

SONG OF THE DAY



Fahad AISabah
Staff Writer

Song: Alejandro
Artist: Lady Gaga
Album: *The Fame Monster*
Genre: Pop

In short: There's no doubt that *The Fame Monster* is an excellent record, start to finish. "Alejandro," one of the best tracks, pays homage to vintage Ace of Base with hints of ABBA.

To listen to the song visit www.alwatandaily.com
E-mail your feedback to falsabah@alwatandaily.com

Faisal Al-Sarraf to release album soon

Faisal Al-Jassim
Staff Writer

KUWAIT: After an absence of a year and a half, singer Faisal Al-Sarraf returns back with a new album that awaits the final touches only so it would be released in the market soon.

Faisal Al-Sarraf said that he is searching for a catchy title for the album as it contains 10 songs that vary in Egyptian, Iraqi, Saudi, Emirati, Omani and local dialects. The album includes the collaboration with a number of poets and composers such as Sheikh Sabah Nasser Al-Sabah, Abdulaziz Al-Abkl, Mansour Al-Fadhli, Khalid Al-Mutairi, Mohammed Khalil, Rakan, and Ahmed Ben Fares along several prominent composers like Mishal Al-Aroj, Yaqyb Al-Kobaizi, and Mohammed Yehia.

Al-Sarraf pointed out that he finished shooting *Habibi Ana* in a video clip form two months ago, directed by Waleed Nassef and it will soon be featured in all music channels before the release of the album.

Al-Sarraf said that the cause of the album delay is due to his participation at *FM Star* program.



Faisal Al-Sarraf

Malak prepares role in *Leila 2*

Yahya Abdul-Rahem
Staff Writer

KUWAIT: Young actress Malak is preparing for her role in the second part of the television series *Leila 2*, which is directed by Saudi Amer Hamoud and is written by Saudi writer Laila Al-Hilali.

Malak said that she will be traveling soon to Bahrain to start the shooting of her episodes, where she will be co-starring Latifa Al-Mqren, Badriya Ahmad, Haifa Hussain, Ibrahim Al-Zejali, Najwa and Shafeqa.

Malak has recently finished filming her latest series *Nour Fe Sama Safeya* (A light in a Clear Sky), with the great actress Suad Abdullah. Safeya is expected to broadcast on Abu Dhabi TV. Concerning her latest news, she apologized for not participating in *Wad Lazam* series due to her inability to balance her time between both series.

Elvis fans love him tender on King's 75th birthday

MEMPHIS: Unconfirmed sightings aside, Elvis lives on for millions of his fans worldwide, and in cities across the globe many are getting ready to celebrate the King's 75th birthday on Friday.

The biggest party will be here in Memphis, where Jan. 8, 2010 has already been proclaimed Elvis Presley Day, and events including live music and exhibits are planned.

But celebrations are also happening globally, with Elvis fan clubs organizing events in Tokyo, London, Paris and elsewhere.

"Elvis is one of those rare people who came along who resonated across cultural lines," said Howard Kramer, who curated the Elvis exhibit at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio.

Even 32 years after his death, the man born Aaron Elvis Presley retains a fan base that is almost unrivalled in numbers and geographic reach, he added.

Elvis is "still out there as an important cultural figure," says Erika Doss, a professor at the University of Notre Dame's American Studies Department.

For Doss, the author of *Elvis Culture: Fans, Faith, and Image*, the King's popularity endures because he offers something different to each fan.

"For some, he will always be the rockabilly rebel from the 1950s, for others he's very much the Las Vegas superstar. For some he is the patriotic American who went into the military in the late 1950s and for others he's sort of a good old boy gospel singer," she added.

But Elvis also remains relevant because he was so far ahead of the cultural curve, Doss says.

"He was an incredibly good-looking guy who deliberately violated all sorts of sex and gender norms in the 1950s and was attractive to both men and women at the time."

"And, you know, you watch him today, you still see it. He is shockingly good-looking and dynamic."

However fans remember him, the most hardcore will be flocking to Memphis, where his ex-wife Priscilla and daughter Lisa Marie Presley will take part in a birthday cake cutting on the sprawling front lawn of the King's former home, Graceland.

"Elvis continues to be popular all over the world, and fans tend to come on the five-year anniversaries," said Graceland spokesman Kevin Kern.

Opened to the public in 1982 and declared a national monument in 2006, Graceland draws nearly 600,000 visitors a year, making it one of America's most visited homes.

In honor of the King's birthday, the estate will unveil a new exhibit entitled "From Tupelo to Memphis," chronicling Elvis' early life from his birth in small-town Mississippi to his high school graduation in Memphis up to just before he stepped into the international spotlight.

In downtown Memphis, pastry chefs at the historic Peabody Hotel will serve up a chocolate birthday cake layered with rich peanut butter and sliced bananas, mimicking the fried peanut butter and banana sandwich said to have been one of Elvis' favorites.

Born on Jan. 8, 1935, the man who would become known as the King of Rock and Roll, grew up surrounded by the influences of popular country music and the gospel songs he heard at the Pentecostal church where his family worshipped.

