





Hello, Liverpool!

It's time once again for Europe to unite under the banner of batshit pop and make a big, international spectacle of itself. As ever, we present our annual Popbitch guide to the wildest, weirdest and wankiest things that this year's contest has to offer...



French disco hell gardens! Human Centipede choreo! The ghost of Edgar Allen Poe! A lot of the more traditional Eurofare has been drawn in this first half, but don't lose heart. It's a decent warm-up for the chaos yet to come.

SS Village People! Moldovan Pagan rave! Aussie keytars and flamboyant German metal! Past the halfway point, Europe really starts to rachet up the madness, so make sure you pace yourself. You won't want to miss a moment of this lot.

Diagrams, facts, information, theory. Want to impress your mates with absolutely useless knowledge about which sorts of things win? We've got everything you need...

The Ones We Left Behind....45–56 If you didn't catch the semis, you'll have missed quite a few acts of note. To honour those who fell at the first hurdle,

we've kept their	profiles here	for posterity.
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Are You Ready?

Eurovision can be an overwhelming experience at the best of times, and we don't want to add to the confusion. So here's a brief overview of the artist profile pages you'll find in this guide — and an explanation as to what a lot of the nonsense we've written actually means...



Artist Info The name of the artist and the title of their song – which will also handily double as a link to their official music video, should you want to see it. (Coloured text is clickable.)

Language Most of the songs are in English, but a few big winners in recent years have been in their mother tongue – so this is more of an open field than it used to be.

Theory Stuff This bit's mostly for dweeps – but, basically: minor keys win more regularly than major; key changes are far less popular than you'd think; and 128bpm is a tempo death trap to be avoided at all costs.

The Nielsen Once again, the lovely people at Nielsen Gracenote Mood Gracenote have shared their findings on the moods of each tune – determined by doing some deeply impressive sounding stuff with machine learning and metadata.







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First Half Songs #1-13



Pt.1: At A Glance

Of the two halves, this first one is definitely the more traditional — which might seem like an insane claim when we kick off with literary Austrian electropop and rousing Portuguese music hall — but by the time the Finnish Human Centipede arrives, the night truly takes a turn...

#	Country	Which One Is That?
1	Austria	A hi-NRG semi-choral club stomper about getting possesed by the ghost of Edgar Allen Poe (yes, really)
2	Portugal	Mad lady cabaret
3	Switzerland	Third year on the trot of Swiss sad lad balladry
4	Poland	One for the wine'o'clock crowd
5	Serbia	A spooky bout of Serbian insomnia with a 16-bit MegaDrive soundtrack
6	France	Deux Et Lipa
7	Cyprus	Muscle-heavy Aussie from Cypriot stock: Eurovision's own Peter Andre
8	Spain	Jury fodder; audience arsenic
9	Sweden	The bookies' big favourite — again; a sandstorm in a panini press
10	Albania	Dramatic family affair; useful piss break to beat the interval rush
11	Italy	A returning act; soulful dreamboat for the mums and mum-adjacent
12	Estonia	Standard issue Euro piano ballad

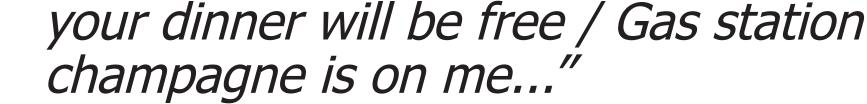


Austria

People always ask "What is the appeal of Eurovision? Why do you do this to yourselves every year?" To which we say, where else would you find an Austrian duo singing a hi-NRG club stomper about being possessed by the ghost of Edgar Allen Poe that absolutely fucking slaps?



	Teya and Salena Who The Hell is Edgar?
Language	English
Key Change Tempo	B minor No 146bpm Four (inc. Teya and Salena)
	A literary 2Unlimited A BBC Three comedy sketch troupe
Gracenote Mood	Energizing -> Arousing Groove
Weird Lyrics	"There's a ghost in my body and he is a lyricist / It is Edgar Allan Poe and I think he can't resist"
Other Notes	It contains a little dig at Spotify for their \$0.003 per stream rate too. " <i>Zero dot zero zero three / Give me two years and</i>



Portugal

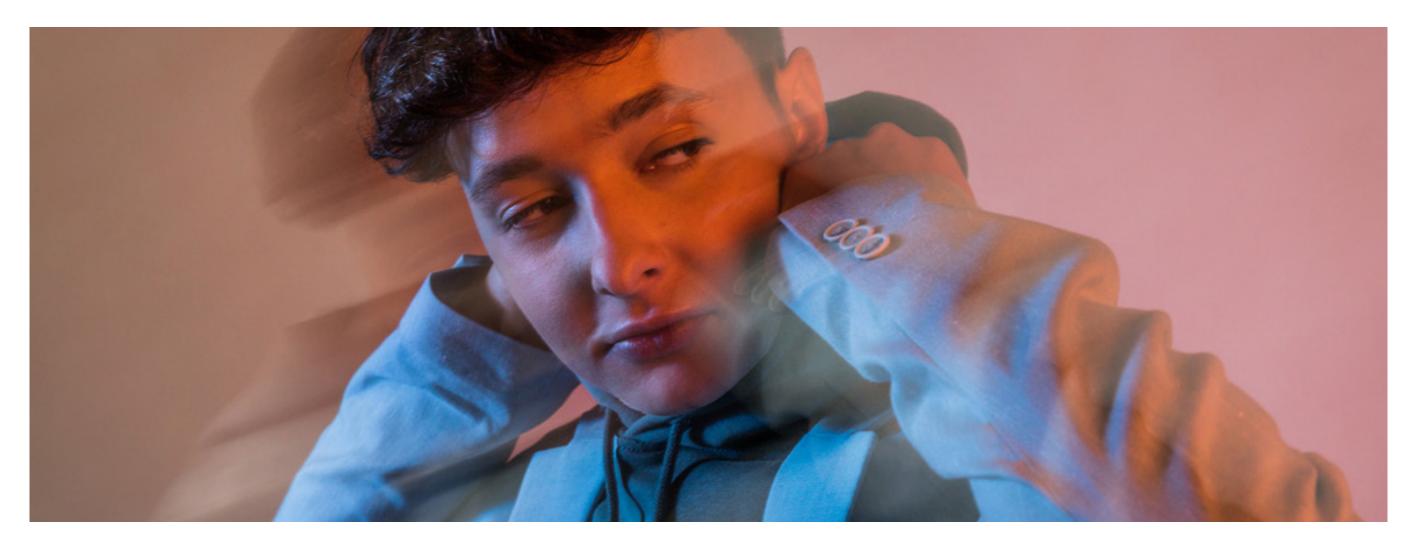
You have to admire them. Whenever the competitions zigs, Portugal zags. What have they pulled from their grabbag this year? A rousing cabaret handclapper, sung by a turn who looks like she could drink every last contestant under the table – then do it all again the next night...



	Mimicat Ai Coração (Translation: Oh, Heart)
Language	Portuguese
Key Change Tempo	F# minor No 145bpm Two <i>(inc. Mimicat)</i>
	Portuguese Paloma Faith Young Bet Lynch
Gracenote Mood	Excited -> Upbeat Pop Groove
Other Notes	Mimicat wrote this song while working as a real estate agent, waiting in a property for the potential buyers to show up.

Switzerland

Following Gjon's Tears (2021) and Marius Bear (2022), Remo Forrer completes the sad Swiss boy bedroom ballad trinity. They haven't set him up on a great trajectory though. From finishing third in 2021, to seventeenth in 2022, diminishing returns hint at the lower reaches of the table this year.



