

FACT SHEET

TITLE: **MARIO FRANGOULIS: SOMETIMES I DREAM**
[Stereo] [TV-G] [CC]

LENGTH: 1/60

NOLA CODE: MFSD

CATEGORY: Music & Entertainment

OFFERED: Premium Service offer, May 2002

RELEASE DATE: November 29, 2002

CONTRACT TERMS: Eight (8) releases to be completed by December 31, 2005. A release is defined as unlimited use within seven days.

PROGRAM SUPPLIER: Sony Classical

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: He looks like a movie star and can sing everything from a hard-rock anthem to an operatic aria — Mario Frangoulis is the tenor for a new age. As a young boy, he studied violin and composed music, then attended the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. Taped on a hot summer night in Thessaloniki, Greece, **MARIO FRANGOULIS: SOMETIMES I DREAM** features the tenor in concert, performing passionately romantic songs that demonstrate the beauty, power and incredibly expressive range of his extraordinary voice.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS: Use the above description for guide listing. A press kit, including fact sheet, press release, Mario's bio and performance rundown, will be posted to FirstClass and www.aptonline.org. Color and B&W photography will be posted to www.aptonline.org. Press kits will be mailed to media.

PRODUCTION DATE: © 2002 Sony Classical

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MARIO FRANGOULIS: SOMETIMES I DREAM /2

FACT SHEET

PRODUCTION CREDITS: Director, David Mallet
Music Producer, Steve Wood

BROADCAST HISTORY: U.S. television premiere

RELATED MERCHANDISE: This program is available on VHS, DVD and CD.

Individual viewer purchase: The VHS, DVD and CD are available in retail stores nationwide.

Pledge: If you are interested in pledging this program and need assistance with premiums, please contact APT Station Services at (617) 338-4455, ext. 121.

SCHEDULING SUGGESTIONS: Consider using for pledge. Outreach to classical music and tenor fans. Seek out Greek community. Mario's performances draw a high female following.

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PRESS RELEASE

MARIO FRANGOULIS: SOMETIMES I DREAM

(Boston, MA, October 2, 2002) On September 17, 2002 the world was introduced to the distinctive voice of Greek tenor Mario Frangoulis with his album, *Sometimes I Dream* (Sony Classical). This December, audiences can enjoy a broadcast performance of this album, exclusively for public television audiences nationwide (check local listings). Mario has been hailed as a promising young opera singer, but the intriguing blend of new romantic songs and arrangements during this performance – in Italian, Spanish, Greek and English – reaches toward a much broader worldwide audience.

The performance, taped in Thessaloniki, Greece earlier this summer at the Theatre of the Earth, is bathed in the passionate atmosphere of the Mediterranean world in which Mario was raised. Inspired by his fellow countrymen, Mario's presentation is flawless and his fans stay enraptured throughout his performance. His emotions during this performance are present from the moment he takes the stage.

The songs vary from his fresh take – in Italian – of the Moody Blues' "Nights in White Satin" and the dancing "Luna Rossa" to a heartfelt new song he wrote himself in collaboration with a young Greek poet he admires. Mario sings in English, Italian and Greek, and he sums up the experience of his life in the title track, a smoldering pop tune aptly called "Sometimes I Dream," inspired by the tenor aria "E Lucevan le Stelle" from Puccini's *Tosca*.

Mario catches the echo of great film music in "Buongiorno Principessa," a touching new love song taken from a melody in Nicola Piovani's score for the film *Life Is Beautiful*.

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From the catalog of Spain's hugely popular singer/songwriter Jose Maria Cano, Mario sings the passionate hits "Naturaleza Muerta" and "Hijo de la Luna." The tenor also convinced Cano to set the lyrics to a haunting melody (originally the theme music to his opera *Luna* with Placido Domingo and Renee Fleming), creating a brand new song for Mario, "A La Luna de Valencia."

Mario also delivers passionate performances with "Night Wants to Forget" and "Vinceró Perderó," which Mario explains as "a song very descriptive of my life. The lyric says, 'I'll win, I'll lose, but either way I will do it on my own.' I have only myself on this journey, and I have always taken risks, tried to make my life better, and this song is a very personal statement of that." "Ton Eafto Tou Paidi," for which the singer wrote the melody, has lyrics by the Greek poet P. Karasoulos.

