

Kalomoira: Greece's Irrepressible Sweetheart Gets Back in the Saddle!

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Pop Star Missing in Action

Kalomoira Sarantis has been a household name in Greece and Cyprus since her early appearances in 2003's song competition *Fame Story II*, straight through to her slam-bang, cornea-frying Eurovision performance in 2008, where she finished third in the viewer voting with her song, "Secret Combination." When she suddenly left Athens later in the same year, her absence generated a black hole in the pop music scene that was absolutely palpable in every schoolyard, café-bar and discotheque in the country. She had been a staple on the FM charts and music video television channels for several years and then, suddenly, after disagreements with her recording label, there was no Kalomoira on the market. It was a heart-shocker to her hardcore fans, which included lathering hordes of ellinida teeny-boppers, and casual listeners alike.

Sweet-Success

She brought to the stage and airwaves something no other performer in Greece had, or currently has, going for them: an endless, playfully charming, joie-de-vie ebullience that was unmistakably genuine. Her frothy, exultant character was carefully mixed by her management with professional production and outstanding songwriting support. The end result was a bona fide pop-star uber alles who appealed to wide and varied listener demographics. Songs such as "Ola Ki Perimeno," (I'm Waiting for Everything) and "Paizies;" (Are You Fooling Me?) perfectly blended her likeable character with a bubblegum/disco/dance repertoire which created an innocent ingénue persona that was wildly marketable and successful with the public.

Look Homeward, Angel

Although Kalomoira was gone from live performance and radio for roughly a year and a half, it always seemed she was trying to keep her foot in the door in Greece, despite her absence. She hosted a Greek-American-Japanese produced TV reality-game show entitled *Made in Japan*, which appeared weekly in Greece for the 2009 season. It also seemed that everyone I talked to, when the subject of Kalomoira would come up, wanted to know when she would come back to stay in Athens. I used to teach English in a frontistirio (foreign language school) and at the same time worked for a Greek-English newspaper in Athens. Heated debates raged in the office, and in my classroom of about twenty kids on the merits, flaws and psychological mindset of Kalomoira- everyone had an opinion about her, from heavy metal rivet-heads, to jaded journalists, to mall-girl fashionistas- she was a topic that simply refused to disappear. Morning TV shows such as Eleni Menagaki's popular *Kafe me thn*

Eleni, (Coffee with Eleni), and Mega channel's *Omorfos Kosmos to Proi* (Beautiful World in the Morning) buzzed for months about what she was doing, where she was hiding, etc. She had departed the country, but, remarkably, had left a loving, indelible mark on the Greek people.

Lady Grinning Soul

But now in 2010, after some career moves and new marriage, Kalomoira is back with us. Her September wedding to longtime boyfriend George Bousalis was a media event on the order of Windsor royalty christening a new atomic submarine. This summer, her face was all over kiosk magazines such as *Shape*, *Downtown* and *Lucky*. She became the public face of the Dominoe's Pizza chain in Greece, and her new CD single, "Please Don't Break my Heart," is a pop-R&B winner which is in steady rotation on the pop charts and video clip television channels.

Talk The Talk, Walk The Walk

In my recent chat with Kalomoira, we hit on a few of the most current-agenda things going on in her life, and some general, daily nitty-gritty as well. A more genuine, together, unassuming young woman would be hard to find in Greece or anyplace else.

1. When you left Greece, after the Eurovision contest in 2008, you had a few unresolved matters with your management group. However, you have recently re-signed with Heaven music, your former label. Have the previous differences been successfully amended?

Yes! I have a new contract with Heaven, there is a new president at the label and there are some new employees too!

2. You are now the public face for Dominoes pizza in Greece. How does your family feel about your endorsement for them, as your father owns and operates an independent, family pizza restaurant in New York? Are there any other television hosting opportunities or company endorsements forthcoming?

My dad was laughing because he thought it was so funny! We all make jokes about it all the time!!! I always advertise my parent's restaurant though!!! If I do a TV interview in America...I always throw it out there!!!

I was discussing a TV idea with 2 Greek channels but I'm not sure if we are going to do it yet! Timing is very important and now I really want to work in the studio on new songs.

3. Your new single, "Please Don't Break My Heart," which features rapper Fatman Scoop, is a pop/r&b hybrid. Are you leaning more towards an r&b sound, after three CDs of Anglo-Greek pop? What can we expect from your new CD which will be out in the spring of 2011?

I have definitely always been very influenced by r&b music! My first cd that I ever bought was "Brandy" and she is all r&b. Now that I'm getting a little older I feel that my

music is becoming more r&b-pop! I think I will always keep the pop sound because it's what I love the most but adding different colors on each album like dance, rock, ex is always really fun! You never know what sound you get until it's all done!

4. There was tons of media hype about the possibility of you and George having two weddings, one in Greece and one in New York. Was there any reason you considered the two transatlantic weddings? How's married life treating you so far?

We only did a wedding in New York because most of our family is in the states and it would be much easier for everyone here! The reason why we didn't have a wedding in Greece is because I felt like having two weddings isn't the same! Just have one and make it special!

So far, so good!!! :-)

5. You are still greatly admired and respected by the pop music audience in Greece. How much time will you be spending here each year, now that you're living in the U.S.A.? Are there any upcoming shows in Greece or tours forthcoming?

I am so grateful for all of the love and support people have shown me in Greece! They have made all of my dreams come true and I couldn't be happier! I will be in Greece probably 6 months out of the year. But it's broken up. 2 months Greece, 2 months states...ex. I've done this for almost 2 years now and so far it's been ok! But time will tell....!

For more information about Kalomira, view photos, read biography and blog, hear songs and communicate with her fan club go to www.kalomira.com

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