	Remo Forrer Watergun
Language	English
Key Change	69bpm (Nice)
	Duncan Laurence Will Byers from Stranger Things
Gracenote Mood	Yearning -> Energetic
Talent Show	The Voice Of Switzerland (Series 3; winner) I Can See Your Voice Germany

Poland

For the first time in decades — maybe even ever — this Eurovision contest has no key changes in it. Luckily for the old-timers, this one does contain a nod to that old Eurovision tradition: the tearway costume. This one looks a bit like opening a new fangled Quality Street.



Artist Song	
Language	English
Key Change Tempo	B minor No 99bpm Seven (inc. Blanka)
Sounds Like Looks Like	
Gracenote Mood	Energizing -> Arousing Groove
Talent Show	Top Model (2021)
Other Notes	Solo has drawn accusations of plagiarism, with viewers of the Polish national finals noting that it sounds an awful lot like a hit song on Polish radio last year: Up by INNA. Blanka's ingenious twist? Instead



Serbia

Having finished in the Top 5 last year with a performance art piece about Serbian healthcare provision and Meghan Markle's lustrous hair, Serbia have clearly decided that art-kook pop is their thing. And you know what? Good for them...



	Luke Black Samo Mi Se Spava (Translation: I Just Want To Sleep)
Language	Serbian; English
Key Change Tempo	E Freygish (Oooh) No 103bpm One (Luke himself)
Sounds Like Looks Like	Hatari Tamsin Greig
Gracenote Mood	Aggressive -> Dark Hard Beat
Thirst Trap?	Sure, why not?
Other Notes	This song is modal – neither major nor minor, but one of the other, less common scale permutations. The Freygish scale is very popular in klezmer and flamenco music. Luckily for Luke, Israel aren't



First Half Second Half The Stats The Rest

France

Generally speaking, Canadians have tended to fare pretty well at Eurovision. Obviously Celine Dion won it 1988 shortly before losing her virginity. Annie Cotton came 3rd in 1993. Natasha St-Pier came 4th in 2001. (We'll just brush over Rykka in 2016...)



	La Zarra Évidemment
Language	French
Key Change Tempo	G# minor No 120bpm Four <i>(inc. La Zarra)</i>
Sounds Like Looks Like	
Gracenote Mood	Empowering -> Idealistic/Stirring
Weird Lyrics	"In my hell garden, the plants are watered with the dreams and tears"
Other Notes	La Zarra sent the Eurovision fandom into a bit of a tailspin with an ominous Instagram story, in which she told her followers that her mental and physical health was shot





First Half Second Half The Stats The Rest

Cyprus

First it was "Oh, let us join for the 60th anniversary." Then it was "Oh, let us stick around for the 61st." Now the Aussie takeover is in full effect, sending both their own entry and Sydney's own Andrew Lambrou under Cyprus's flag too. (We unleashed a monster with Gina G...)



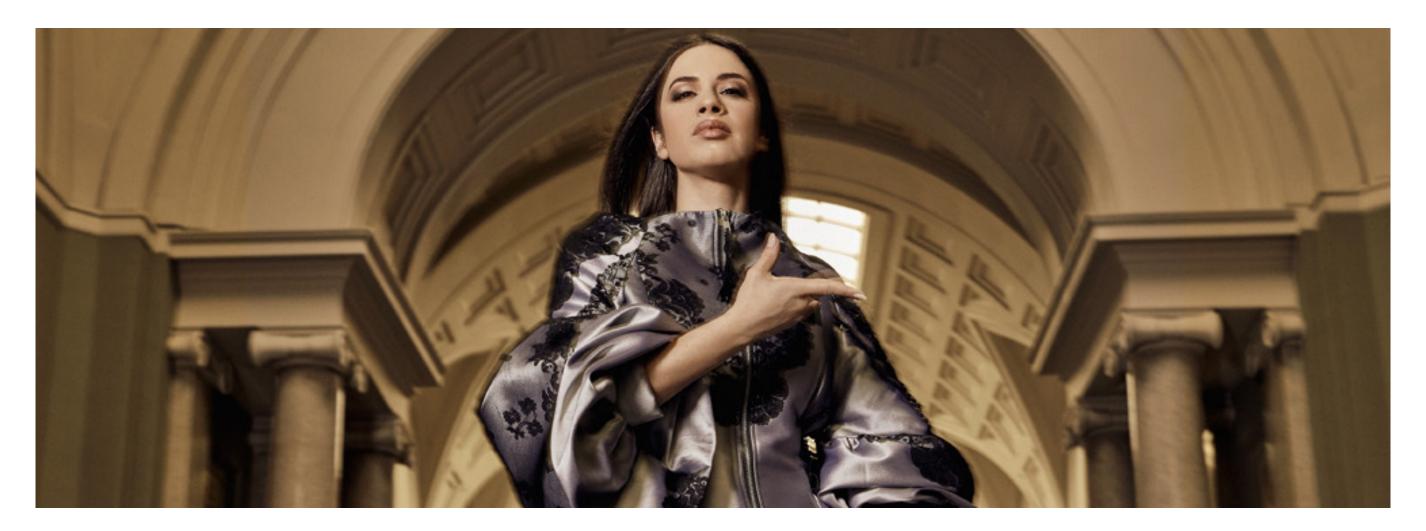
	Andrew Lambrou Break A Broken Heart
Language	English
Key Change Tempo	Eb minor No 130bpm Four (Two Swedes, one Dane – zero Lambrous)
	Tom Odell? Tom Grennan? A mid-chart Tom Cypriot Rylan
Gracenote Mood	Empowering -> Idealistic/Stirring
Talent Show	The X Factor Australia (Series 7)
Other Notes	Australian Andrew's Cypriot heritage basically makes him Eurovision Peter Andre. So don't be be surprised if he tries to open a café while he's in town.





Spain

The last ten years have seen the UK, Germany and Spain taking it in turns to finish last. Germany very kindly took the wheel last year, while the UK and Spain took silver and bronze. This year, it seems Spain drew the short straw. Thanks, Spain. We'll repay it next year...