"'Ton Eafto Tou Paidi' is a song based on my childhood, my early childhood, when I wanted to escape all the trauma in my family through my imagination," Mario recalls. "As the song says, I found this imaginary garden, where I would enter and everything would be all right, where all the elements of the earth and nature would become my friends. But the song is about coming to terms with my childhood, with the past, about becoming whole. I wouldn't be the same person if I hadn't gone through what I went through in my childhood. And today I know who I am. I'm stronger for what I've experienced, and I'm grateful for all the love and passion and joy. I think all the songs (performed on *Sometimes I Dream*) reflect that – the music chosen for this album and the lyrics could not have been a more perfect match."

Mario Frangoulis grew up in Greece, where he began studying music as a child. As a teenager, he entered London's Guildhall School to study drama. The true tenor range of his maturing voice emerged while he was a student and suddenly he found himself on the path towards an operatic career – even as he was appearing on London's West

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End as the young romantic heroes of *Les Miserables* and *The Phantom of the Opera*. “I always sang, from an early age, with a record player – with Greek singers, of course, but also recordings of movie musicals, Frank Sinatra, Barbra Streisand,” Mario remembers. “I knew I had a good voice but I didn’t know I had an operatic voice. In the beginning, I was against anyone saying I had that kind of operatic sound. I had always felt I didn’t belong in that category. I wanted to communicate the music, and I didn’t think opera singers sounded young enough, modern enough. Then I saw a performance of *Carmen* in Athens with José Carreras and Agnes Baltsa, and I realized I could be all of those things.”

He became the great tenor Alfredo Kraus’s only private student and also spent three years studying at New York’s Juilliard School of Music. When La Scala in Milan staged its first production of Leonard Bernstein’s *West Side Story*, he was chosen to sing the role of Tony.

“My greatest love is opera and classical music,” Mario says, “but I always found it very hard to communicate opera the way I wanted to. So I wanted to find a contemporary bridge to a larger audience to communicate the way I felt. We have chosen material that is not operatic, strictly speaking, but good music, with great lyrics. I think this album is full of surprises, filled with Mediterranean colors and spirit.”

Executive Producer: Peter Gelb. Director: David Mallet. Music Producer: Steve Wood. Produced in 2002 by Sony Classical, **MARIO FRANGOULIS: SOMETIMES I DREAM** is distributed to public television stations nationwide by APT’s Premium Service.

About American Public Television

For 40 years, American Public Television (APT), located in Boston, has been a major source of programming for the nation’s public television stations. APT has more than 10,000 hours of programming including *Discovering the Real World of Harry Potter*, *Nightly Business Report*, *Rick Steves’ Europe*, *Julia and Jacques Cooking at Home*, *Ballykissangel*, *Brian Jacques’ Redwall* and *The Three Tenors Christmas*. APT is known for identifying innovative programs and developing creative distribution techniques for producers. In four decades, it has established a tradition of providing public television stations nationwide with program choices that enable them to strengthen and customize their schedules. For more information about APT’s programs and services, log on to www.aptonline.org or contact Donna Hardwick at 617/338-4455 ext. 129 or donna_hardwick@aptonline.org.

BIOGRAPHY

MARIO FRANGOULIS

For Mario Frangoulis, it's all about the dream. A dream that is alive with music and poetry, love and light, passion and joy. A dream that has been with him throughout his life. To soothe his childhood traumas, he would often escape by climbing up on the rooftops of different homes around his neighborhood where he would be alone and somehow be closer to his dreams.

Mario Frangoulis is a young tenor from Greece, but those facts alone do not begin to describe him. Born in Africa – in colonial Rhodesia as it was becoming the nation of Zimbabwe – he survived a childhood marked by hardships both at home and in the world outside. At the age of four, his mother found a home for him with her sister in Greece, at a time when the political situation in Africa was explosive and dangerous. Raised by his aunt and separated from his beloved older brother, Mario was surrounded with a large extended family. Today, he speaks fondly of both sets of parents and the feeling for music they instilled in him. He studied violin and even composed a bit when he was a boy. At the age of 17, he was sent to London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama to study acting. The stage was an obvious choice because, among other things, Mario is handsome enough to be a matinee idol. In fact, he had already wowed audiences on London's West End as the dashing young heroes of *Les Miserables* and *The Phantom of the Opera*.

