

Vangelis

Who is Vangelis?

Vangelis is a famous Greek composer and keyboardist. He composes and performs mainly instrumental music and filmscores. His music is often categorized under terms like "synthesizer", "sympho" and "new age".



He was born as "Evangelos Odysseus Papathanassiou" at march 29th 1943 in Greece. He started playing the piano at the age of 4 and gave his first public performance of his own compositions at the age of 6. He moved to Paris in the late sixties while forming the progressive rock-band "Aphrodite's Child", which became very popular. Very soon they moved on to London.

In 1970 the group broke up and Vangelis started a solo career.

What instrument does he play?

It seems to be mainly keyboards in all forms (Pianos, synthesizers, organs, etc.), but he is also skilled at the drums and has played flutes, vibes, tablas, tubular bells, timpanies, cymbals and gongs in the past.

In most cases the synthesizer forms the basis of his work.

What does he do?

Putting out records mostly. Sometimes composing music for films, plays, etc. He rarely performs in public and hardly gives interviews.

Have I perhaps ever heard his music?

Probably. His music has been used for many purposes. What you perhaps heard differs a lot per country. I'll list a few possibilities:

The German boxer Henry Maske used Vangelis' theme for the film "1492, the Conquest of Paradise" (1992) as his victory tune in 1995. As a result of this the CD single and later the album were rereleased in Europe and reached the tops of most of the charts.

Interesting to note is that Maske never got to meet Vangelis. Maske: "Ich lad' ihn immer ein, aber er kommt nie. Er ist zu sensibel fürs Boxen." (I invited him often, but he doesn't come. He's too sensitive for boxing.)

Also heavyweight boxer Tommy Morrison from the USA used this track, but it did not result in any success. Neither for the music nor the boxer.

The main theme for Hugh Hudson's film "Chariots of Fire" (1981) won Vangelis an Oscar and has hit many charts back then. After that it was used as theme for the Olympic games in Sarajevo in 1984. Since then it seems to pop up in just about every documentary about the Olympics and many commercials all over the world, like recently for the "Citroen Xantia".

The famous television series Cosmos used lots of Vangelis music, mainly from the album "Heaven and Hell" (1975).

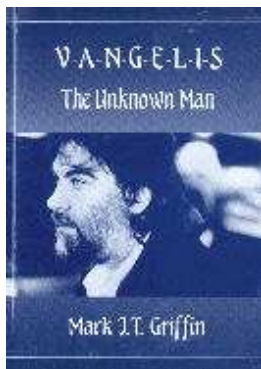
In the Netherlands music from "The Spiral" was used as theme music for the popular science-show "Wondere Wereld" while "Kinematic" from the "Antarctica" album is often recognized as the "actionmusic" from "Wedden Dat?" In the USA commercials for "Gallo Wine" used the track "Hymne" from the album "Opera Sauvage" (1979).

In the early 80's Ford used the opening of "Chung Kuo" from the album "China" in their commercials for the "Mercury Lynx" while Chanel used "The Little Fete" from the same album around the same period for promotion of their "Chanel 5" perfume.

Some Personal information

Vangelis avoids public appearances. He rarely gives interviews and concentrates on making music.

It is disputed if he is presently married. There is an old interview (Backstage 1982, Belgian musicians magazine) that claims he was once married to Vana Veroutis, a Greek female vocaliste who performed on Vangelis' albums "Heaven and Hell" and "La Fete Sauvage". Vangelis remarks in the interview he doesn't even know where she is at that moment.



On the other hand, Mark Griffin's book "The Unknown Man" makes no notice of this at all, but mentions instead that Vangelis lived with Veronique Skawinska, who's responsible for most photographs used in the artwork of many of Vangelis his albums

from the late seventies and early eighties. It's perhaps best to avoid this subject at all, since Vangelis is a private person, and it serves no purpose to gossip about these matters. He has a brother called "Nico", who is also in the music business, but functions mainly as producer. The two worked together on an album by the Italian band "Chrisma", recorded in Vangelis' Nemo studio in London.

Vangelis' last known studio was the "Epsilon Laboratory" in Paris (walls and roof build of glass on top of a building), but his three latest albums were allegedly recorded somewhere in Greece. Vangelis himself apparently moves around a lot, being labeled some sort of "nomad" by the media.

