

# A new platinum album by Greek crossover artist

Two things come to mind when listening to Mario Frangoulis's latest platinum album "Mario & Friends - What a Wonderful World," released by Sony Classical.

The first is how successfully the tenor has managed to maintain his style and standards, and enjoy a somewhat singular career by Greek standards. The second thought that springs to mind is the spectacular return of easy-listening music to the Greek scene. This revived interest was proven by the thousands of people who rushed to see Frangoulis's shows at the Athinon Arena last spring,

where he was joined by a few very well-known vocalists, such as Lucio Dalla, Lara Fabian and Madeleine Peyroux, in a series of duets that provided the material for his new, double album. "Easy listening" might not seem quite the appropriate term to describe Mario Frangoulis, an artist with a rich, operatic education and undoubtedly great vocal talent, and when it comes to describing his work it is anything but derogatory.

On this album, easy-listening classics such as "Historia de un Amor" and "O Sole Mio" can be found side by side with

many Hadjidakis classics. Lucio Dalla is heard performing beside Dionysis Savvopoulos, but it is the orchestrations and the operatic touches in Frangoulis's voice, at times more epic and at other times more internal, that give a pop character to the final result. Abroad, many well-known tenors become crossover artists and icons in countries that have a greater tradition in opera. In Greece, Frangoulis has cultivated his fan base, an audience that seems not to care a whim about labels. Frangoulis's audience is only interested in old, much-loved songs and in his good voice.



## Many Greeks wary of shops bearing goods

Greek shoppers and traders are among the most suspicious in Europe about the quality of products, the results of a new Eurobarometer study have shown.

Nearly four in 10 (39 percent) Greek consumers have «serious reservations» about the products they buy, one of the highest rates in the EU. Greek traders are even more apprehensive, with 42 percent saying they fear «most goods on the market are not safe» - the highest rate in the bloc.

In the case of Greek shoppers, fears are not necessarily groundless. Nearly one in five (18 percent) claims to have purchased goods that were subsequently recalled due to health or safety concerns. Meanwhile, 60 percent say they worry about the safety of a product when shopping, the second highest rate in the bloc. Nevertheless only 8 percent bother to return tainted or defective goods, the second lowest rating in the EU.

## Private guard outside US envoy's residence shot by policeman

*A private security guard on duty outside the official residence of the US ambassador in Athens was seriously injured shortly before noon on Wednesday when a police sentry fired two shots at him under still undetermined circumstances.*

Hours later, Greek Police (EL.AS) announced that two top police command-

ers were suspended in relation to the unprecedented incident, while a third was transferred to another post. The apparent shooter, who remained in custody, was also suspended. Specifically, a deputy commander in Athens' police headquarters along with the senior officer in charge of the Ambelokipi precinct were suspended.

Earlier, police spokesman Panagiotis Stathis said the 38-year-old police sergeant on duty outside the US ambassador's residence fired

his service revolver and wounded the 31-year-old private security firm employee in the throat.

The injured man was rushed to the nearby Hellenic Navy Hospital, where he was reported in serious condition. The US ambassador's residence is roughly two blocks away from the US embassy in Athens, with the hospital another block away.

Describing the incident according to information gathered by the early afternoon, Stathis said the policeman was at the entrance of a guard post when the security employee exited the diplomatic compound and turned in the opposite direction, at which time the police sergeant fired one round. When the security guard turned around to see what had happened, the alleged perpetrator fired a second shot, which hit the former in the throat.

Stathis added that the policeman had not, up until the afternoon, provided clear answers as to the reason he opened fire.

Government spokesman Evangelos Antonaros described the incident as "unfortunate", adding that a preliminary examination would be held.

The arrested officer joined the police force in 1995 and was stationed at the Ambelokipi police precinct in central Athens, whose jurisdiction apparently encompasses the area where the embassy is located.

### US ambassador

In a later statement regarding the incident, US ambassador to Greece Daniel Speckhard expressed his sympathy for the guard and his family, and wished him a speedy recovery.

Speckhard also spoke by phone with Interior Minister Prokypis Pavlopoulos over the phone regarding the incident.

US embassy operations were not affected.



## Spy on your family, friends with new program

Google have unveiled a new feature that allows users to track the location on Google Maps of friends or family using a mobile smartphone.

Google Latitude uses Global Positioning System (GPS) technology to show the "approximate" whereabouts on a Google Map of users who opt into the service and choose to share their location with others.

"You can do things like see if your spouse is stuck in traffic on the way home from work, notice that a buddy is in town for the weekend, or take comfort in knowing that a loved one's flight landed safely, despite bad weather.

"Not only can you see your friends' locations on a map, but you can also be in touch directly via SMS, Google Talk, Gmail, or by updating your status message," Google said in a company blog post announcing the new feature.

The Mountain View, California, Internet giant stressed

that the sharing of location data is strictly optional.

"We've built fine-grained privacy controls right into the application," Google said. "Everything about Latitude is opt-in. You not only control exactly who gets to see your location, but you also decide the location that they see.

"For instance, let's say you are in Rome. Instead of having your approximate location detected and shared automatically, you can manually set your location for elsewhere — perhaps a visit to Niagara Falls.

"Latitude (also) lets you change the settings on a friend-by-friend basis," Google said.

Latitude, which can be downloaded at [google.com/latitude](http://google.com/latitude), is presently available in 27 countries and Google said it hopes to add more soon.

Latitude works on mobile smartphones and as an iGoogle gadget on desktop and laptop computers. Google said Latitude will be available for the Apple iPhone "very soon."