certainly there were some excellent songs that year.

Look-In was known as the junior TV Times. Published from 1971 to 1994, it featured news, articles, posters and comic strips based on contemporary television (ITV) and pop music. In 2007, Graham Kibble-White compiled an 'annual' format look-back at some of the best of the magazine entitled *Look-In: The Best of the Seventies*. Among the comic strips based on ABBA (SE 1974), *Man About The House* and *Sapphire & Steel* are a number of articles, including one from the 26th October 1974 issue. This preview of forthcoming record releases features a mention of the single *Round Ev'ry Corner* (Philips 6006416) by new group Love Together (which is pictured in the article). The Eurovision connection is that members Steve Glen and Nichola Martin were later members of Rags, who came fourth in the 1977 SFE competition with the song *Promises Promises*. Nichola would then go on to

be part of Gem/Paris (SFE 1981) and to help Andy Hill form Bucks Fizz (UK 1981 when she was a behind the scenes backing vocalist) and the rest, as they say, is history. There is also a companion volume *Look-In: Best of the 80s*, which features an example of the Bucks Fizz comic strip as well as a reprint of an interview with member Bobby Gee (sic) at about the time of the release of the first single featuring Shelley Preston -

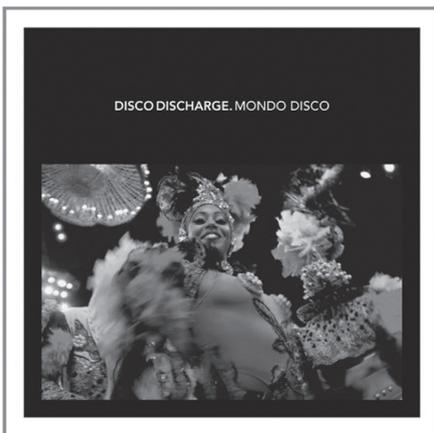


New Beginning.

Incidentally Nichola Martin was part of a duo in the very early 1970s called Nick & Nichola. They released two singles – *It's Beautiful* (Decca F 13046) and *Apple Crumble Mind* (Decca F 13215) and may (or may not) have had success in Japan. I can certainly find no hint of chart

success anywhere else. The male half of the duo (Eric Storm) has posted *Apple Crumble Mind* with an introduction in which he misremembers some facts, but it is still worth checking out if only for the publicity shots of the singers: www.youtube.com/watch?v=L0p_3kAksC8. An audio only version of the song can be found at: blogfiles.wfmu.org/DP/2007/12/363_126_Nick_and_Nickola_-_Apple_Crumble_Mind.mp3.

I recently came across a rather curious collection of songs on the CD *Disco Discharge. Mondo Disco* (Harmless LC 13237), which contains a number of tracks with Eurovision connections. Firstly there's the original 12" Mix of Patrick Juvet's (CH 1973) *Got A Feeling* (UK number 34 in 1978), then there's Liquid Gold's (SFE 1981) original album version of *My Baby's Baby* (US number 45 in 1979) – which runs to a full 6'10" of disco stomping loveliness – not to mention the previously unreleased Adrian Baker song *Don't Take The Night Away*. Adrian Baker was the writer/producer behind Liquid Gold and also contributed songs to the two SFE finals (*Miss Caroline Newley* was 11th in 1979 for M Squad and *Don't Panic* was second for Liquid Gold in 1979). All in all, it's rather a fun disco collection.



Or you could just buy it for all 9'41" of American crooner Andy Williams's disco version of *Love Story* – fantastic! Actually, I bought it as the only way to get hold of 5000 Volts's song *Doctor Kiss Kiss*.



Speaking of Liquid Gold, a compilation of some of the best bits from the Polo record label was released for download at the end of last year. Entitled *The Very Best Of Polo Records*, it includes four singles from Liquid Gold (including *Dance Yourself Dizzy* and *My Baby's Baby*) as well as two solo efforts from lead singer Ellie Hope (*Lucky* and *Don't Feel Sorry*). At the same time a series of four-track singles were released by Polo including Liquid Gold's *What's She Got?*, *Hit The Roof*, *One Of Us Fell In Love*, *Where Did We Go Wrong?* and *My Baby's Baby* usually containing remixes and sometimes B-sides as well.

A programme on Radio 4 on 1st April 2011 on the beginnings of Rock'n'Roll music in the UK featured a number of stars from the 1950s, 1960s and beyond

including Bruce Welch of The Shadows (UK 1975) and Vince Eager (SFE 1960). Incidentally, the latter's song is often said to be *Teenage Tears*, but that is only due to confusion with another song of about the same vintage. Eager's attempt at being the UK's Eurovision entrant in 1960 was actually called *Teenage Years*. Sadly, it does not seem to have ever been recorded.

Composers' versions of their Eurovision entries sometimes reveal another side to the songs, as shown, for example, by John Carter's *Knock, Knock, Who's There?*, which revealed how unsuited to the song was Mary Hopkin's soprano voice. However, sometimes they are little different from the versions we know so well. When Scott Fitzgerald came second to Celine Dion in 1988 with *Go*, the songwriter – Julie Forsyth of 1970s vocal group Guys n' Dolls (SFE 1979) – was arguably better known than the singer in this country (mind you, her father, Bruce, was better known by far than both of them put together – and still is). Her own recording of the song that year was little changed, except that it was sung as a duet with husband Dominic Grant (also of Guys n' Dolls). It



can be found on their 1988 CD *The Grant & Forsyth Story* (RCA PD 71758) released in the Netherlands, though it is probably the most lacklustre song on there.

Incidentally, in 2009 Julie Forsyth released four download-only cover versions of ABBA songs – her recordings

of *SOS*, *Gimme Gimme Gimme, Voulez-Vous* and *The Winner Takes It All*. In my opinion, it is only on the latter that she has managed to produce something other than a straightforward cover, and I remain unconvinced that her voice actually suits the selected tracks. Still, if you're interested they should be available in download stores now.

Finally, a quick vinyl round-up. *Te Voila*, Marie Chantal's French language cover of Kathy Kirby's *I Belong* (UK 1965) was released on a multi-artist EP together with versions of *N'Avoue Jamais* (FR 1965) by Eric Richard and *Poupee De Cire, Poupee De Son* (LU 1965) and *Va Dire A L'Amour* (MO 1965) both by Sonia Christie. It can be found on Disque Saphir LDP 5 559 as well as Week-End WE 100.001. Now if only I could find the ultra rare release on CD I'd be a happy man. For some strange reason an English language cover of *Rock Bottom* (UK 1977) was released in Portugal under licence from Pickwick International. Sung by Lynn Thomas and Paul Clark it can be found on Imavox IM-10.150. *Once*, the runner-up in the 1957 *Festival of British Popular Songs*, was recorded by Kirk Stevens and released on 7" single (which I knew about) and 78 (which I didn't) as the B-side to *This Silver Madonna*. Both seem to have the same catalogue number: Decca F 10863. A third, completely different, German version of Cliff Richard's 1968 Eurovision runner-up *Congratulations* has emerged. After *Man Gratuliert Mir* and *Kommt Gratulieren*, we now have the longer *Ihr Könnt Mir Alle - Mal Gratulieren* by Herman Moeserle on Populär 3056.

Thanks this time round go to Richard Crane for his Eurocurios correspondence. If you have any information about releases that may be of interest to others, or even just questions, then please send me an email: eurocurios@hotmail.co.uk. ♡

THE FESTIVAL OF BRITISH POPULAR SONGS 1956 Part 2

Continuing Thomas Latham's comprehensive review of the show that was the British precursor to participation in the Eurovision Song Contest

Heat 4 – 30th July 1956

For some reason a different production team handled this particular heat with Bryan Sears taking over as producer and Eileen Diss as designer.

Song number one was described as being a 'soft shoe', number two was a production number, number three was described as being 'pleasant' and considered for Johnny Brandon from the beginning, number four was a waltz that was considered as a duet, number five was another 'soft shoe' proposed for Frankie Vaughan and number six was the only song not to be categorised but was suggested as being suitable for Bruce Trent.

Among the songwriters, Norman

Newell, working at the time for the EMI group, was a respected lyricist who later wrote *Tears* (a massive hit for Ken Dodd), as well as the 1963 UK ESC entry *Say Wonderful Things* and returned to Eurovision by writing the English lyrics to *Après Toi* (as *Come What May*) and *Si (Go (Before You Break My Heart))* in 1972 and 1974 respectively.