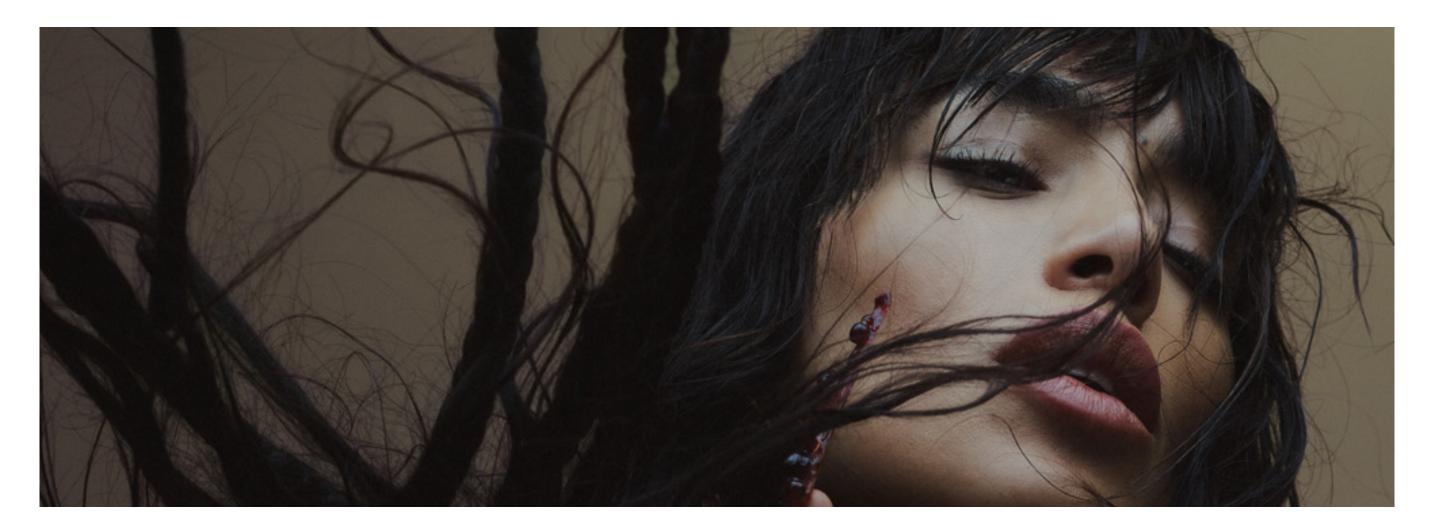


Artist Song	Blanca Paloma Eaea
Language	Spanish
Key Change	116bpm
	Answers on a postcard, please Spanish Sophie Winkleman
Gracenote Mood	Fiery -> Fiery Groove
Other Notes	The second entry this year to be written in Phrygian mode (Serbia's Freygish mode is also known as Phrygian Dominant, should such things matter to you). It does tend to go over big with the flamenco crowd and the music nerds – so perhaps the jury will be swayed by it and we'll have to eat our



Sweden

Returning to the contest as a past winner is a risky move. Johnny Logan is the only act to have claimed a second win back in the 80s. More recent attempts (Lena, 2011; Rybak, 2018) have dropped like shit-caked stones. That said, this is the bookies' favourite this year...



Artist Song	Loreen Tattoo
Language	English
Key Change Tempo	F# Major (Historically not a great choice) No 150bpm Six (inc.Euphoria co-writers Thomas G:Son & Peter Boström)
Sounds Like Looks Like	The B-Side to Euphoria Loreen
Gracenote Mood	Energizing -> Arousing Groove
Other Notes	Speaking of tattoos: Finland's entrant Käärijä has a visible chest tattoo of Rammstein's logo. Less visible, but 100% verified, UK entrant Mae Muller has a tattoo of a Tunnock's Teacake on her left calf.
	Not speaking of tattoos: Loreen's stage-





Albania

2023 has been the Year Of The Nepo Baby, but Albania has given things a neat little twist. Instead, of getting to Eurovision on the strength of her family connections, Albina (the daughter) has got to Eurovision and then brought the rest of her family up on stage with her.



Artist Song	Albina and Familja Kelmendi Duje
Language	Albanian
Key Change	110bpm
	Albania's entry most years The breakout stars of Gogglebox Albania
Gracenote Mood	Urgent -> Dark Pop Intensity
Talent Show	The Voice Of Albania (Series 4; 2014) Top Fest (2015)
Other Notes	One of the writers of this song has a very sparsely updated YouTube channel where he posts remixes he's done. In one, he's somehow unintentionally managed to make



Italy

Hidden within the lyrics of this is Marco's cure for a hangover, which might be useful tomorrow morning if you're the type to play Eurovision drinking games. He recommends coffee with lemon. (2-3tbsps of lemon juice to a standard 8oz/225ml cup of coffee ought to do it.)



	Marco Mengoni Due Vite
Language	Italian
Key Change Tempo	D Major No 118bpm Four (inc. Marco on lyrics)
	Italy's 2013 entry The lovechild of George Clooney and Roy Kent
Gracenote Mood	Yearning -> Energetic Yearning
Talent Show	X Factor (Series 3, winner – 2009)
Other Notes	This song gave Marco his 69th platinum record.

Estonia

There's not a huge amount to tell you about this standard issue piano ballad, so we'll tell you this instead. One of Alika's backing vocalists — kept offstage on harmony duties — has potentially the most metal name in the history of the contest: Grettel Killing



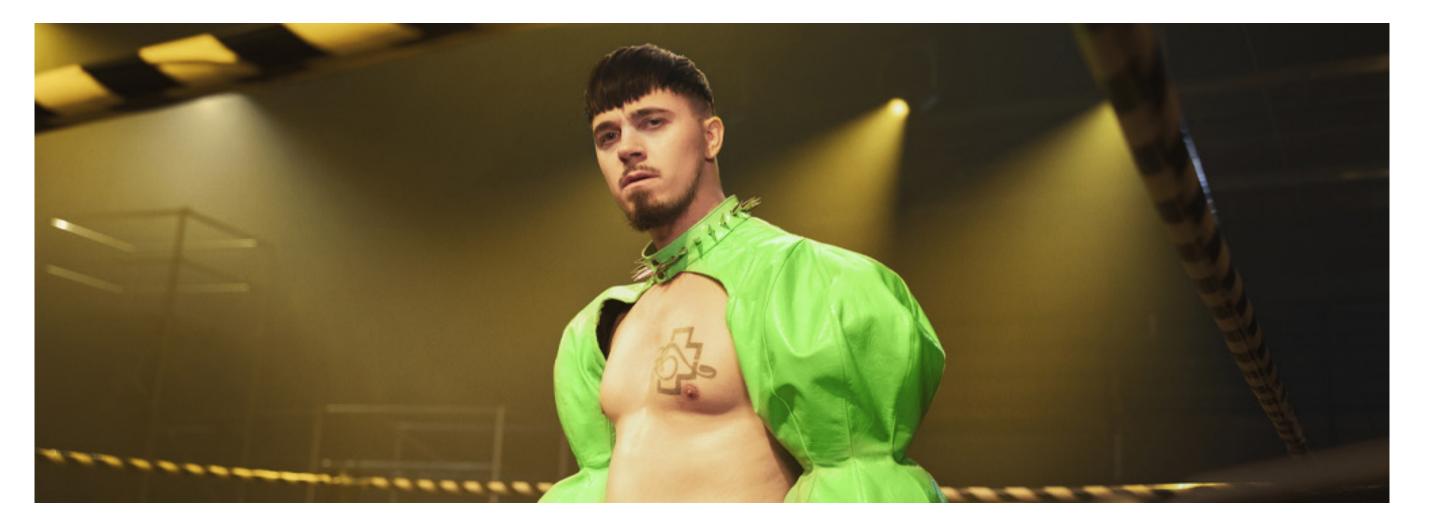
Artist Song	Alika Bridges
Language	English
Key Change Tempo	C minor No 70bpm Three <i>(inc. Alika)</i>
	An Adele off-cut Jennifer Lawrence
Gracenote Mood	Yearning -> Energetic Yearning
Talent Show	Eesti Otsib Superstaari (Winner, series 8, 2021)
Other Notes	The two other co-writers on this wrote Tout I'Univers for Gjon's Tears in 2021, and one also co-wrote Duncan Laurence's Arcade.
	Alika's sister is a pro dancer and won the





Finland

Fuckin YES.



