

# ekosmos

Hellenic News, Culture & Lifestyle

## Hatzigiannis Down Under

Mihalis Hatzigiannis, the most popular Greek singer of the last decade has been confirmed as this year's headline act at both the 2013 Antipodes Festival & Greek Festival of Sydney

In what Festival organisers have called a coup, the talented and extremely popular Cypriot born superstar Mihalis Hatzigiannis will headline this year's Antipodes Festival in Lonsdale Street Melbourne on Saturday March 16 and the Greek Festival of Sydney at Darling Harbour on Sunday March 17.

Hatzigiannis was born in Nicosia, Cyprus and graduated from the Cyprus Music Academy (Royal College of London) with a degree in piano, guitar and music theory. Starting out young with his first major performances coming at Eurovision qualifiers when he was only 17 years old, he had three hit records (all reaching platinum status in Cyprus) and a performance at Eurovision by the time he was 20. Sold out tours and platinum records followed right across the Greek speaking world including 2 previous sold out tours of Australia.

The Greek Festival of Sydney and Melbourne's Antipodes Festival have become renowned worldwide as the largest celebrations of Greek culture outside of Greece. Tens of thousands of people attend the free events with the highlight each year being the performance by an invited guest artist on the respective main stages at Lonsdale Street and Darling Harbour.

In taking to the Festival stages, Hatzigiannis follows in the footsteps of some of Greece's most well-known performers including Eleftheria Arvanitaki, George Dalaras, Haris Alexiou, Glykeria, Dimitra Galani, Alkistis Protopsaltis and

Pantelis Thalassinos.

"We are delighted and excited about having one of the hottest Greek artists in recent years gracing our stage." Leonidas Vlahakis, Antipodes Festival

"Beyond simply being a great performer one of Hatzigiannis's attractions for us is his appeal amongst a younger audience." Nia Karteris, Greek Festival of Sydney

Hatzigiannis was last in Australia in 2011, and with his broad range of musical talents and extensive song list, we're excited to be presenting these concerts for free to Melbourne and Sydney audiences.

The Lonsdale Street Glendi is the highlight of the Antipodes Festival, the cultural arm of the Greek Community of Melbourne, which sees Melbourne's Greek centre transform into one giant free street party, bringing together local and international performers, children's activities and food, for a weekend of fun and feasting.

The Greek Festival of Sydney takes over Darling Harbour during the weekend of March 16 and 17, where it comes alive to the sound of fabulous Greek music, the aromas of Greek food, displays of Greek dancing and many surprises for the children. It's the perfect way to celebrate the vibrant multiculturalism of Sydney and to explore the beauty of Greek culture.



Seminal Sydney-based Greek contemporary folk troupe Out of the Blue, return to the fold after a well-deserved sabbatical.

Words by SAVVAS LIMNATITIS



### INFO

**WHEN:** Friday 8th February 2013 at 8.00 PM  
**WHERE:** FIX LIVE 588 Princess Highway Rockdale  
**TICKETS:** \$40.00 with meze  
**BOOKINGS:** Adriana on 0431 333 349  
 or [bookings@fixlivesydney.com.au](mailto:bookings@fixlivesydney.com.au)  
 or Panagiotis Kalandranis on 0408 280 716  
[outofthebluemusic@live.com.au](mailto:outofthebluemusic@live.com.au)

## Headfirst into the deep blue

Aptly named "The Journey", Out of the Blue's latest venture (see info panel for more details) is not only a retrospective of their illustrious career so far, but also a magical trip through the tranquil waters of Greek song. A word of warning though: if you are expecting the almost mandatory spit-and-polish affair usually connected with Greek live music in the land down under, or the pyrotechnic showing off of some speed freak bouzouki player, you are best advised to steer clear of Fix Live at Rockdale on the night of Friday 8th 2013. What you will get instead is a no-frills, proper Greek music, vehemently performed with a painstaking attention to detail and the all-prevailing passion that has come to characterize Panagiotis Kalandranis' merry group of dedicated musicians.

Accompanying the band on the night will be no less than three traditional Greek dance companies, with a group of thespians adding further spice to the affair, their impeccably written exchange of one-liners easing the audience into the journey through the history of Hellenic music.

Talking exclusively to "O Kosmos" newspaper (read the full interview in yesterday's edition – in Greek, sorry!!!), Panagiotis Kalandranis and Georgia Giatis, his faithful sidekick and lead singer

of the band explain that while their road so far has been paved with many a thorn, the love they have received from their audience has been so intensely expressed, it has given them all the required strength to carry on, despite the many obstacles they so frequently encounter. "People need to understand that the problems we face are many" said a visibly disappointed Kalandranis. "We have no support from anyone. Whatever we do, we do on our own...But people have embraced us and that's the most important bit".

As we speak, Out of the Blue are waiting for the nod from Melbourne's Antipodes Festival (a mere formality if first indications are anything to go by), so they can start making arrangements for a trip to the third largest Greek city in the world. With a stripped down version of the band having already introduced Out of the Blue's mission to the demanding Melbournians, their appearance at this year's Greek Festival promises to be an unforgettable experience for all involved.

Any plans for the future? A mischievous smile appears on the faces of both Giatis and Kalandranis. "We shall talk very soon" says Kalandranis. Meantime, buckle up and enjoy "The Journey".