Johnny Brandon, Doreen Duke and Kathie Kay were all booked on 11th July, and two days later Bill O'Connor, the Four Grads (consisting of three men and one woman), Lester Ferguson, Dora Bryan and the George Mitchell Singers were added to the list of artistes for this heat. Two dancers – Hermione Harvey and Peter Darrell – were also hired to

1956 FESTIVAL OF BRITISH POPULAR SONGS: Heat 4

No.	Pts	Pos	Perf	Title	Composer(s)	Writer(s)
1				<i>England Is Made For Us</i>	Ron Grainer	David Dearlove
2				<i>The Waiter Was Yawning</i>	Elton Box & Desmond Cox	
3		1st		<i>Ev'rybody Falls In Love With Someone</i>	Peter Hart & Norman Newell	
4				<i>There'll Be Orange Blossom In My Hair *</i>	Peter Hart	
				<i>Ev'rybody Falls In Love With Someone</i>	Peter Hart & Norman Newell	
5				<i>Just Another Day Gone By</i>	Billy Reid	
				<i>There'll Be Orange Blossom In Your Hair *</i>	Peter Hart	
				<i>The Waiter Was Yawning</i>	Elton Box & Desmond Cox	
				<i>Just Another Day Gone By</i>	Billy Reid	
6		10		<i>Andalucia</i>	Ruth Guthrie & Dorothy Dodd	

Orchestra: Eric Robinson Orchestra Quartet: Malcolm Lockyer Quartet Singers: George Mitchell Singers

* Song number 4 was written for a male vocalist and submitted as *There'll Be Orange Blossom In Your Hair*. The lyrics were changed for Kathie

appear in this heat. Dora Bryan sang her song in the role of a not-too-classy nightclub singer, and wore a three-quarter length lightish cocktail dress. Alan Page spoke in Spanish during the performance of *Andalucia*. Johnny Brandon sang *Ev'rybody Falls in Love With Someone* to pictures of Marilyn Monroe, Ava Gardner and Diana Dors. Wilfrid Thomas announced that the members of the quartet were, besides Malcolm Lockyer himself, three musicians with the surnames Price, Muddel and Weedon. Possibly the latter was famed guitarist Bert Weedon. The Four Grads were a Canadian vocal group.

Rehearsals and recording followed the pattern established in the previous heat with telephone lines being tested between 8.30pm and 9.00pm.

Little Ship, For You And Me and *No Love Could Be* were played in a three minute medley by the Malcolm Lockyer Quartet before the juries were called in the following order: Glasgow, Bristol, Birmingham, Manchester, Swansea,

Belfast, London, Bangor, Aberdeen, Plymouth and Leeds. Johnny Brandon performed a curtailed one minute reprise of *Ev'rybody Falls In Love With Someone* at the end of the show.

Although scheduled to run from 9.15pm-10.00pm, this time the heat under ran by ten minutes, possibly since two of the songs were only performed once. The broadcast finished at about 9.50pm and so was followed by an interlude film. These were pieces of film that could be inserted at short notice to cover such eventualities, the most famous probably being *The Potter's Wheel*.

The audience share slipped again to 15 percent against increased competition from ITV, which gained four percent for its plays in the 8.00pm-9.30pm slot, and variety shows from 9.30pm-10.00pm. The audience appreciation figure slumped to the lowest of the whole series at just 48, well down on Panorama's 69.

As well as producing appreciation index figures for all BBC television



30th July 1956 9.15pm-9.50pm

Publisher	Performer	Arranger	Dur.
Southern Music	Singers & Orch.	Arthur Wilkinson	2'20"
Box & Cox	Four Grads & Quartet	Malcolm Lockyer	1'50"
Cinephonic Music	Johnny Brandon & Orch.	Alan Bristow	2'25"
Dash Music	Kathie Kay & Orch.	Bert Thompson	2'15"
Cinephonic Music	Quartet	Malcolm Lockyer	1'50"
Macmelodies	Doreen Duke & Orch.	Bert Thompson	2'55"
Dash Music	Bill O'Connor & Quartet	Malcolm Lockyer	1'50"
Box & Cox	Dora Bryan & Orch.	Arthur Wilkinson	2'25"
Macmelodies	Four Grads & Quartet	Malcolm Lockyer	2'10"
Liber-Southern	Alan Page, Singers & Orch.	P. Knight	3'15"

Kay so she sang it instead as *There'll Be Orange Blossom In My Hair*

1956 FESTIVAL OF BRITISH POPULAR SONGS: Heat 5

No.	Pts	Pos	Perf	Title	Composer(s)	Writer(s)
1	30	2nd	1	<i>Little Golden Ring</i>	Tommie Connor	
2	9	5th=	2	<i>I'm Lucky</i>	Harry New	Derek Jones
3	39	1st	3	<i>Wibbly Wobbly Moon</i>	Vivian Ellis	Howard Barnes
			4	<i>I'm Lucky</i>	Harry New	Derek Jones
4	29	3rd	5	<i>Too Much In Love</i>	Desmond O'Connor & Max Francis	
5	18	4th	6	<i>All I'm Waiting For Is You</i>	Freddie Poser	David Dearlove
			7	<i>Too Much In Love</i>	Desmond O'Connor & Max Francis	
6	9	5th=	8	<i>The Fellow Who Has Got No Time For Romance</i>	Jack Strachey	Edward Montagu
			9	<i>All I'm Waiting For Is You</i>	Freddie Poser	David Dearlove
			10	<i>Wibbly Wobbly Moon</i>	Vivian Ellis	Howard Barnes
			11	<i>The Fellow Who Has Got No Time For Romance</i>	Jack Strachey	Edward Montagu
			12	<i>Little Golden Ring</i>	Tommie Connor	

Orchestra: Stanley Black Orchestra Quartet: Bill McGuffie Quartet Singers: George Mitchell Singers

How the regions voted

No.	Pts+	Pos	Title	Newcastle	Plymouth	Birmingham	Cardiff	Edinburgh	Nottingham	Belfast	Bristol	Glasgow	Bangor	London
1	30	2nd	<i>Little Golden Ring</i>	1	4	4	2	1	0	5	2	5	0	6
2	9	5th=	<i>I'm Lucky</i>	1	0	0	0	2	4	1	0	0	0	1
3	39	1st	<i>Wibbly Wobbly Moon</i>	4	1	1	5	2	4	1	5	4	11	1
4	29	3rd	<i>Too Much In Love</i>	4	3	5	0	3	3	3	4	1	1	2
5	18	4th	<i>All I'm Waiting For Is You</i>	1	2	1	4	4	1	1	1	1	0	2
6	#9	5th=	<i>The Fellow Who Has Got No Time For Romance</i>	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0

+ The total available votes should be 132 (11x12) but totals actually add up to 134. The problem appears to be with the votes for song number 6.

Although recorded as coming fifth equal with nine points, this song only seems to have scored seven points (and therefore to have come last) when adding the points up jury by jury. Perhaps the scoreboard mis-recorded an extra two votes for it somewhere.

programmes the Audience Research department also produced about 12 more detailed reports each week. Viewing panels were sent questionnaires to complete for selected forthcoming shows. For the first time, the Festival of British Popular Songs was chosen for the production of such a report with Heat 4. The Audience Research Report showed that Johnny Brandon was the most popular artist but that overall the songs were considered poor. As one Architect's Assistant put it: "Laudable as its aim may be this series suffers from mediocrity due entirely to the incredibly low standard of the numbers entered."

Meanwhile reaction to the compere was only moderately favourable. While some thought Wilfrid Thomas was "delightfully natural and friendly", others thought he was "too talkative", "too facetious" and "altogether too offhand and casual".

Heat 5 – 27th August 1956

Heat 5 was broadcast from the Radio Show then being held at Earl's Court instead of from Lime Grove studios as usual. In the event of strike action, arrangements were made to switch it to the Television Theatre on Shepherd's Bush Green or Riverside Studio 1.

In July, it was noted that improvements

27th August 1956 9.25pm-10.10pm

Publisher	Performer	Arranger	Dur.
Valando Music	Kentones, Orch. & Quartet	A. Bristow & B. McGuffie	2'45"
Essex Music	Dennis Hale & Quartet	Bill McGuffie	2'20"
New World Publishers	Petula Clark & Orch.	Bert Thompson	2'20"
Essex Music	Kentones & Orch.	A. Bristow	2'25"
World Wide Music	Janie Marden, Singers & Quartet	Bill McGuffie	2'40"
B. F. Wood Music	Singers & Orch.	Ken Jones	1'50"
World Wide Music	Quartet & Orch.	Bill McGuffie	2'20"
Sun Music	Janie Marden & Orch.	W. Stott	1'55"
B. F. Wood Music	Petula Clark & Quartet	Bill McGuffie	2'00"
New World Publishers	Laurie Payne & Quartet	Bill McGuffie	2'00"
Sun Music	Orch.	J. Gregory	1'40"
Valando Music	Ormonde Douglas, Singers & Orch.	Arthur Wilkinson	3'00"

to the strength of the television signal in the Nottingham area might soon mean that it would be possible to have a jury in the East Midlands for the first time. The absence of one in that part of the country had been noted in the early stages of planning and a jury in that city did indeed take part for the first time with this heat.