Artist Song	Käärijä Cha Cha Cha
Language	Finnish
Key Change Tempo	E minor No 155bpm Four <i>(inc. Käärijä)</i>
	Electric Callboy The Sheriff Of Nottingham in a queerpunk adaptation of Robin Hood
Gracenote Mood	Excited
Weird Lyrics	<i>"A couple piña coladas I have devoured / Yet the expression I have on my face is sour"</i>
Other Notes	There was a rumour going around that former Finnish prime minister Alexander



Songs #14-26



First Half Second Half The Stats T

The Rest

Pt.2: At A Glance

Now that you're nice and warm after Finland, get ready for the rest of the bonkers shit that we let through this year. Nazi Pee Wee Herman! Moldovan pagan rave! Panslavic sisterhood anthems and killer Aussie keytars! An eclectic show of European pop that's mostly great.

#	Country	Which One Is That?
14	Czechia	Bad Sisters: The Musical
15	Australia	Antipodean prog-metal — starts light, gets unexpectedly heavy; a good time had by all
16	Belgium	The kind of 90s house bop that RuPaul would kill for
17	Armenia	Little Simz orchestral rap with an Alesha Dixon delivery
18	Moldova	Full-on ethno-folk rave; potential to induce a contact trip
19	Ukraine	Pet Shop Boys stage presence with that Imagine Dragons advert sound
20	Norway	Electro Game Of Thrones cosplay
21	Germany	Flamboyant metal from a growling German parrot man
22	Lithuania	A portal back to Eurovision 2003
23	Israel	Overengineered but extremely slick pop from someone trying hard to spark a dance craze
24	Slovenia	Would make perfect bedding for an XFM/Radio X station ident
25	Croatia	SS officers satirical punk singalong
		A astabut hook to alogo out with



Czechia

Most years, there's some sort of Slavic women's anthem about solidarity and sisterhood. Sometimes it's a nudge-nudge, wink-wink, buxom butter-churning bop. Sometimes it's a bonkers bouncing babushka rap. And sometimes it's... this.



Artist Vesna Song My Sister's Crown Language English, Ukrainian, Czech, Bulgarian Key E minor Key Change No Tempo 150bpm Songwriters Six Sounds Like Blackpink Looks Like Helena Bonham Carter's greatest hits Gracenote Mood Aggressive -> Dark Hard Beat Other Notes The promo video for this song promised lots of weird, spooky, stately home horror potential for a crazy stage show, but the design they've plumped for is relatively tame, revolving mostly around them all having huge plaited ponytails. Which only serve to remind us of Slavko Kalezić – and



Australia

Earlier this year, someone appeared to leak the costs of all the various special stage effects in a Eurovision stage show. The pyro, the dry ice, the wind machines, etc... If you're interested, we figure this prog-metal band might be a fun one to keep a running tally on.



	Voyager Promise
Language	English
Key Change	122bpm
	It Bites (The band; we're not sayin Terry Thomas
Gracenote Mood	Defiant -> Heavy Brooding
Other Notes	Keytars are a weirdly under in Eurovision, given how inf they are. They've had a bit in the sun recently thanks t entries Think About Things 2020 competition) and 10 Y

eirdly underused instrument ven how inherently goofy re had a bit of a moment itly thanks to the Icelandic out Things (from the nixed on) and 10 Years (from 2021) by Daði & Gagnamagnið.

we're not saying it sucks)

Belgium

From Beyoncé to Calvin Harris, David Guetta to Drake, Kim Petras to Bebe Rexha — the sound of 90s house is alive again. Belgium are going all in on the retro and have drafted in one of the singers of nu-disco legends Hercules And Love Affair to bring it to you.



	Gustaph Because Of You
Language	English
Key Change Tempo	C minor No 127bpm (Teetering on the verge of catastrophe) Two (inc. Gustaph)
	Will Young doing the Drag Race credits Elon Musk dressed as Boy George
Gracenote Mood	Fiery -> Fiery Groove
Other Notes	Gustaph is another of this year's entries who has put in a good chunk of time at the Eurovision coal face, acting as a backing vocalist for other acts before graduating to

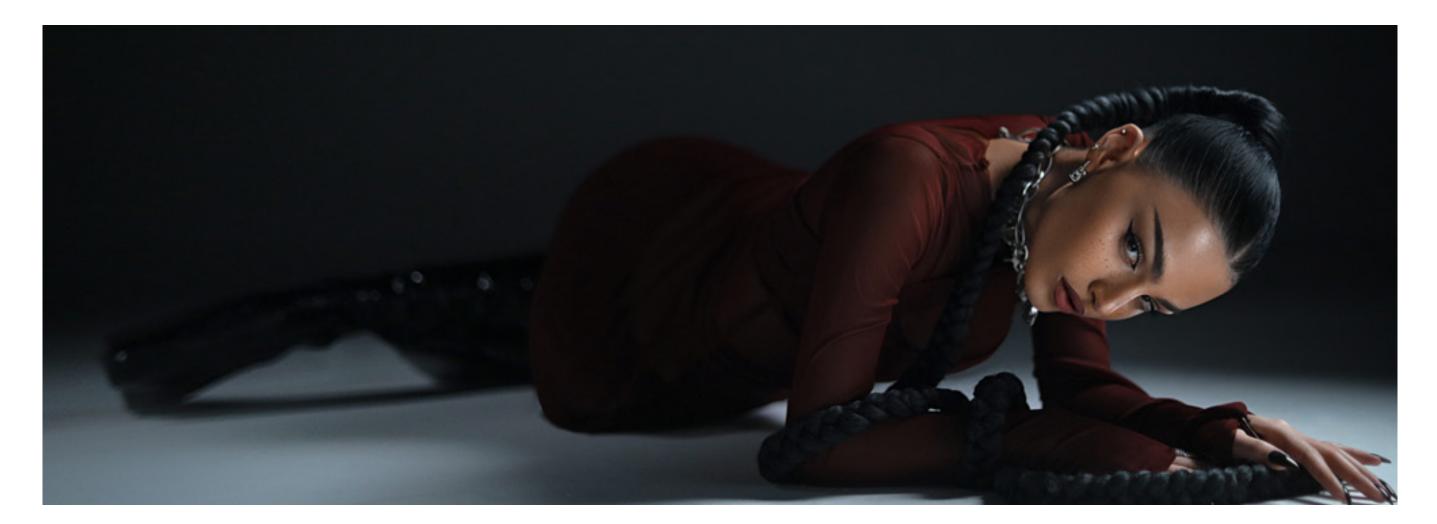
He was on BVs for Sennek in 2018 and for



the spotlight himself.

Armenia

If the singing thing doesn't work out for Brunette, she could always trademark her lyric "I just wanna make art, read books and just find someone who likes me enough to kiss my face" whack it on a tote and spend her summer selling them to twats at festivals. She'd clean up...



