

September 15, 2010

Hi John, Here's the CD reviews for Sept. 15. I'll come by your office a bit later with the covers. Hope yr fine, talk soon, P

CD Reviews for September 15, 2010

Hvh Adamou: *Kalokairi Sthn Kardia*

Sony Music 2010

Finally, we have a teen sensation who is worthy of the moniker "teen sensation." Sixteen year old Hvh (pronounced ee-vee) Adamou has become a heavy-rotation video clip and radio presence over the past several months, promoting songs from her debut CD, *Kalokairi Sthn Kardia* (Summer in the Heart).

The completely telegenic, endlessly ebullient Adamou is a joy to watch in her videos, displaying a joie-de-vie sophistication not often seen in teen singers. Her physical movements are completely organic, not studied or lock-stepped, and her production team appears to be top-notch in their work.

If one listens closely to the disc, you'll hear influences from 80s groups like Depeche Mode and Duran Duran. Fuzzy synthesizer loops mixed with Synsonic-effect drums and microchip mini-keyboard blips give songs such as *A-G-A-P-E* (L-O-V-E) and *Gelaei* (He Laughs) a true retro dance-floor feel. My personal favorite track is *To Mystiko mou na Breis* (You Will Find my Secret) which borrows heavily from the Martha and the Vandellas classic song "Heat Wave," while maintaining the new version's pure teen fun and giddiness.

All tracks are surprisingly catchy and the production and recording are squeaky clean. The album's only shortcoming is lack of material. Of the ten songs on the disc, two are classified as "Karaoke" versions, AKA- the same song with no vocal track, and one re-mix. The seven remaining originals are solid, radio-friendly nuggets worthy of the airplay they are receiving.

*Stars on the Beach: 28 Party Hits*

Various Artists

Universal Music 2010

I love this kind of cluster stuff, I really do. As I have told you guys many times before, every year around this time the record company executives from every label get together and ask themselves the same question. This is the question they ask themselves: How many times can we sell the same song? The answer, invariably, is “we don’t know, because we’re still doing it.”

The racks of new releases in the record stores are brimming with summer-hit collections, and there is a good amount of similar recorded material being shared on the various CDs. *Stars on the Beach* appears to be the 800-pound gorilla of the bunch, cramming 28 hits onto two CDs for a mere ten Euros. The clever marketers at Universal clumped the Greek and English songs into separate CDs for taste-specific crowds. Pop chart spanky-toy Kostas Martakis, current *Esquire* magazine centerfold sex bomb Eleni Foureira, and adolescent heartthrobs Melisses appear on both CDs with their current hits in both languages.

This CD is a fine snapshot of what the radio pop charts look like in Greece at this moment. Standout tracks include Dan Bilan and Eleni Foureira’s “Chica Bomb,” the Contras’ “La Luna,” and Yolanda Be Cool vs D Cup’s “We no Speak Americano.” This CD should keep you going until the big collections come out in November, which will invariably include more comprehensive anthologies from KISS, Led Zeppelin and Jimi Hendrix.

Natasha Theodoridou

*Mia Kokkinh Grammh*

Sony Music 2009

The undisputed hair-queen of the bouzoukia scene returns with a safe, but very enjoyable disc full of club songs and ballads which guarantees to satisfy her devoted supporters. Theodoridou has been at the top of the nightclub slag heap for so long it’s difficult to remember when she wasn’t a presence in the Greek nightlife. In my opinion, she is best we have to offer in the pop/rembetika category of female singers. She is always in style, always a crowd pleaser and always a consummate professional.

*Mia Kokkinh Grammh* (One Red Line) does not venture far from her standard arsenal of musical trademarks which she uses to full advantage here. Chiming bouzoukis, soaring vocal arrangements, and orchestral background are incorporated full force by her composer Yiorgos Theofanos.

There are a couple of surprises on the disc, but nothing that will ruffle the feathers of her longtime loyal fan base. The track “Ase Me Na Zhso” (Leave me to Live) features a heavy

70s disco beat a la Donna Summer and Gloria Gaynor. "Mazepse ta Ola" (Gather Everything) features digital delay treatment on the vocal track to throw an obligatory nod to the growing number of musical technophiles in the audience and the always desirable youth market, who constitute the bulk of the nightlife crowd in Athens.

She is always at her best with the ballad format, and, not surprisingly, the albums' standout tracks include the ballads "Dipla se Sena," (Next to You) and Apandhse mou (Answer Me).