Song number one was a novelty number considered suitable for Shirley Abicair, number two was 'bright' and a 'slow bounce', number three was a 'soft shoe' and the only song (of all 36) to be described as 'pop', number four was a waltz that was initially considered for a duet, number five was up-tempo and number six was a good production number with 'bounce'.

Vivian Ellis was a well known songwriter who had written for musicals and revues from the 1920s to the 1950s. Jack Strachey is perhaps best known for co-writing the song *These Foolish Things*.

Janie Marden seems to have been the first singer to be booked for the heat on 18th June. In the middle of July, Petula Clark was approached and was available but happened then to be on holiday. If she liked the numbers sent to her when she returned, she was to be booked to sing two songs. Extra Roxy Brown was hired to appear with Laurie Payne during his performance of *Wibbly Wobbly Moon*. For

some reason the latter was only available from 4.30pm on the day of broadcast. Yvan Bravard was hired to walk on stage during Janie Marden's number and present her with some flowers when she sang the line "One day he noticed the sunbeams that danced in her hair". The Stanley Black Orchestra containing 39 musicians (outfitted with shirts from Marks & Spencer in collar sizes ranging from 14½ to 17) and the George Mitchell Singers were to be shown on screen in this particular heat. As well as playing with his quartet, Bill McGuffie played *Too Much In Love* as a piano solo backed by the orchestra. Kathy O'Hagan was booked to play the piano in rehearsals on the morning of the broadcast since no BBC accompanists were available.

Since the programme was due to be broadcast from the 23rd National Radio & Television Exhibition at Earls Court, rehearsals took place this time in the TV studio there. The singers, orchestra and quartet rehearsed the day before (Sunday 26th August) in the music room and room 4 of the canteen block of television centre, before production moved to Earls Court. There was a pre-rehearsal there from 5.00pm to 10.00pm on the Sunday followed by the camera rehearsal from 10.30am on the day of the broadcast (Monday 27th August).

1956 FESTIVAL OF BRITISH POPULAR SONGS: Heat 6

No.	Pts	Pos	Perf	Title	Composer(s)	Writer(s)
1			1	<i>Twenty-one Candles</i>	Hedley J. Higgins	Vera J. Higgins
2		1st	2	<i>Cloudy Moon</i>	Billy Hamilton	
3			3	<i>With All My Loving Heart</i>	Ronald F Wakley	T. Harrison
4			4	<i>Tiger Bay</i>	David Heneker	Eric Maschwitz
			5	<i>With All My Loving Heart</i>	Ronald F Wakley	T. Harrison
			6	<i>Cloudy Moon</i>	Billy Hamilton	
5			7	<i>Tell Me My Heart</i>	Eric Pickering	
			8	<i>Twenty-one Candles</i>	Hedley J. Higgins	Vera J. Higgins
			9	<i>Tell Me My Heart</i>	Eric Pickering	
6			10	<i>The Heart of A Child</i>	Michael Austin	Cole Bourne
			11	<i>Tiger Bay</i>	David Heneker	Eric Maschwitz
			12	<i>The Heart of A Child</i>	Michael Austin	Cole Bourne

Orchestra: George Melachrino Orchestra Quartet: Frank Weir Quintet Singers: George Mitchell Singers

A Mastiff dog was required for Petula Clark's performance of *All I'm Waiting For Is You*. In fact, two Mastiffs were brought along so the producer could choose the most suitable. The script, however, mentions a Great Dane walking into shot with a packet of fish and chips just before the end of the song. The dog was required for rehearsals at Earls Court on the Sunday from 5.30pm to 6.00pm. A typewriter was used on stage during Janie Marden's second performance.

Petula Clark was to provide her own clothes for her two performances, while Laurie Payne was provided with a striped blazer and white trousers for his. The Quartet wore navy blazers with 'Festival' badges and the orchestra wore dinner jackets.

The Bill McGuffie Quartet played a minute and a quarter of the winning song from the previous heat before Wilfrid Thomas called the juries for their votes. This week they were called in the following order: Newcastle, Plymouth, Birmingham, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Nottingham, Belfast, Bristol, Glasgow, Bangor and London. Our knowledge of the voting is, once again, not quite complete. However, it seems that Bangor giving 11 out of 12 votes to *Wibbly Wobbly Moon* effectively brought an otherwise

close contest to a conclusion. Petula Clark performed a reprise of winner *Wibbly Wobbly Moon* to close the programme.

The show was broadcast from 9.25pm-10.10pm, between part four of the documentary series *Away From It All* and the outside broadcast (O.B.) *A Germ Of Civilisation*. The audience share recovered slightly to 17 percent, losing just one percent from the documentary. Afterwards television sets were turned off in droves since the O.B. gained only a seven percent share. However, the ITV network continued to make gains in terms of audience. Its plays from 9.00pm-9.30pm won a six percent share, though this dropped to four percent for the variety shows scheduled during the next half hour and then to three percent for a mixed bunch of programmes transmitted from 10.00pm. The appreciation index for this heat also staged a comeback rising to 57.

This particular heat was telerecorded by the BBC to be shown to the European Broadcasting Union and various member networks of Eurovision in the planning stages for the 1957 Eurovision Song Competition in Frankfurt. The telerecording was later lent to RIF in Paris and subsequently requested by Belgian television. It is doubtful that any of the other heats were recorded in this way and, unfortunately, it is extremely

24th September 1956 9.15pm-10.00pm

Publisher	Performer	Arranger	Dur.
De Montford Music	Coronets, Orch. & Quintet	B. Oliver or M. Sammes	2'10"
Mayflower Music	Jean Campbell & Orch.	W. Hill Bowen or A. Bristow	2'30"
Grosvenor Music	Anne Shelton & Orch.	B. Oliver	2'40"
Peter Maurice Music	Tony Brent & Quintet	B. Oliver or W. Hill-Bowen	
Grosvenor Music	Frank Weir & Orch.		
Mayflower Music	Lester Ferguson & Orch.	W. Hill Bowen or A. Bristow	
	Alma Warren & Orch.	B. Oliver or B. Thompson	2'15"
De Montford Music	Jean Campbell & Quintet	B. Oliver or M. Sammes	
	Lester Ferguson & Quintet	B. Oliver or B. Thompson	
Pickwick Music	Anne Shelton & Orch.		2'30"?
Peter Maurice Music	Lee Lawrence, Singers & Orch.	B. Oliver or W. Hill-Bowen	3'15"
Pickwick Music	Coronets & Singers (unaccompanied)	Bill Shepherd	

unlikely that this one telerecording still exists somewhere today.

Heat 6 – 24th September 1956

Song number one was described as a 'soft shoe' that was initially considered for Alma Cogan, number two was a slow ballad regarded as having a good lyric, number three was also a slow ballad, number four was a 'bounce', number five was a beguine type ballad and number six was a ballad in the *Never Walk Alone* vein.

Songwriter David Heneker later had success with musicals, penning *Half A Sixpence* and *Charley Girl* among others. *Tiger Bay* was published in 1956 (before 26th November when the British Museum acquired a copy) with a picture of Lee Lawrence on the cover. However, no mention was made of the festival.

Jimmy Young was initially booked to sing one or two numbers as early as 14th June but was subsequently replaced for some reason. Likewise, Marion Keene initially seems to have agreed to appear, having been sent a copy of one song, but was replaced some time after

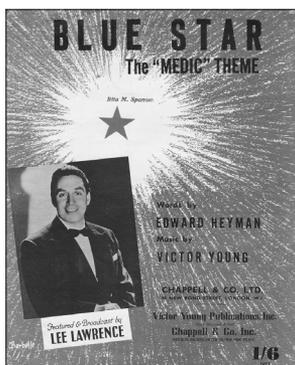
10th September, possibly by Alma Warren. By that stage all the other singers had been sent their songs. On 10th September, Bill Shepherd (one of the Coronets) was sent his two songs. He was asked to produce a vocal arrangement for *The Heart Of A Child* with no orchestral accompaniment.