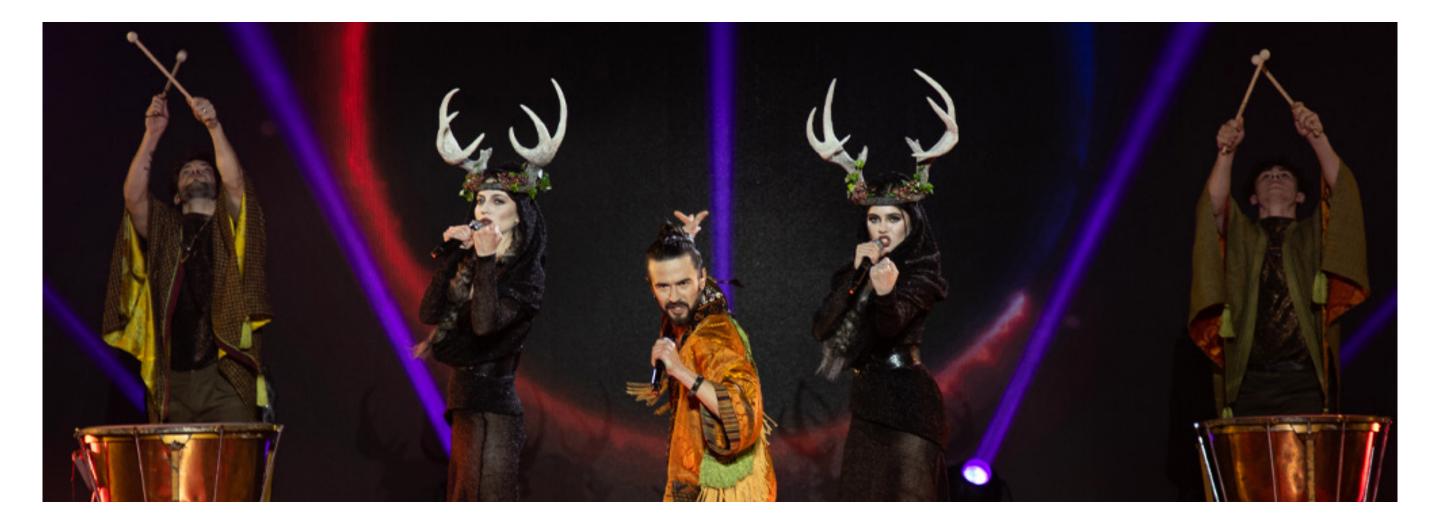
Artiat Brunotto

	Brunette Future Lover
Language	English; Armenian
Key Change Tempo	D minor (Solid; wins disproportionately regularly) No 103bpm One (Brunette herself)
	Touches of orchestal Little Simz (Introvert) A heretofore undiscovered Jenner sibling
Gracenote Mood	Melancholy -> Sad Soulful
Other Notes	Brunette is also a part of Project 12, which they describe as a "Yerevan-based musical collective" – but we'd more accurately describe as a "local covers band".
	Here she is performing 50 Cent's P.I.M.P., Silk Sonic's Fly As Me and previous Eurovision winners Måneskin's I Wanna Be



Moldova

Pagan Rave is fast becoming a staple subgenre at Eurovision. In 2021, Ukraine's Go_A finished Top 5 with Shum. In 2022, France's Alvan & Ahez finished, erm... Top 24 with Fulenn. Obviously it's unlikely to win, but sometimes it's more important to keep a tradition alive.

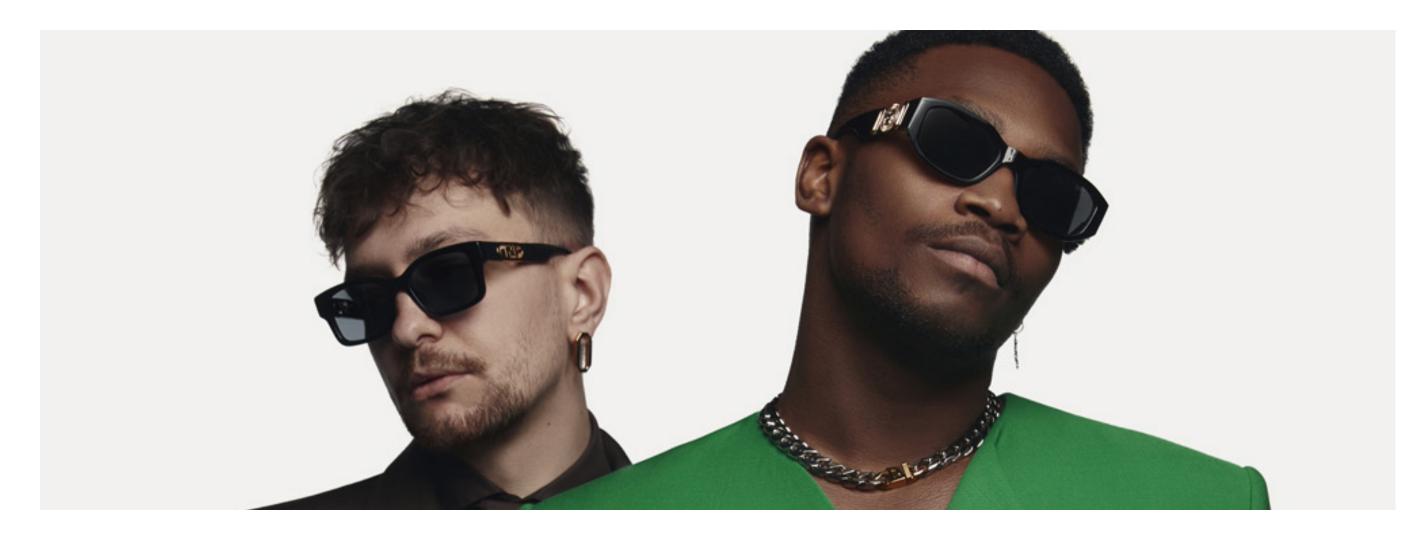


	Pasha Parfeni Soarele Și Luna (Translation: The Sun And The Moon)
Language	Romanian
Key Change Tempo	C minor No 125bpm (flirting with the deadly tempo) Three (inc. Pasha)
	Glastonbury Dance Tent at 1am Ed Norton dressed as Russell Brand
Gracenote Mood	Energizing -> Arousing Groove
Other Notes	This is Pasha's third bite at the Eurovision cherry, having previously sung Lăutar in Baku 2012 and played piano for Aliona Moon's O Mie in Malmö 2013.
	He was also briefly the singer of SunStroke Project – who you might remember as the



Ukraine

It's never easy to follow a win. When the Netherlands won in 2019, they came 23rd the next year. Israel won in 2018, came 23rd the next year. Portugal won in 2017, came 26th the next year. Ukraine won in 2016, came 24th the next year. You get the picture...



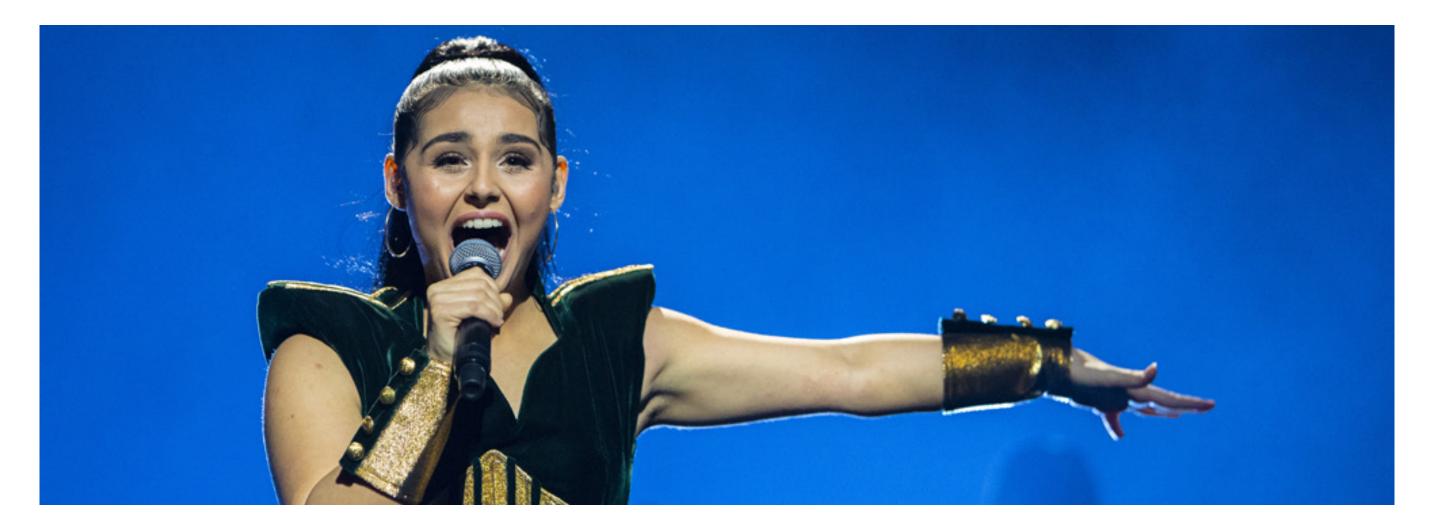
Artist Song	Tvorchi Heart Of Steel
Language	English; Ukranian
Key Change Tempo	C# minor No 78bpm Two (The two of them)
	Imagine Dragons Shanks & Bigfoot
Gracenote Mood	Empowering -> Idealistic/Stirring
Other Notes	After Kalush Orchestra won last year, lead singer Olef called from the stage "Please help Ukraine, Mariupol. Help Azovstal right now."
	This song was written during the siege of