The way he combined those influences to create a new sound had a lasting effect on music, according to Jeff Melnick, an associate professor of American studies at Babson College in Massachusetts.

"It's so central to our musical vocabulary, the idea of borrowing from other genres or literally creating remixes or mashups. That's really in our musical DNA now."

Elvis' early death, at 42, did not create his iconic image, according to Melnick.

"He didn't die young enough," he said. "He didn't die so young that we remember him as this always fresh-faced, wonderfully energetic guy."

"He doesn't die young and leave a beautiful corpse. Far



FILE - baseball card sized photographs of Elvis (top) and covers of records (above) adorn the walls of Paul MacLeod's "Graceland Too," home in Holly Springs, Mississippi. (AP)

from it, he's much more the image of what happens through excess," he added.

But his image as an ultimate entertainer persists nonetheless in large part because of the many recordings of the young Elvis, Melnick said.

"There's preserved this unbelievable footage of this young, incredibly athletic, incredibly sexy guy who was just doing stuff that no one had done before," he said. "He was just really good."

Millions of fans agree, and Elvis continues to influence

musicians today, from award-winning stars to Memphis-based rockabilly trio The Dempseys.

"From his music, movies, clothes and moves, no one will ever be as influential as him. He was an original," said Brad Birkedahl, one of the band's members.

For curator Kramer, the key to the King's long reign is quite simple.

"Truth be told, greatness is what endures, and the reason we're still talking about Elvis Presley long after he died is because his music is great." -AFP

SINGLE REVIEW



Reviewed by Fahad AISabah

Song: I'd Do It All Again
Artist: Corinne Bailey Rae
Release date: Jan. 5
Label: EMI

After a four-year hiatus, Grammy Award-winning Acoustic Soul singer Corinne Bailey Rae is back to "Do It All Again" with her sophomore album, *The Sea*. The lead single, "I'd Do It All Again," an expounding declaration of love, finds the English crooner at her most vulnerable self. The song was two months before Rae's husband passed away, after the couple had an argument, and is a testimony of her strong, undying love. The song's structure is very simple, and so are the musical arrangements, giving the song an extremely tender sound that matches Rae's delicate voice. "You try sometimes but it won't stop / You got my heart and my head is lost / I've been burning down these candles for love / So weary, someone to love, is bigger than your pride's worth" sings Rae on the heart-rending track. "I'd Do It All Again" succeeds by focusing on Rae's powers, and not trying too hard to be radio-friendly. 2010 looks like a big year for Rae, as she is preparing to tour extensively throughout the year to promote her album, *The Sea*, out Jan. 26.

Sharon Stone to guest star in *Law & Order: SVU*



FILE - Actress Sharon Stone. (AP)

LOS ANGELES: Actress Sharon Stone is set to guest star in four episodes in NBC's popular television crime series *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*, NBC said on Tuesday.

Stone, 51, best known for her roles in the movies *Basic Instinct* and *Casino*, will play a former police woman turned prosecutor on the show, which follows a squad of detectives who investigate sex crimes. NBC had no air date for the episodes in which she will appear.

Stone won an Emmy Award for her guest actress appearance in the TV legal drama "The Practice" in 2004 and a Golden Globe for her work in the 1995 movie *Casino*.

"It is obviously a thrill and a delight to have a star of Sharon's wattage and importance joining SVU," said *Law & Order* creator Dick Wolf. -Reuters

Taylor Swift, Taylor Lautner top movie poll

LOS ANGELES: Apparently movie fans failed to get the memo that these two young romantics have broken up. Teen heartthrob Taylor Lautner and *Fearless* singer Taylor Swift on Tuesday landed atop online movie ticket seller Fandango.com's annual "Hot List" as the new on-screen couple film fans can't wait to see together on movie screens.

Based on results of an informal online poll, the couple dubbed "Tay-Squared" in the media who star in upcoming romantic comedy *Valentine's Day*, outranked other new on-screen pairings of Jennifer Aniston and Gerard Butler, as well as Jennifer Lopez and Alex O'Loughlin.

Even though many film lovers seem eager to see the 17-year-old Lautner and the 20-year-old Swift connect on film in *Valentine's Day*, which opens on Feb. 12, in real life the romance between the two appears to have fizzled out.

Celebrity magazines *People* and *Us* revealed last week

that Lautner and Swift, after going on a number of dates, have decided to just stay friends instead of pursuing romance.

The Fandango "Hot List" also showed that comic book movie sequel *Iron Man 2*, starring Robert Downey Jr, is the most anticipated 2010 release, with 18 percent of respondents in the poll picking it as their first choice.

That was followed closely by *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1* with 17 percent and vampire romance *The Twilight Saga: Eclipse* with 15 percent.

The Fandango poll rated Swift the "next big movie star of 2010" based on her supporting role in *Valentine's Day*. But expect Swift to compete for attention in *Valentine's Day* from plenty of already established stars. The film also features Jessica Alba, Jamie Foxx, Kathy Bates, Jessica Biel, Patrick Dempsey, Julia Roberts and others. -Reuters



FILE - Singer Taylor Swift. (AP)