He was also informed that the first chorus of *Twenty-One Candles* would be played by the orchestra alone, the first half of the second chorus would be played by the Frank Weir Quartet and the second half sung by the Coronets accompanied by the Quartet.

With All My Loving Heart seems to have originally been intended to have a clarinet solo

for its second performance, since this is mentioned in a memo dated 18th September. However, on the night this seems to have been played by a soprano saxophone instead.

Both performer rehearsals in the music room and camera rehearsals in Studio G started at 10.00am this time. The producer's secretary for this heat was Sally Adams and, although her script was kept for the file, this



LEE LAWRENCE

1956 FESTIVAL OF BRITISH POPULAR SONGS: Final

No.	Pts	Pos	Perf	Title	Composer(s)	Writer(s)
1		1st	1	<i>Ev'rybody Falls In Love With Someone</i>	Peter Hart & Norman Newell	
2		3rd	2	<i>For You And Me</i>	Jack Penn	Sean Vincent
3		2nd	3	<i>Little Ship</i>	Terry Roper	Irene Roper
4			4	<i>Wibbly Wobbly Moon</i>	Vivian Ellis	Howard Barnes
			5	<i>Little Ship</i>	Terry Roper	Irene Roper
5			6	<i>Cloudy Moon</i>	Billy Hamilton	
			7	<i>Ev'rybody Falls In Love With Someone</i>	Peter Hart & Norman Newell	
6			8	<i>No Love Could Be</i>	Peter Arne	Jack Booker
			9	<i>For You And Me</i>	Jack Penn	Sean Vincent
			10	<i>Cloudy Moon</i>	Billy Hamilton	
			11	<i>No Love Could Be</i>	Peter Arne	Jack Booker
			12	<i>Wibbly Wobbly Moon</i>	Vivian Ellis	Howard Barnes

Orchestra: *Eric Robinson Orchestra* conducted by *Eric Robinson*¹, *Stanley Black*² and *George Melachrino*³

Quartet: (The script says that all the small musicians' groups were at the final but other records are unclear on this.)

Singers: *George Mitchell Singers*

does not seem to have recorded the votes in the same way that her predecessor's did.

After the Frank Weir Quintet had performed *Wibbly Wobbly Moon* from the previous heat, juries in Manchester, Edinburgh, Nottingham, Cardiff, Bristol, Belfast, Plymouth, London, Newcastle, Leeds and Aberdeen were called to give their votes. It is possible that there was no winning reprise at the end of this week's show.

Broadcast from 9.15pm-10.00pm, the final heat was sandwiched between Panorama and the outside broadcast Shop Window Fashion From The Savoy Hotel. The audience kept steady at 17 percent, despite a further improvement in figures for ITV. The latter's schedule now seems to have become fixed for Mondays, with Croydon and Winter Hill showing the series Gun Law from 9.00pm-9.30pm, while Lichfield transmitted Douglas Fairbanks Presents: Success Train, giving the network a total of seven percent of the adult audience. Thereafter, all three ITV regions scheduled the show Son Of Fred (featuring Spike Milligan and Peter Sellers), which gained a total share of five percent. The heat's audience appreciation figure also stayed at 57.

The budget for this heat was £1,649 but this was exceeded by just over £1,000 - the actual cost being £2,651.

The Final – 22nd October 1956

Although jurors had been warned by Wilfrid Thomas to ignore the performances and concentrate on the songs, the production team felt that individual singers had a great deal to do with helping songs to win their heats. They were therefore keen to keep the original performers for this show as far as possible. Even extra Roxy Brown was rehired for an appearance in *Wibbly Wobbly Moon*. Shirley Abicair and Ronnie Carroll were booked to sing their winning songs in the final as early as 14th June, while Carole Carr and Petula Clark were booked to sing theirs on 1st August and 4th September respectively. Attempts to book Johnny Brandon on 1st August to sing his heat winner were unsuccessful, since he was to be in America at the time of the final. Although Teddy Johnson was being considered as a replacement for him by 13th October, Brandon was eventually replaced by Dennis Lotis. Meanwhile, Jean Campbell and Laurie Payne were booked only a week before transmission on 15th October. Only six members of the George Mitchell Singers were required for

22nd October 1956 9.15pm-10.05pm

Publisher	Performer	Arranger	Dur.
Cinephonic Music	Keynotes, Orch.1 & Quartet	Alan Bristow	2'35"
Mills Music	Ronnie Carroll & Orch. ²	Bert Thompson	3'10"
B.Feldman & Co	Shirley Abicair & Orch. ¹	Bert Thompson	2'10"
New World Publishers	Laurie Payne & Quartet	Bill McGuffie	1'05"
B. Feldman & Co	Quartet & Choir	Bill McGuffie	2'20"
Mayflower Music	Jean Campbell & Orch. ³	Alan Bristow	2'45"
Cinephonic Music	Dennis Lotis & Orch. ¹	T. Osborne	2'00"
Schauer & May	Carole Carr & Orch. ³	W. Hill-Bowen	2'35"
Mills Music	Semprini (piano solo)	Semprini	2'00"
Mayflower Music	Lester Ferguson & Orch. ³	W. Hill-Bowen	2'35"
Schauer & May	Max Jaffa & Orch. ³	W. Stott	2'35"
New World Publishers	Petula Clark & Orch. ²	Bert Thompson	2'15"

the final, none of whom were to appear on screen.

On 9th October Yvonne Littlewood advised Johnny Johnston of the Keynotes of how their performance of *Ev'rybody Falls In Love With Someone* would be arranged. The first chorus would be played by the orchestra, the second by the Bill McGuffie Quartet and the third would be performed by the Keynotes accompanied by the Quartet.

Although we don't know exactly how songs were staged, many of them were performed in front of plain black curtains. Certainly no special set dressing was required for either performance of *Cloudy Moon*. Others required only a minimum of items. Dennis Lotis performed his winning song in front of three framed enlargements of photographs of Marilyn Monroe, Diana Dors and Ava Gardner. Meanwhile (presumably saved from the fourth heat), Ronnie Carroll sang next to a nine foot silver birch tree that had been sprayed white.

Occasionally more elaborate sets were used. Petula Clark's rendition of *Wibbly Wobbly Moon* involved exactly 100 stone foot-square slabs dressed with moss, plus a stock watertight tank measuring six by five feet by one foot deep and painted with glossy black oil paint. Floating on

the water in the tank (fastened to the bottom to prevent them from drifting) were 12 artificial lily pads of assorted sizes (up to eight inches in diameter) and five open flowers. A single chair was provided in front of stock black velvet curtains measuring 30 x 20 feet, which were decorated with hanging blossom and creepers.

Rehearsals started at 10.00am in the music room (with the orchestra) at Television Centre and the King's Theatre (where the quartets and quintets were only required in the morning).

The final was the only programme that seems to have an audience, since it was broadcast from the King's Theatre, Hammersmith. Even so, curiously, the audience was asked not to applaud songs since this might influence the juries. They did, however, applaud the songwriters when they were shown in the auditorium just before the voting.

A lack of dressing rooms at the theatre for the number of artists involved meant that the following had to share them: Ronnie Carroll and Laurie Payne, Carole Carr and Jean Campbell, the three male Keynotes, and the three conductors and Max Jaffa.

The London jury was also assembled in a private room at the theatre. It is possible

that their spokesperson was a Mrs Cruikshank and that their 12 members gave *Little Ship* six points, *For You And Me* five points and *No Love Could Be* one point. The Glasgow spokesman was proposed as a Mr James Connolly, who was the Scottish representative of the Hobner Accordion Company. The rest of that jury consisted of a company secretary, an insurance clerk, two students, an apprentice tracer, a commercial traveller, two owners of a garage, a secretary and her friend and Gordon Reed (the show columnist of the Daily Mail).

For the final, the 11 juries were called in the following order: Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, London, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Belfast, Bristol, Plymouth, Cardiff and Bangor.

At the end of the show an announcement was made about the 1957 Eurovision Song Competition. Over the winning song a caption appeared on screen saying "You are listening to the winning number".

An Audience Research Report was undertaken for the final in which it was estimated that 19 percent of the adult population had watched the show. Granted a full hour from 9.15pm-10.15pm, it again followed Panorama (with an audience of 22 percent) and was followed by the Outside Broadcast Inventor's Club (15 percent). Its reaction index of 62 was slightly higher than the average for the heats of 57 but still below the Light Entertainment average for shows broadcast between July and September of 65. Both programmes broadcast on either side of it scored indexes in the 70s.