during the siege of Mariupol, drawing inspiration from watching



Norway

Eurovision loves a self-assured queen with a bold message of female empowerment. It loves a young Nordic woman dressed in Game Of Thrones fantasy attire. It loves a falsetto disco vampire and a dubstep rapping astronaut and... what was our point here? We forget.



	Alessandra Queen Of Kings
Language	English
Key Change Tempo	E minor No 126bpm (Perilously close to the killer tempo) Four (inc. Alessandra herself)
	Latter-Day Muse A Disney kid gone dark
Gracenote Mood	Urgent -> Dark Pop Intensity
Talent Show	The Voice Norway (Series 7, made the live shows)
Other Notes	The high note Alessandra hits near the end (an E6) is in Whistle Register – a favourite trick of Mariah's. (Mariah supposedly once opened somebody's garage door with it, but that's almost certainly horseshit)



Germany

Given their proud heritage of good metal, it seems mad that Germany haven't sent something along these lines before. They're making up for lost time with a glut of leather straps, topless men, pyro so high it'll scorch the ceiling and a growling parrot frontman.



	Lord Of The Lost Blood & Glitter
Language	English
Key Change	140bpm
	A scrubbed-up Rammstein A scrubbed-up Rammstein
Gracenote Mood	Rowdy -> Confident/Tough
Other Notes	Chris, the frontman, might look like a gigantic parrot in his outfit – but there is a death metal band who have an actual real-life parrot as their singer.
	Hatebeak features the vocal stylings of Waldo the Parrot and they have released

G

cal stylings of Waldo the Parrot and they have released



Lithuania

Look, we could try to write you an intro for this but, really, what's the point? You have things to do, we have things to do. Let's just let the music talk for itself, shall we? (That sounds generous enough, right...?)



Artist Song	Monika Linkyte Stay
Language	English
Key Change Tempo	B Major (Usually the UK's preferred key of choice; dire) No 98bpm Three (inc. Monika)
Sounds Like Looks Like	A Eurovision entry from the mid-2000s Sheridan Smith
Gracenote Mood	Yearning -> Energetic Yearning
Talent Show	Lietuvos Balsas (The Voice Lithuania runner-up, 2013)
Other Notes	Monika is also one of the returning stars of this year's Eurovision. She performed This Time with Vaidas Baumila in 2015. Apparently in rehearsal for that, they botched their mid-song stage-snog so badly

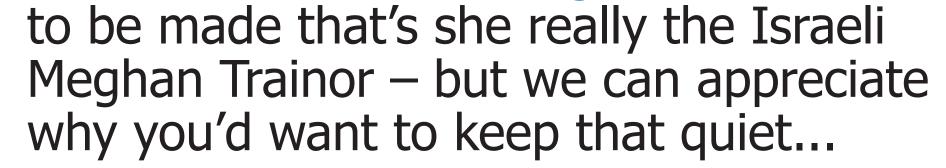


Israel

Noa Kirel first came to public attention appearing in the Israeli reality documentary series *Pushers*, a show about overbearing stage parents who spend their lives managing their children's careers. Not that you could tell. No, not a bit of it...



	Noa Kirel Unicorn
Language	English; Hebrew
Key Change Tempo	F# minor No 130bpm Four (inc. Noa herself)
Sounds Like Looks Like	
Gracenote Mood	Energizing -> Arousing Groove
Other Notes	The big press angle on Noa Kirel is that she's Israel's answer to Britney Spears – a teen star who scandalised the nation by dressing sexy in a video when she was 14. However between the theatre kid energy and the fact she also sampled Mr Sandman in a recent single, there's a case



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Slovenia

Now that everyone's all eco-conscious and into zerowaste, the branded merch game in the Eurovision press centre isn't what it once was. Joker Out have put in a decent showing this year though, handing out Carpe Diem-branded condoms.



	Joker Out Carpe Diem
Language	Slovene
Key Change	132bpm
Sounds Like Looks Like	Hard-Fi League 1 Footballers
Gracenote Mood	Urgent -> Dark Pop Intensity
Other Notes	Since Måneskin parlayed their Eurovision success into a mainstream career, they've got to collaborate with some genuinely massive names like Max Martin and Tom Morello from Rage Against The Machine.

Joker Out haven't done too badly either.

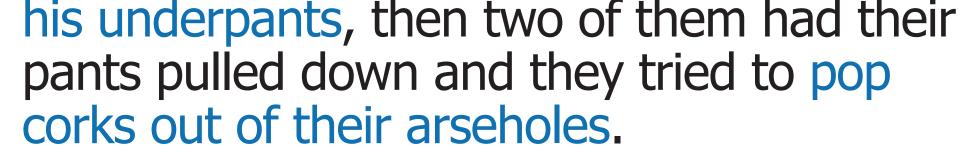


Croatia

Famed for their provocative live shows, Let 3 were once fined for indecent exposure in 2016 after they performed naked at an open-air concert in Varaždin. Sadly, the judge didn't buy the band's defence that they weren't naked because they were wearing corks. In their anuses.

