

decision to make The Wannabes and not a sequel to The Wog Boy, surely a safer bet. "The first half is good, but I took on too much [Giannopoulos also directed it] and what suffered, as a result, was my performance. I'll never make that mistake again.

"I was a physical and emotional wreck after The Wannabes. It's the only setback I've ever had. But I've moved on and it was the best thing that could have happened to me. You can't learn as an artist until you've experienced the lows".

Seamlessly switching back into salesman mode, he adds: "And the film premiered at the TriBeCa Film Festival in New York, where I got to do an acting class with Al Pacino".

Colosimo listens quietly as his friend talks about The Wannabes. The pair are sitting in Giannopoulos' inner-city office, where the walls are covered with framed posters of his successes - The Wog Boy, Wog-A-Rama and even The Wannabes is up there. It was on Wog-A-Rama that Colosimo, who had by then also graduated from VCA, first worked with Giannopoulos, in 1993. "We worked so well together, we had such wonderful chemistry onstage", says Giannopoulos.

Their friendship was cemented as the production toured the country, performing to sell-out crowds. "Those shows went on for a long time", says Giannopoulos. "We'd find ourselves in a city for three months at a time and we used to share a room. We became very close. I was lucky to have him on the road. I don't think I'd have got through it otherwise".

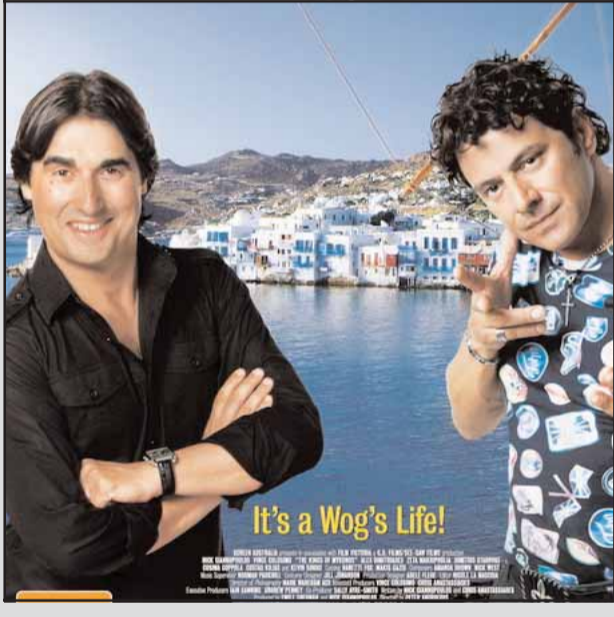
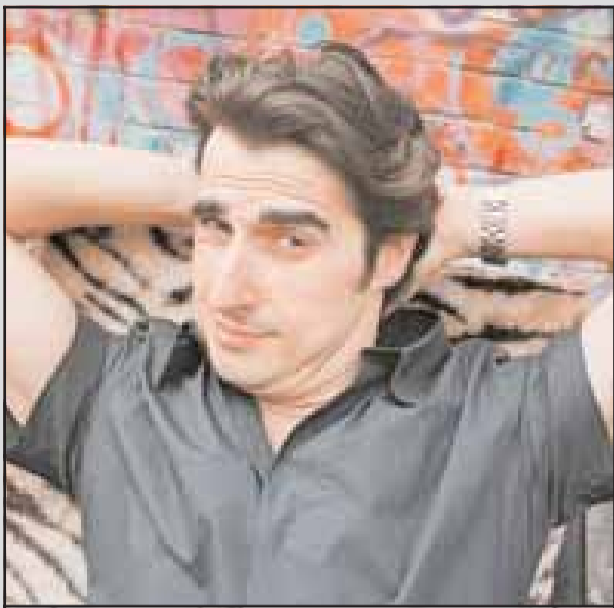
Colosimo was on hand to offset his friend's occasionally temperamental behaviour. "We have very different personalities", says Giannopoulos. "I'm a lot more intense and have a shorter fuse, whereas Vince lets things ride over him. So the wonderful thing during the stage shows was that, while I was getting angry at people for various stuff, Vince was there to make them feel better.

"Even [while filming] in Mykonos, he was still doing that. He balances me, contrasts my intensity. Because, I'm actually a very serious guy," he adds with a smile.

Colosimo picks up the thread: "The thing about Nick is that he can put people's backs up straightaway if they don't know him. He wore a lot of hats very early on: the performer, the writer and the producer. There was a lot of pressure on him and sometimes people took the way he dealt with things the wrong way. It wasn't always easy for him or a lot of the people who worked for him. But it all came out in the wash and we had a lot of fun, too."

Giannopoulos admits he's less abrasive these days. "I cut abrasive out", he says, laughing. "As you get older, you mature and learn how to stress your point without shouting".

Colosimo interrupts: "He's changed a million per cent. I don't know what the pills are, but they're fantastic". Once again the pair collapse with laughter.



The Underbelly star says had no hesitation in stepping back into Frank's stonewashed jeans and see-through shirts for the Kings of Mykonos ("Who wouldn't want to go to Mykonos?" he asks), a fact Giannopoulos readily admits helped to secure funding for the production.

The pair also enjoyed getting to wear their iconic leather jackets from The Wog Boy again, even if they're only briefly seen onscreen. "We both still had them, wrapped in plastic in our wardrobes", Colosimo says laughing.

"So we wore them in the scene where Steve and Frank step off the plane in Mykonos," adds Giannopoulos. "But you never see them again, because it was so bloody hot".

Colosimo would have liked to have worn it for a little longer. "But it was unbearable" he says. "It was either take it off or faint. But I liked playing Frank again. I'd love to do a bit more comedy.

As director of the Kings of Mykonos, Peter Andrikidis was the man trusted with keeping things on track during location shooting ("Nick and I had to be separated so many times", admits Colosimo).

Andrikidis also had to deal with a somewhat different Greek work ethic (I don't want to hang sh*t on the Greeks, but their social life does get in the way of their work", he says) plus his own excitable cast and crew: "There was a bit of partying on the island, initially, but we sorted that out. That happens whenever you take a crew overseas. But you can't do a 12 hour day of shooting and then stay out drinking for six hours afterwards".

Cast and crew were also devastated when Dimitriades, who plays the suave villain Mihali had to fly back to Australia during filming, after the death of his mother.

"He actually found out his mother had died during a big fight sequence, but he kept going and finished the scene", says Andrikidis. "Then he flew home for a week.

"He was very close to his mother, but I was impressed with how professional he was. He was incredible".

As for Giannopoulos and Colosimo both say they'd love to work with each other again. "But it's not really up to us," muses Giannopoulos. Ultimately, it's up to the audience. If they want us to do something, we'll do something. But you can't do something for no one".

Colosimo starts laughing. "Well, we could do it for our parents," he says "Whenever Nick comes round to our house for Christmas or whatever, my parents are so excited, because they know there's going to be a show.

"Nick can make them laugh so much that my dad can't sit down any more. So, we can always do it for them".

The Kings of Mykonos: Wog Boy 2 is in cinemas May 20

Article from the Sunday Telegraph Magazine

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