According to the report, Carole Carr, Lester Ferguson, Shirley Abicair, Petula Clark and Semprini were the most popular performers, with the others making little impression either way. Although some felt that Wilfrid Thomas had been "delightfully informal" and "pleasantly natural", others considered him to be "too

off-hand" and thought he had talked too much. Overall the majority view was that the idea of the show was a good one but that the songs were poor and, although a new series would be welcomed, this was only on condition that the songs would be better. As one member of the viewing panel put it: "The basic idea of this series was commendable and it could have been a good show but oh! those songs! Nothing remotely resembling a hit among them and all in the same 'lush' style."

Each of the three ITV transmitters broadcast different programmes from 9.00pm-9.30pm, when viewers could choose between Frontier Doctor, Douglas Fairbanks Presents: 90th Day and Gun Law, which between them were watched by six percent of the adult population. Then from 9.30pm they again combined to transmit the variety show Son Of Fred (five percent).

The final received an increased budget allocation of £1,700. Nevertheless, there was again an overspend and it actually cost £2,616.

Aftermath

Ronnie Waldman thought that the winner was "by no means a world-beater" but nevertheless urged Light Entertainment Producers to use it in their shows, if possible, to help support British songwriting in future contests.

The winning song (*Ev'rybody Falls In Love With Someone*) was recorded by Don Rennie (produced by George Martin) on 1st November (GBR 45 Parlophone 45-R 4249) and by Matt Monro on 10th November 1956 (Decca F 10816). It was also recorded by Dickie Henderson as the B-side to *A House With Love In It* (Oriole CB1346). Monro's version has appeared on a number of his CDs over the years as well as being available as a download.

Few of the other songs seem to have attracted much interest. On 25th October,

Waldman received a telegram to say that record companies were reluctant to record the song that had come second (*Little Ship*) unless the BBC were prepared to support it. Nevertheless, two recordings of this song were made, the first with vocals by Jackie Lee (SFE 1962) with Frank Marlowe and his Orchestra (Polydor BM 6045 78) and the second (on a 78 rpm) by Michael Adams and his Orchestra (with a vocal group and lead vocals by Julie Dawn – Oriole CB1347).

A good place to find some versions of the top two songs in the 1956 Festival of British Popular Songs is the World Record Club EP *Top In Pops* (R 52), which features Dickie Henderson's version of winner *Ev'rybody Falls In Love With Someone* and Julie Dawn's *Little Ship*. The EP is rounded off with tracks by Bryan Johnson (UK 1960). Copies are rare but do turn up occasionally and are well worth looking out for as these recordings are otherwise extremely hard to find.

From Heat 6, *Tiger Bay* was recorded and released by Billy Daniels on his EP *Magic Touch of Billy Daniels* (Polydor - BM 6038). *The Heart Of A Child* from the same heat was recorded by Malcolm Vaughan and released as the B-side to *My Special Angel* (HMV 45-POP 429). Released at the end of 1957, Vaughan's single reached a high of number three in a 14 week run. It could be argued therefore that *The Heart Of A Child* was, in a way, the biggest selling song from the contest. It can be found on the CDs *EMI Presents the Magic of Malcolm Vaughan* and *The Very Best of Malcolm Vaughan*. The song also appeared on the soundtrack to the 1999 film Felicia's Journey.

Although so few songs were recorded,

a few more were eventually published as sheet music for the public to buy – *For You And Me* and *Tiger Bay* in 1956 and *Andalucia* and *This Love Is Mine* in 1957. Luckily, the lyrics of all 36 songs taking part in the festival were recorded in the scripts and so at least that part of them has been preserved for posterity.

Appearing in the festival does not seem to have affected the success of any of the artists who appeared in it. Ronnie Hilton and Anne Shelton both had number one records during 1956, while the George Melachrino Orchestra, Ronnie Carroll, Alma Cogan, The Johnston Brothers, Tony Brent and even selector Cyril Stapleton all had chart hits during the year. Neither did appearing put people off returning in later years. The competition had obviously not yet acquired its 'kiss of death' reputation.

Even before the end of the 1956 series, the BBC and the MPA met on 10th August 1956 to discuss

the format for a possible second series, the winner of which (and at that stage possibly also the runner-up) would go through to the Eurovision Song Competition in Germany the following year. A follow-up series was by no means certain, however. Although the MPA was interested in repeating the exercise in 1957, Ronald Waldman wrote to them the day after the final to say that no decision had as yet been taken on whether or not to mount another festival. As we now know, a second and final series of the Festival of British Popular Songs, producing the UK's first Eurovision entry, was indeed broadcast in 1957, which will be the subject of a future article. ♣



PETULA CLARK

MANDY AND JUDE IN

Good friends and OGAE UK members, Mandy Norman and Jude Habib took Düsseldorf by storm. Dressed in their lovely Union Jack outfits and blue wigs in honour of our representatives this year, they certainly carried the flag. Here is their photo journal featuring the weird and wacky world of Eurovision!



Mandy

Jude



INVADE DÜSSELDORF



MINIPOP ICONS

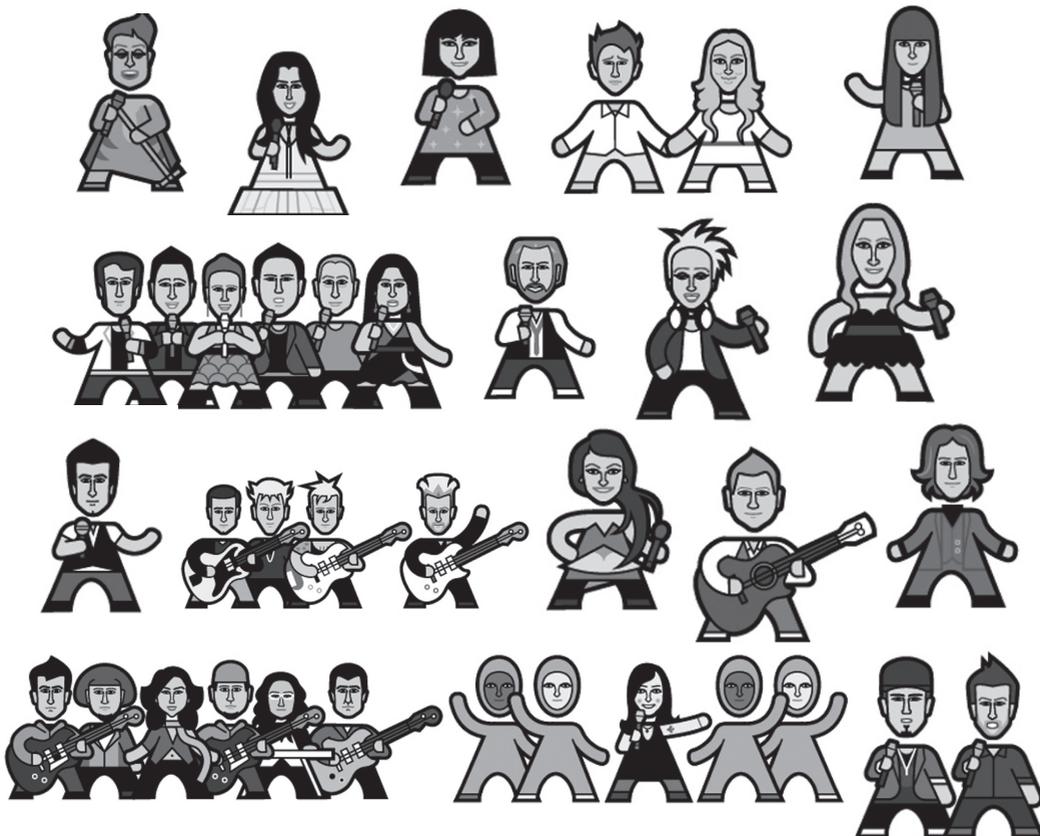
In our review of Düsseldorf we teased you with an image of a 'minipop icon' of Blue by talented graphic designer and OGAE UK member, Ben Morris. Ben produced an image (or two) for all of the 43 entrants for this year's Eurovision. His button-badges were much sought after among those at the press centre – as were his t-shirts. Fellow OGAE UK members did their best to promote Ben's designs. Andrew Main even managed to persuade Alex Sparrow to wear 'his' one. The Russian seemed very pleased with the result.