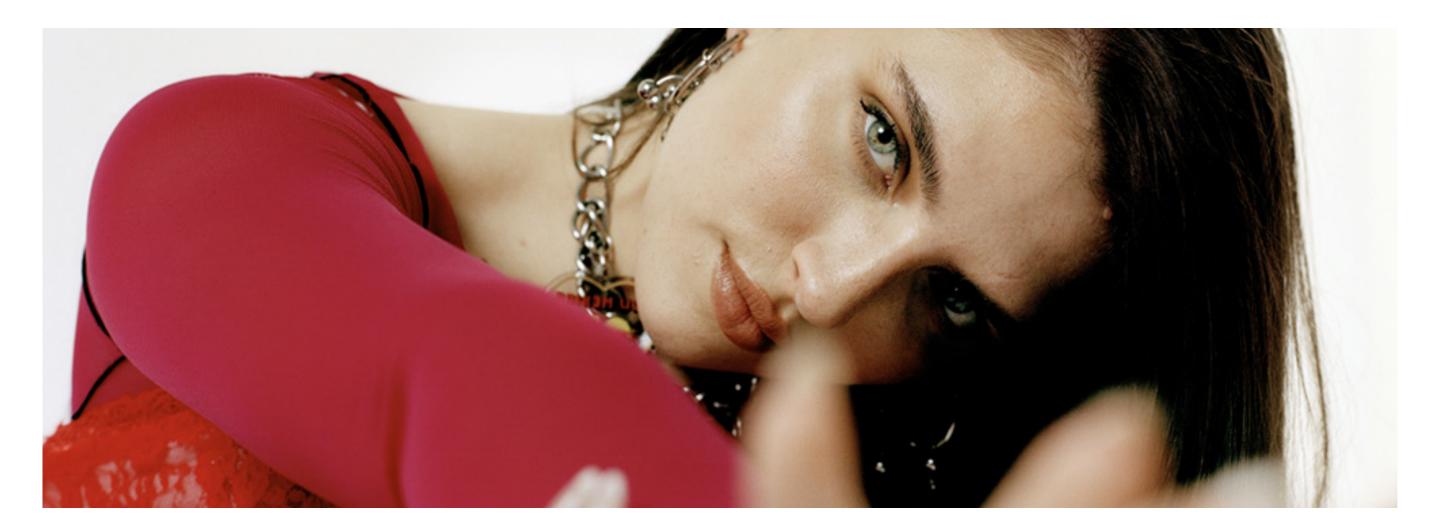


Artist Song	Let 3 Mama ŠČ!
Language	Croatian
Key Change	135bpm
	An absolute cacophony (in the best possible way) SS Village People
Gracenote Mood	Rowdy -> Driving Dark Groove
Other Notes	The band once caused a Sunday afternoon talkshow in Croatia to be taken off air early. Partly because of their continual swearing ("fuck", "dick", "piss" plus a phrase that translates to English as "river cunt"). But mostly because during the interview, one band member summoned a live dove from



United Kingdom

God, it's nice not having to spend ages scrabbling around for something vaguely positive to say about our entry after all these years...

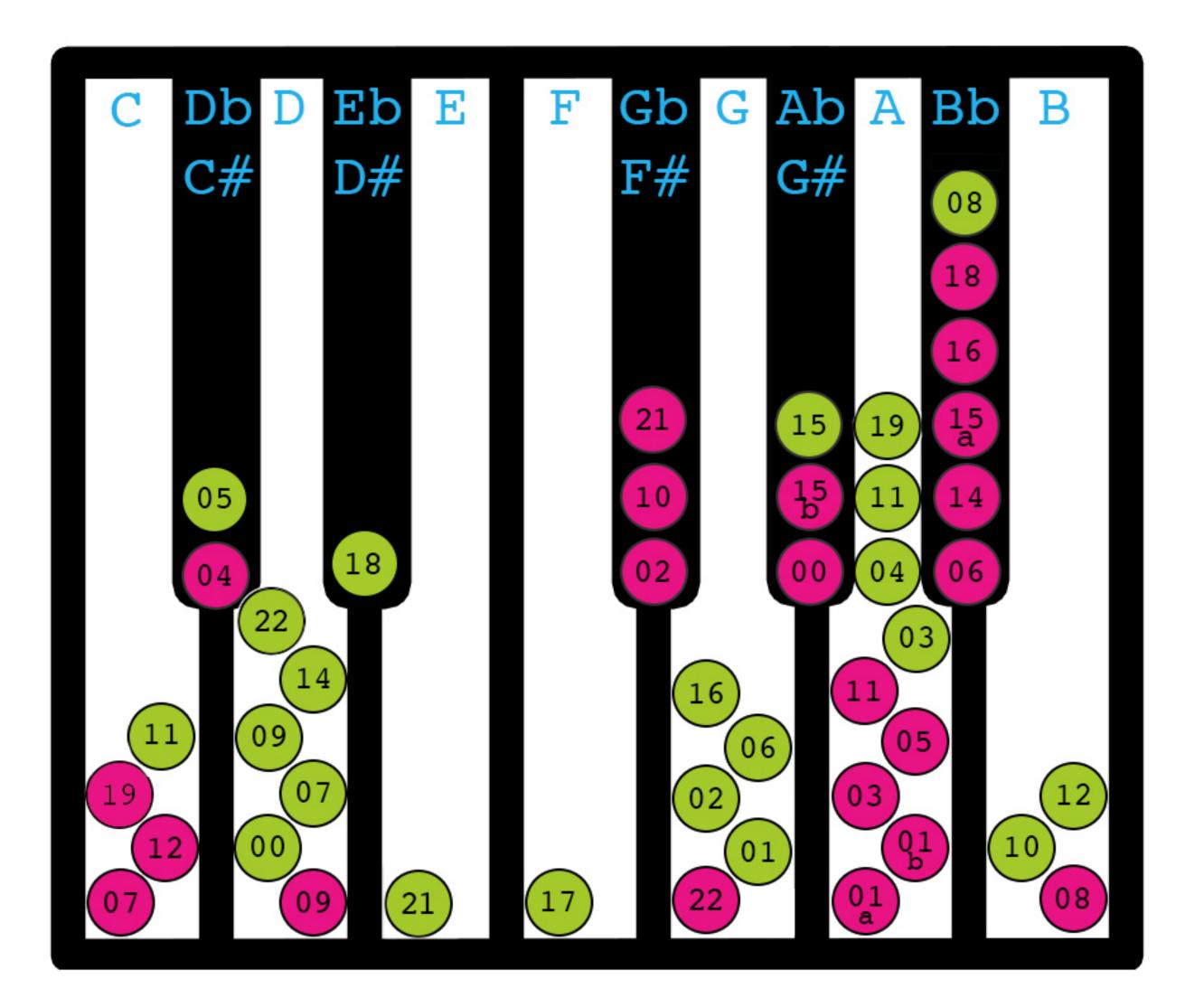


	Mae Muller I Wrote A Song
Language	English
Key Change Tempo	A minor (very solid; very popular) No 125bpm (uncomfortably close to the 128bpm death trap) Three (inc. Karen Poole, of Alisha's Attic)
Sounds Like Looks Like	Rita Ora Anne-Marie x a British Billie Eilish
Gracenote Mood	Fiery -> Fiery Groove
Other Notes	As well as her work with Alisha's Attic, co- writer Karen Poole has worked on some big bona fide hits. She has credits on Lola's Theme by Shapeshifters, Wow by Kylie Minogue, Caught In A Moment by Sugababes, Remember by Becky Hill and David Guetta and dozens of others.



The Key To Success

There's a common misconception about Eurovision songs all being happy, smiley, glitz and glitter. A look back at the last few decades shows that you're actually much better served entering a song in a moody minor key — and steering well clear of major ones.