But in his days as a drama student, Mario discovered the operatic side of his tenor voice, winning the Maria Callas Prize, which he auditioned for simply because he knew some arias and a friend encouraged him. Juggling this newfound ambition with his burgeoning stage career, he found himself on a path that took him to New York's Juilliard School of Music as a scholarship student, and won him the support and counsel of such operatic legends as Alfredo Kraus and Marilyn Horne. He was the only private student the late Kraus ever accepted.

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With Horne's encouragement, Mario went to Rome for Kraus and Nicola Rescigno, who was Maria Callas's favorite conductor. Both were impressed. He became Kraus's student, flying all over the world to take lessons as the great tenor continued to perform. The experience gave Frangoulis a solid vocal technique and good high notes, both hallmarks of Kraus's style. The title track of the public television performance special *SOMETIMES I DREAM* salutes that experience, for the aria that haunts the song – "E Lucevan le Stelle" from Act III of Puccini's *Tosca* – is what the tenor calls "my aria, which I've always sung, in every audition."

Yet the career Mario has built is anything but a conventional operatic career. He sang the role of Tony in *West Side Story* in its first performances at Milan's Teatro alla Scala. He has appeared in films and on television, in concerts and even in epic presentations of Greek tragedies. And he is not quite 35 years old. He lives in Athens, surrounded by family – "millions of cousins," he says with a laugh – and he loves sea sports, including wind surfing and scuba diving.

The tenor began recording for Sony Classical in Greece in 1998, and his recordings have topped the charts at home. His new album reaches for an international audience, with material that draws freely from opera, rock, film and pop music. All the songs have been tailored to Mario's unique talents, and they include several original titles written specifically for the tenor.

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INTERVIEW

MARIO FRANGOULIS

Q: You are a tenor for a new age, Mario. Tell me a bit about growing up in Greece, going to school and performing in London, as well as the musical influences that have led you to this point in your career.

A: Basically, I started singing when I was four years old. I suddenly discovered music and I got stuck behind a record player and I just couldn't leave it. I was born in Africa — Rhodesia — which is now Zimbabwe. By the age of 12 or 13, I went to a private English school in Greece. There was a great drama teacher there and she encouraged me to get into acting — especially theater. At the time, I wasn't thinking about classical or opera, and I was against it. I didn't think classical musicians or opera singers cared about communicating. Especially communicating to a younger audience — you have to reach out to them. Using a variety of rhythms and sounds — it's got to be different so that you can reach the younger crowds.

*Q: Tell us a bit about the music that you perform in the upcoming public television special, **SOMETIMES I DREAM**, also the title of your CD which debuted in the U.S. on September 17th.*

A: With this album, I knew it should have good music and great stories about the history of the great lyricists. One way of knowing that this album is a classic is that it will please many generations to come. There are many beautiful tunes in it. I surprised myself by how beautiful the songs are. It's a way of looking at different times in my life. I began working on this two years ago — I wasn't in a hurry. In Greece, they say you have to wait for something good to come out of things. I've tried to be patient and make sure that every track is what I've wanted to hear. This way, when the listener hears the album, there is continuity throughout. When creating it, I tried to envision myself as the listener and think about what song I would like to hear next.

Q: Who would you say has influenced your career the most as you were getting started and helped you get to where you are today?