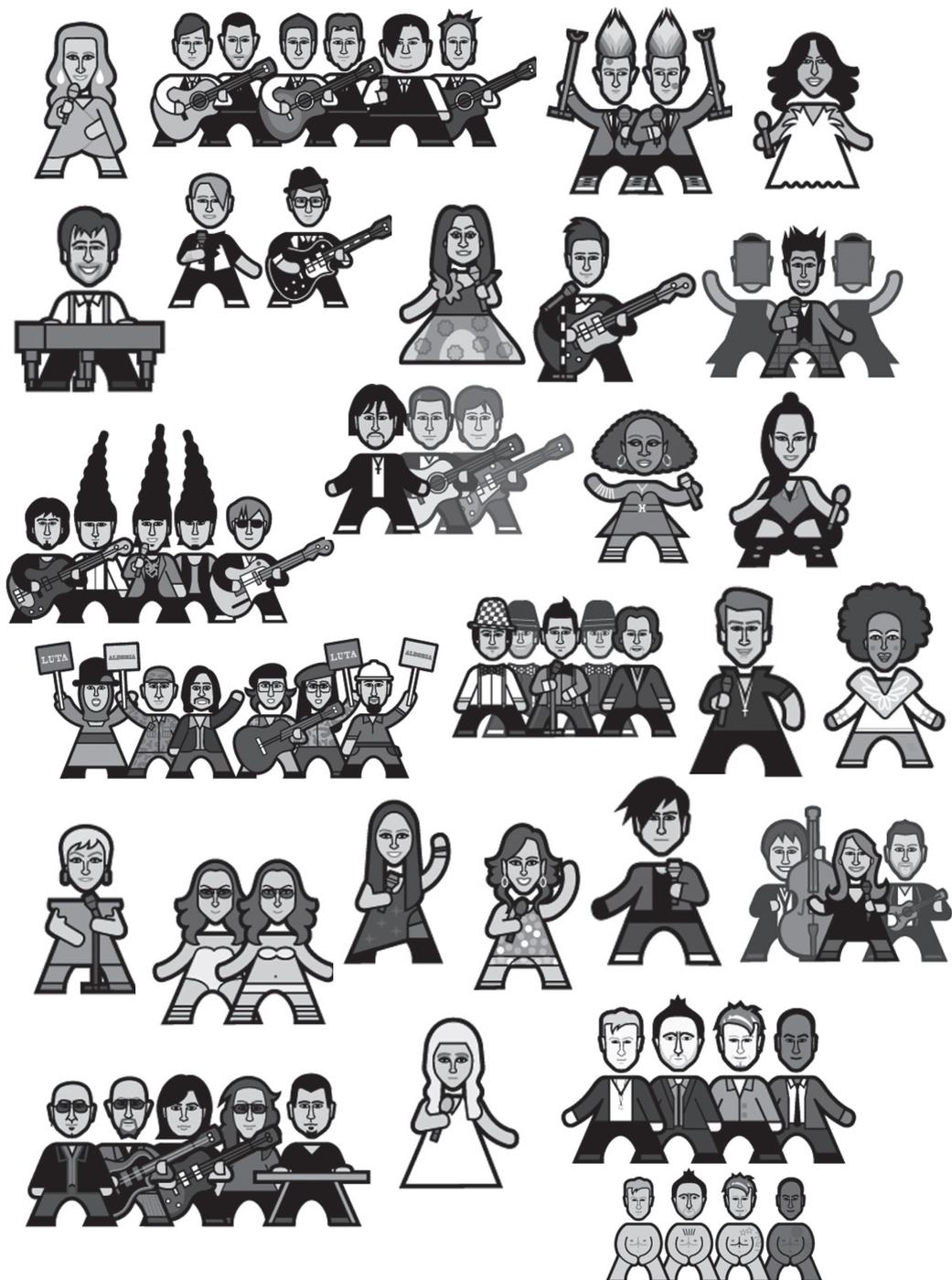
With any luck, we'll see more of Ben's designs, possibly officially, in Baku next year. In the meantime if you would like more information about Ben's work, please contact him on ben.morris@btinternet.com.

Here are all of Ben's designs of this year's performers. Enjoy!



PHOTO: DAVID ELDER





WHATEVER HAPPENED TO... BILL MAYNARD

Bill Maynard is the subject of the latest in the on-going series focussing on people who have participated over the years in the Song For Europe. **Marcus Keppel-Palmer** looks at the career of the man who acted for many years in Heartbeat

Claude Greengrass. Remember him – the cheeky chappie over the years in the cop show set in the sixties and nostalgia fest, Heartbeat? Of course you do, but did you know that Bill Maynard also performed in the Song For Europe, trying, unsuccessfully, to represent the UK at Eurovision? Well, here is his story.

Bill, or rather Walter Williams as is his real name, was born in Surrey on 28th October 1928 and his family moved to Leicestershire when he was young. Bill always wanted to be on stage and started off at the age of eight doing different types of act. A spell of scarlet fever didn't slow him down, and he took time to learn the ukelele while he was convalescing. Bill played comic parts in his act, including one drag act (aged nine) singing a song called *I'm Knitting A Singlet For Cecil* and in another act singing cowboy songs. Bill trod the variety stage during his teen years, initially billed as Little Billy Williams, then Bill Williams. He decided to change his name for his professional career to Bill Maynard, based on seeing a poster for the sweet, Maynard's Wine Gums. Although his variety act was

mainly comedy, the tradition in those days was that a performance had to finish with a song – so Bill became an able singer too. He also became a band singer for a while in his teens, and recorded for Decca, EMI and other companies.



However, it wasn't until 1949 that Bill actually attained his first professional theatre role when he successfully auditioned for Ian Carmichael's Theatre Review – Bill would team up again with Carmichael in the TV series *The Royal*. Bill always hankered after being a stage actor but always seemed more suited to comedy. In the 1950s, on the variety

circuit, comedians would always play at holiday camps and it was at Butlin's in Skegness that Maynard met up with Terry Scott (later of Terry & June) and formed a long lasting partnership. The pairing contrasted perfectly – as in all the best comedy double-acts – with Scott frenetic and Maynard laid-back.

Bill and Terry found themselves regularly on BBC radio and in 1955 they landed their own television situation comedy, *Great Scott It's Maynard*, in which their characters shared a flat. The series proved hugely popular and ran for

three seasons, and in the latter seasons featured Shirley Eaton, Hugh Lloyd (who would work with Terry Scott in television in the 1960s) and Pat Coombs (who would go on to star in *Till Death Us Do Part*). After three successful seasons of the show Maynard was anxious to do more straight acting and so he split up his partnership with Scott.

So with straight acting in mind, it would seem strange that Maynard went directly into pantomime, spending the 1956 Christmas season playing at Sutton in *Aladdin* with Maureen Kershaw. In 1957 the BBC decided to enter the Eurovision Song Contest for the first time, using an almost Melodifestival format of three heats,

each with six songs, and then a final of six songs. The Festival of British Popular Songs ran weekly from 22nd January 1957, and Bill was engaged to perform in the third heat. Curiously, almost all of the songs in the heats were performed twice, with different performers and different arrangements each time. Bill was asked to perform the song *Don't Cry Little Doll*, written by

Ron Grainer and David Dearlove, in its second outing backed by the Frank Chacksford Orchestra. The first version of the song had been performed by vocal harmony group, The Kentones, a quartet who were made-up of Celia Wright, Ken Flower, Vincent O'Hagan and Leslie Want, who were Scottish, Welsh, Irish and English respectively. However, that was not his only song in the heat as three songs later, Bill duetted with Shirley Eaton, his colleague from *Great Scott It's Maynard*, on the song *Choose A Cosy Corner* backed by the George Mitchell

Singers and the orchestra. *Don't Cry Little Doll* was voted second in the heat and so the following week Bill performed in the final. Again his arrangement was the second performance of the song, but this time 14 votes was only sufficient for fourth place and the song *All* won the contest, and Patricia Bredin would go on to represent the UK in Eurovision 1957.

Two weeks later, Bill was back on television with his own comedy show, *Mostly Maynard*, in which The Kentones provided musical numbers, but this show only ran for five episodes. After that Bill would appear regularly in various TV shows including the Anne



Shelton Show and drama *No Hiding Place* until the early sixties, when he devoted himself to the stage. It was not until the seventies that Bill reappeared regularly on TV, initially in dramatic roles such as *Paper Roses* and *Kisses At 50*, for which he won a BAFTA award, as well as acting opposite Celia Johnson in *Love Affair*. However, he was most at home

as a character actor in sitcoms, popping up in all manner of shows including *Till Death Us Do Part*, *Love Thy Neighbour* and *Sykes*. He even appeared in *Coronation Street* as a pub singer.

In 1974 Bill starred in the first series of *Oh No It's Selwyn Froggitt*, a comedy about a shambling man, based by Bill on a friend of his, which proved to be a ratings winner with its mix of physical and verbal comedy. The storyline featured the bungling exploits of Selwyn Froggitt, a burly, balding, good-natured council labourer who had intellectual

pretensions. Yorkshire TV produced two further series in 1976 and 1977, and then in 1978 a follow-up show just titled Selwyn, which ran for one series, with the Froggitt character transported to a holiday camp.

In 1975, he again starred in his own sitcom, *The Life of Riley*, but again, only ran for one series. Never mind, as Bill was engaged now in a short-lived recording career - one single was called *The Pheasant Plucker's Son*, which can be heard on YouTube - as well as appearing in films. Bill did five Carry On films in the seventies and also appeared in four Confessions Of... films, all of which starred Robin Askwith. 1975 also saw Bill publish his autobiography. In 1977 he starred in the ITV sitcom, *Paradise Island*, which was about two men of widely differing personalities marooned on a tropical island in the Pacific following a shipwreck. This too lasted for one series.

With the Selwyn franchise at an end, Maynard found another sitcom hit in the early eighties with *The Gaffer*, in which Bill plays the man who runs a struggling engineering firm and is constantly trying to avoid his creditors, the tax man, the bank manager, and indeed anyone who might want him to pay for something. The series ran for three seasons until 1983. In the final season Maynard's character is elected to the local Council. The show ending abruptly may well have been caused by the death of Maynard's first wife, Muriel, whom he married in 1949 and who had been ill for some years. Bill and Muriel had two children, the eldest of whom,



Martin, performed as Maynard Williams with Ryder in Eurovision 1986.

In 1984 Maynard, perhaps spurred on by his role in *The Gaffer*, stood for Parliament in a by-election for Chesterfield as an Independent Labour candidate. He lost to Tony Benn and, echoing his Song For Europe experience, finished fourth. In 1989 Bill re-married, this time to Tonia, widow of racing driver Donald Campbell.

In 1992 Bill returned to Yorkshire TV to appear in the long-running series *Heartbeat*, which had been created for ex-Eastenders actor Nick Berry. Bill played the scheming, loveable rogue Claude Greengrass, who would always end up barely on the right side of the law. Along with Nick Berry, Bill contributed vocals to some songs which were released on *Heartbeat* albums including *Walking The Dog*. He continued in the very successful series until 2001, when he was forced to retire due to illness. However, he returned to the role in 2003, appearing in the first series of the spin-off show *The Royal*.

From 2003 he became a radio presenter on BBC Radio Leicestershire, doing a Sunday show until 2008. He has since retired but occasionally appears on television to do interviews, often connected to DVD releases of his many TV shows.

Bill Maynard has been involved in popular entertainment for over 70 years as a comic actor, straight actor, film and TV actor, radio personality and singer - a man for whom participation in the Song For Europe 1957 was just one of many steps in his very full career. ♥

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

A word from OGAE UK President Paul Marks-Jones



Oh no, Eurovision's over for another year I hear you cry! And while that might well be true for most of Europe, it's certainly not for the swelling ranks of OGAE UK.

As many of you know, Eurovision 2011 and the Düsseldorf experience was a great roller-coaster of ups and downs. We all arrived with high hopes for Blue and although the boys did us proud, it was a little disappointing that their popularity, enthusiasm and dedication to the cause, didn't quite transfer itself onto the final scoreboard. Still, we can be proud of our 11th place. Let's just hope it's the start of a long line of great acts for the UK.

For those of you not able to come to Düsseldorf you unfortunately missed "the best party of the week" (not my words) as OGAE UK hosted what was supposed to be a small gathering with OGAE Ireland. As many of you know we always invite the acts from the UK, but unfortunately other appearances usually take precedence. However, this year myself and Simon Bennett put in a bit more planning into the event and it certainly paid off. From a hopeful 50-60 attendees at O'Reilly's pub in the old town, when the news spread, so did the numbers coming through the front door as we topped 200 people upstairs alone! From my point of view,

it was wonderful to see so many new faces at the pub gathering and more than a pleasure to welcome our closest neighbours from OGAE Ireland. And to make the event even more enjoyable our boys from Blue made an appearance. This was really the highlight of the year for me – after many months of liaising with the BBC and a couple of previous failed attempts our patience paid off! It was certainly a great coup and wonderful to see how appreciative the crowd was. The BBC even said it was the most seamless and enjoyable appearance the boys had made!

So, how do we top that? Well, we have the annual Eurobash to look forward to, come October, and I am delighted to say that the event sold out in record time. Keep your eyes peeled for some special guest announcements very shortly. And I look forward to catching up with many of you in Manchester!

And onto Baku! We'll aim to keep you updated on all the

developments as and when information becomes available. We're working with a tour company to see if we can put together some sort of package given the difficulties of travelling to Azerbaijan. So, if you're a member of Facebook you'll be able to keep updated, and update others there. And for those of you not on Facebook we'll use all of our normal methods to get news to you as quickly as possible.

Enjoy the 'quiet' season... ♡



Simon Webbe of Blue at O'Reilly's

OGAE BECOMES LEGAL!

OGAE UK becomes a founding member of the new OGAE International. **Simon Bennett** reports

Most members are aware that OGAE UK is the British branch of a much wider European fan network that was originally founded in Finland back in 1984 when the first OGAE club was formed. Since then, the organisation has grown and spread across the whole continent and beyond, but at the international level, it has always been a rather loose association of national clubs.

The individual national clubs have worked together under the name OGAE International, and have had an elected International Coordinator who chaired the annual Presidents' meeting in that year's host city, and who gives the organisation a figurehead. It is OGAE International which issues our photo membership cards, and they have coordinated the annual ticketing negotiation and allocation.

Over recent years, however, it has become increasingly clear that OGAE needed to be a more formal and professional international organisation. The annual OGAE ticketing process now involves hundreds of thousands of pounds, and so a more rigid and structured set-up was required to ensure appropriate governance and controls.

The various national Presidents initiated a discussion of possible options about four years ago, but the limitations of the old structure meant that these discussions dragged on for years. Back in 2009, the Moscow meeting finally



Simon Bennett and Mat Kroon Gutierrez make history and OGAE International official. And they left a big tip as well.

agreed that OGAE International should become a formal registered legal entity, and a small subcommittee was charged with drawing up a registration proposal and statutes.

The process was long and, at times, very painful, with the last two Presidents' meetings running for hours as everyone worked to get a solution acceptable to all the existing clubs. On 13th May 2011 in Düsseldorf, after a marathon five and a half hour meeting, the OGAE Presidents finally agreed unanimously to incorporate OGAE International under French law, and to set up an elected administrative bureau to administer the new organisation.

The actual incorporation and registration were not the simplest processes in the world, but it was agreed that representatives of at least two national clubs would meet in Paris to formally found the new OGAE International. With the incumbent

International Coordinator's term of office coming to an end on 30th June 2011, it was agreed that the new organisation would be founded in early July, with an administrative bureau elected on the basis of elections being held under the old rules.

The process was fairly convoluted and seemed to mirror the complexities of the European Union's operations, but everything came together in the end.

On 2nd July 2011, representatives of OGAE France and OGAE UK met in Paris to formally establish the new OGAE International. Mat Kroon Gutierrez and Simon Bennett met in the unlikely surroundings of a bar on Paris' Rue Vieille du Temple to create the new organisation. No doubt, the building will one day have a plaque commemorating the momentous event, and will become a destination for Eurovision pilgrims. For the time-being however, it's worth visiting more for the great ice cream, chocolate and macaroon shops in the vicinity!

OGAE France and OGAE UK became the founding members of the new OGAE International. All other national branches will be granted automatic membership if they apply before October, but thereafter, there will be a more formalised application procedure. The members of OGAE International are the individual national clubs, and no other organisations will now be allowed to use the OGAE name.

Mat and Simon, as representatives of the founding members, elected the new bureau in accordance with the results of elections which had been held the previous week. The new organisation's

first President is Maiken Mäemets, who previously served as President of OGAE Finland. She is joined in the bureau by Alexandros Liapis (Greece) as Secretary, Mat Kroon Gutierrez (France) as Treasurer, Miran Cvetko (Slovenia), Adrian Refalo (Malta), Klaus Woryna (Germany) and Simon Bennett (UK) as board members and deputies. The members of the new bureau bring a wealth of experience both from their professional lives and from their involvement with OGAE and Eurovision in general. They are drawn from a wide range of participant countries and so represent a broad cross section of Eurovision fans.