A: I was trained both as an opera singer and an actor. I did three years of professional acting and played the leading role of Marius in *Les Miserables* in London's West End in the late '80s. In 1990, I went to Italy to study voice with tenor Carlo Bergonzi, which led to a role in *The Phantom of the Opera* at Her Majesty's Theatre back in London. My real big influence, the man who taught me that less is more and you don't have to hide behind a jar to be an opera singer so long as you are concentrated, was tenor Alfredo Kraus. Kraus was the first of the great Spanish tenors to make a mark outside of his country. I was his first student, he hadn't taught until we met and he taught me some extraordinary things. Whatever style I'm singing his teaching was in the simplest of ways — whether it's simple songs like "The Rose" or "Imagine" or a complicated aria. He was a major influence and I couldn't have won the Maria Callas Prize (scholarship) without his help. Kraus never charged me a penny for my lessons. He was so generous and I am so grateful. I traveled with him and studied off and on for two years. He sang in every major opera house around the world. What a career! And while it wasn't like Carreras, Domingo and Pavarotti's careers, he certainly left his mark on the 20th century. I was very lucky to be singing with some of the greatest names.

Q: How would you describe the Mario Frangoulis fans and what's the most important thing you want to relay to them when you are performing or putting together an album?

A: My audience seems to be more women, but of all ages. It's not just a young crowd — I started to realize that at my concert in Greece (the taping for *SOMETIMES I DREAM*, distributed by PS13, November 2002). I like to do a concert and just see who comes. I'm a Greek tenor singing Italian arias, so you just never know. My little secret is that I sing a lot of the songs they want to hear like "Imagine" and "The Rose," with good Greek classical songs mixed in. Not the stereotypical Greek music though. I want the audience to sit down and listen and feel. I just want to make them think. That's what I've always done from the beginning — mixed in different styles. Sometimes I'll even read poetry with background music — Greek and Spanish poets mostly, but also Keats or

Shakespearean sonnets. I try to create an atmosphere. Of course, lately I've done a little bit less of this and a bit more of the album, so the audience knows my next steps and where I'm going now.

Q: What is your career like in Greece — do you incorporate your Greek heritage into your music? How would you describe yourself to potential fans — especially those of Greek heritage living in the United States?

A: Many criticized me in the beginning and said, “You do theater, drama, modern songs — which one is it?” I like being part of this world and this world offers all these things to us. I want to learn and I just love presenting this kind of music. These days you have to be open-minded. Whoever said that Michelangelo could only be a painter and not be a sculptor? I love being part of all the arts.

Sometimes I Dream was originally going to be an album of arias, but we decided to try doing an album like this so we could reach out to more people — I'll do all arias later. I was inspired by the Three Tenors, singing together in Rome. What is it about this combination? They've got a pop appeal, they are having fun with this music, and there is no competition among them. They have great voices and look great on stage.

Q: Public television stations are going to be pledging SOMETIMES I DREAM during December — is this their first introduction to you and your music?

A: I would say that I'm very, very grateful that they are doing this — supporting young artists in their journey. There is a lot of competition and it's easy to lose yourself due to how market-oriented things are. I'm grateful to them for using this for pledging — for without them we wouldn't be able to get our work out at such an early stage. It gives me the encouragement to get our hopes high and better ourselves.

This is why I was excited about SOMETIMES I DREAM being a public-supported program — everything is at such a high standard. It's all about the public and what they want and need, and that's what makes it exciting.

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PERFORMANCE RUNDOWN

MARIO FRANGOULIS: SOMETIMES I DREAM

1. Luna Rossa

Music by Antonio Vian; Lyrics by Vincenzo de Crescenzo

2. Buongiorno Principessa

Music by Nicola Piovani; Lyrics by Vincenzo Cerami

3. Non Sarà

Melody by Phil Palmer; Lyrics by Niccolò Agliardi

4. Vincerò, Perderò

Music by Steve Wood; Lyrics by Luisa Zappa Branduardi

5. Ton Eafto Tou Paidi

Music by Mario Frangoulis; Lyrics by Paraskevas Karasoulous

6. Hijo de la Luna

Music and Lyrics by José María Cano

7. Nights in White Satin (Notte di Luce)

Music and Lyrics by Justin Hayward; Italian Translation by Gala

8. A la Lunca de Valencia

Music and Lyrics by José María Cano

9. Night Wants to Forget

Music and Lyrics by Steve Wood; Music by Jim Brandmeier
Translation by Luisa Zappa Branduardi

10. Naturaleza Muerta

Music and Lyrics by José María Cano

11. Sometimes I Dream

Music by Mario Frangoulis; Lyrics by Steve Wood
with "E Lucevan le Stelle" by Giacomo Puccini

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