The new bureau is already hard at work

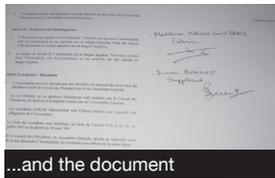
completing the registration process and looking at ways to improve the support provided to national clubs. One important issue, which will need to be addressed soon, is the procedure related to the OGAE International membership cards that caused us in the UK so much frustration earlier this year. The new team will also face a considerable challenge in the coming months as the logistics for Eurovision 2012 are already shaping up to be some of the most difficult (and expensive) we have ever faced.

We at OGAE UK are very proud that we are a founding member of the new organisation which we hope will prosper in the coming years and further strengthen the Eurovision enthusiast community.

● *Due to OGAE International becoming a legal entity, the OGAE UK committee have decided to put on hold our recent name change competition. We hope to discuss the issue at this year's Eurobash. ♥*



The venue...



...and the document



Vision editor Hassan Yusuf has the last word on this year's Eurovision

Well, what a show! Many of us were slightly disappointed when it was announced that Düsseldorf was going to host Eurovision 2011, rather than the expected front-runner and German capital, Berlin. However, the city rose to the challenge. While not the most exciting of places, it was however clean and green – as well as very friendly and laid back. And let me repeat – laid back! It was such a surprise that hardly anything in the two-week build up to the main show ran on time! Rehearsals were late, press conferences were late – I was fully expecting the live shows to run late! However, these were just the few negatives – the positives were that the Germans put on three great shows – with one of the best stages and backdrops ever!

A lot of thought went into the wonderful graphic backdrops. The Earth emerging behind Paradise Oskar will perhaps be the defining image that I'll take away from the show. And the presenters all meshed

well together and they all performed their chores admirably.

The OGAE UK committee was expecting a lot of interest for this year's event from the club – after all Germany is easy to get to and not as expensive as Oslo (what is?). We were however surprised that nearly half of the membership originally applied! Eventually about 160 of us turned up – or bought tickets via the club. No doubt this was helped by the fact that for the first time in many years we had an established and world-famous act representing us. OGAE UK member Jude Habib nailed it on the head when she told me that for once we had an act that the country could be proud of. She was one of many that made a great effort to show off their Britishness clad in a blue wig and Union Jack dress. And there was a lot of dressing up this year – definitely more than usual.

With so many new members joining the club recently, the committee used some of

that extra cash to purchase a sparkly Union Jack hat for all members at Dusseldorf. We were hoping that the camera would pan out to see dozens of Union Jack hats, but alas that never happened. In fact there was a distinct lack of shots of the audience. One reason for this is that Germany has strict privacy laws, so maybe close ups were not encouraged. Nevertheless, we all looked great.

OGAE Germany was in charge of allocating the seats for the OGAE clubs this year. They were obviously fully expecting us to win – as they put us in two great blocks for the final show! We've never had such good seats before.

Our ticket coordinator, David Ransted, had his work cut out placing 160 fans over three shows. For the final we placed 'colourful' characters near the front of our blocks in the hope that we would get loads of camera shots when those '12 points' starting rolling in. Alas, as we know, Blue only had one 12 point awarded to them (thank you Bulgaria) – but it was great to see Anita Newport get highlighted in her 'pearly-queen' style outfit (that's Anita in the centre in the photo opposite).

Still, more of us got close-ups during the interval act.

David did his best to be fair with the seat allocation. If you had a good seat in the final, that wasn't the case for the semi-finals (and vice-versa). But quite honestly, there weren't any bad seats this year. We hope everyone was pleased. However, there were the usual problems. Case in point: Once we had worked out the seating plan, the German authorities took four of our seats and placed them

elsewhere! Those seats still offered great views, but it's annoying when things like that happen without any explanation. We suspect that those seats were taken over by security – to avoid another 'pitch invasion' as happened last year! Also one of our seats at the front was taken over by a technician operating a wind machine! Rather than moan and cause a 'health & safety' issue, everyone just squashed up. I mention all this to show that despite all the planning, there are always unexpected problems. Still, this wasn't as bad as Helsinki when a whole row disappeared! But OGAE UK sorted that out.

A big thank you must go to Simon Bennett and Paul Marks-Jones. Simon went on a scouting mission a few weeks before Eurovision and located O'Reilly's pub in Düsseldorf's old town for the joint OGAE UK/OGAE Ireland party and negotiated a good deal for us. And Paul managed to get Blue to make a special appearance. Many thanks to the BBC's Stuart Macdonald for all his help in this venture as well. Paul has been working very hard these past few years to raise our profile with the BBC.

Well done Mr President!

More thanks should go our German counterparts at OGAE Germany, who organised a great boat trip on the night before the final. One of the guest singers was Eurobash favourite Nicki French – who of course represented us in 2000 with *Don't Play That Song Again*. Nicki as usual put on a great professional show.

And now is as good a time as any to thank our representatives, Blue. Personally I think *I Can* was the best UK entry in



PHOTO: DAVID ELDER



PHOTO: DAVID ELDER

decades. It just hit the right buttons. While I wasn't surprised that Azerbaijan won the contest (it was obvious from the first hearing), I really expected Blue to give Ell & Nikki a run for their money. But alas, that wasn't the case – the juries soon put a stop to that!

Simon Bennett argues elsewhere in this issue that he thinks the jury system still works. While I certainly don't want to abuse my position here and use **Vision** to vent my displeasure, I'm still nevertheless firmly in the anti-jury camp (and always have been). While it's nice to see the juries promoting 'posh' songs as the ones from Lithuania and Italy, they seemed so out of touch with others – surely something is wrong when the public make us fifth while the juries placed us in the 22nd position. These juries are meant to be made up of music professionals. So what if their performance in the dress rehearsal where they make their judgments wasn't 100 per cent – they should be judging it on the song! And only someone tone deaf could argue that *I Can* wasn't one of the best songs of the contest! Still, at least we were on the right side of the scoreboard this year – on the left! So well done lads – you did us proud!

But it was good to see some of those 'posh' songs do well. It all adds to the variety and mix of Eurovision. And this year's contest dispelled the notion

that diaspora voting always guarantees certain countries will go through from the semi-finals to the final. Many of us were shocked that Turkey and Armenia never made it through. Mind you, neither country deserved to go through this year. The Turkish band are truly a great band, but for Eurovision, like Armenia, they just 'dumbed-down' and went populist. And the same fate befell Ms International. The bad placing of Russia was also deserved. It's been said many a time that Russia could just walk on stage and collect a guaranteed 100 points! How nice to see these myths finally put to bed. To win or get through to the final you really do need a good song! Of course this isn't a fine art, and there are always contradictions, but hopefully this will make the national broadcasters think again about song choice. (By the way, I fully expect Alex Sparrow to come in a few years time and win the contest.)

Overall though I think the contest gets better year by year. Most countries seem to try much harder than in past efforts.

A few last thanks for everyone that supplied photos for this issue – Liam Whelan, Mandy Norman, Robin Scott – and especially David Elder. I've tried very hard in this issue to feature as many members as possible that were in Düsseldorf, but I doubt if I managed to get a shot of everyone.

If you would like give some of your views to this year's songs, it's not too late to write to Darren Jenkin. See his article elsewhere for details.

Personally, I'm now getting withdrawal symptoms. Baku can't come soon enough! By the time this issue comes out, that date and venue will have definitely been finalised. We'll keep you informed with an issue of **Vision Update**.

We hope to see many of you in Azerbaijan. Sounds exotic, doesn't it? ♥

VISION BITS



DAVID ELDER THE STRONGEST LINK!

Vision would like to congratulate OGAE UK member David Elder on winning the Weakest Link episode broadcast on Monday 9th May.

David was in Düsseldorf as an accredited journalist on the day itself and many Brits huddled around a computer in the press centre to watch the show via a live link. David kept quiet about the result, but his victory didn't come as a surprise to many of us!

He won a total of £2,600 (quite high for that show) of which he donated £1,000 to the Children's Hospice Association Scotland. If any members are considering donating to a charity in lieu of Christmas cards, etc, then CHAS is a great organisation to go for. For details, go to:

www.chas.org.uk

Well done and congratulations David!

BACK ISSUE BONANZA!



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WRITE FOR VISION

Vision is always looking for more involvement from OGAE UK members. If you have an idea for a feature or would like to write something, then please contact Hassan Yusuf on hassan.yusuf@hotmail.com

Euro Quiz Answers

1. 29th May 2. Eight 3. *Candlelight* – Hungary 2008 4. Three 5. Bryan Johnson 6. 1961 7. 12th 8. Sieneke 9. Maja Keuc 10. Novak Djokovic

THE 'LAST' PAGE



Switzerland 2011 – Final
In Love For A While
Anna Rossinelli

Received 19 points
(Ten from the United Kingdom,
five from Serbia and
four from Slovakia)