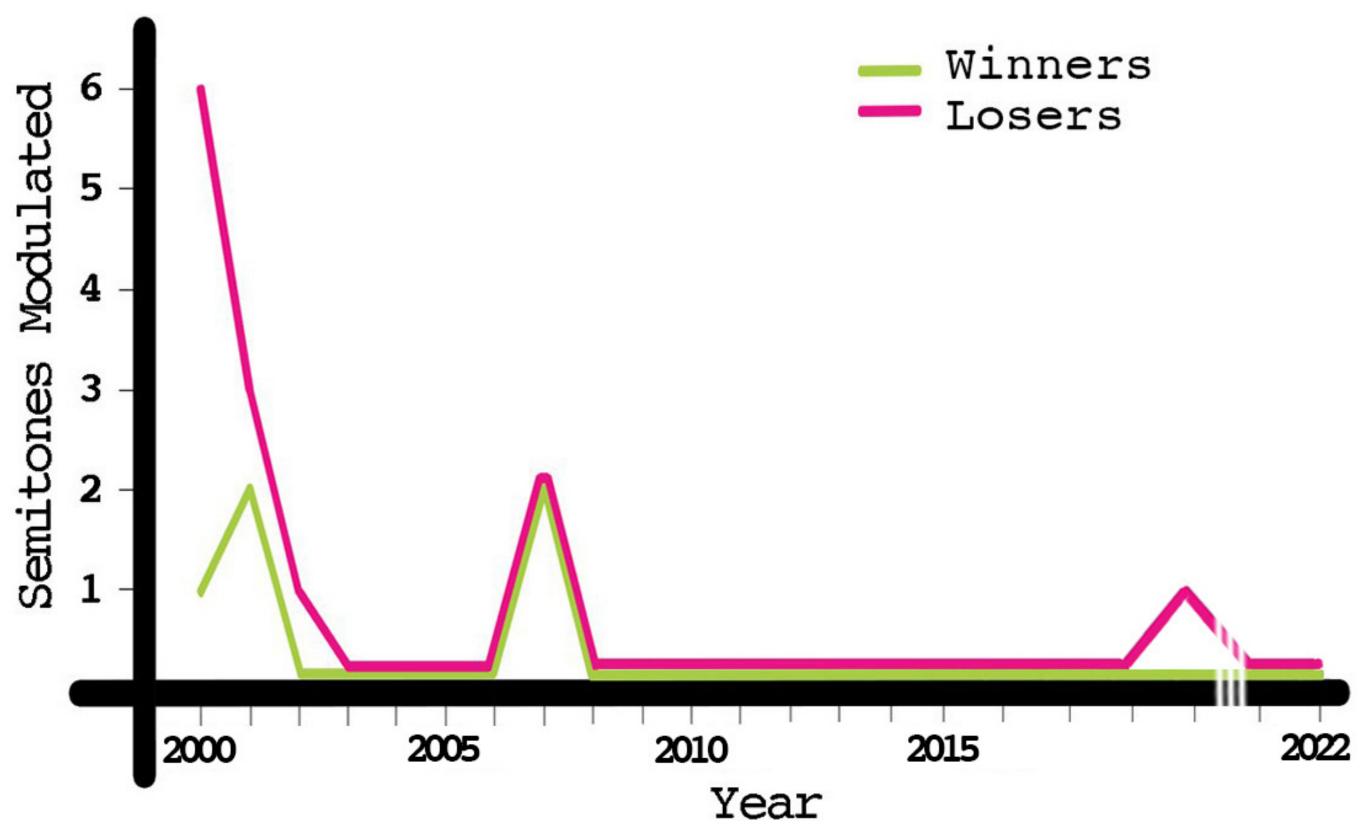


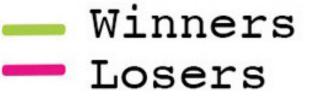
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Change Reaction

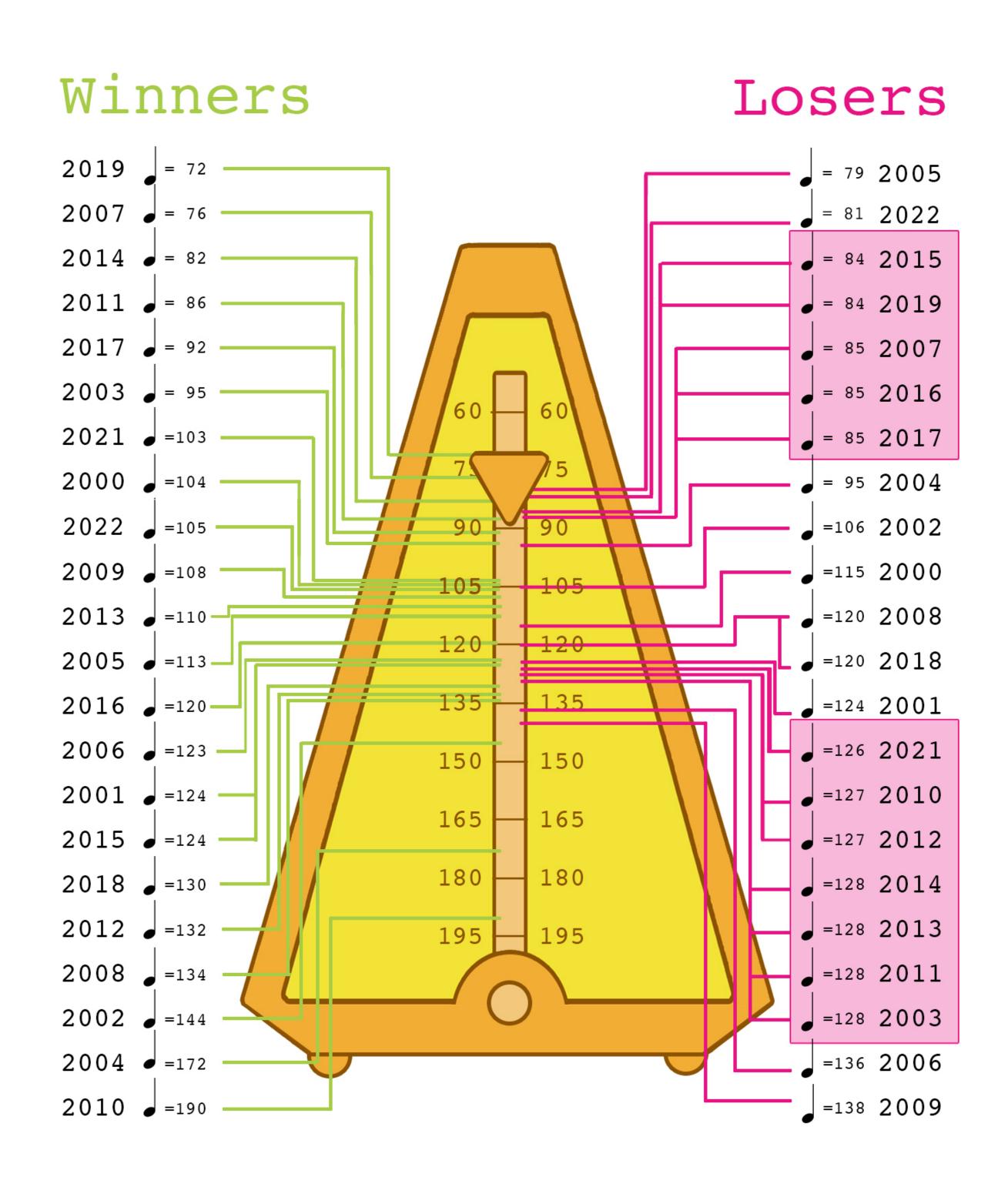
Everyone claims to love a key change. Everyone sticks "KEY CHANGE!!!" on their office Eurovision bingo cards and insists on taking a shot whenever they hear one but there isn't a single one in this year's contest. And no winner has attempted one in over 15 years now...





A Need For Speed

The tempo is the heartbeat of a song; the rhythm to which it works. In a competition where you have a strict three-minute upper limit to adhere to, choosing your tempo is therefore a critical decision. The two consistent killers you need to avoid? 128bpm and 85bpm.



In The Moods

Nielsen's Gracenote has conducted some research that they kindly shared with us about what moods have been most successful at Eurovision over the years. Pre-2000, calm and positive was best, but now? "Fiery" is the one to aim for – having won five of the last 25 contests.

Gracenote sonic moods of **Eurovision Song Contest winners**





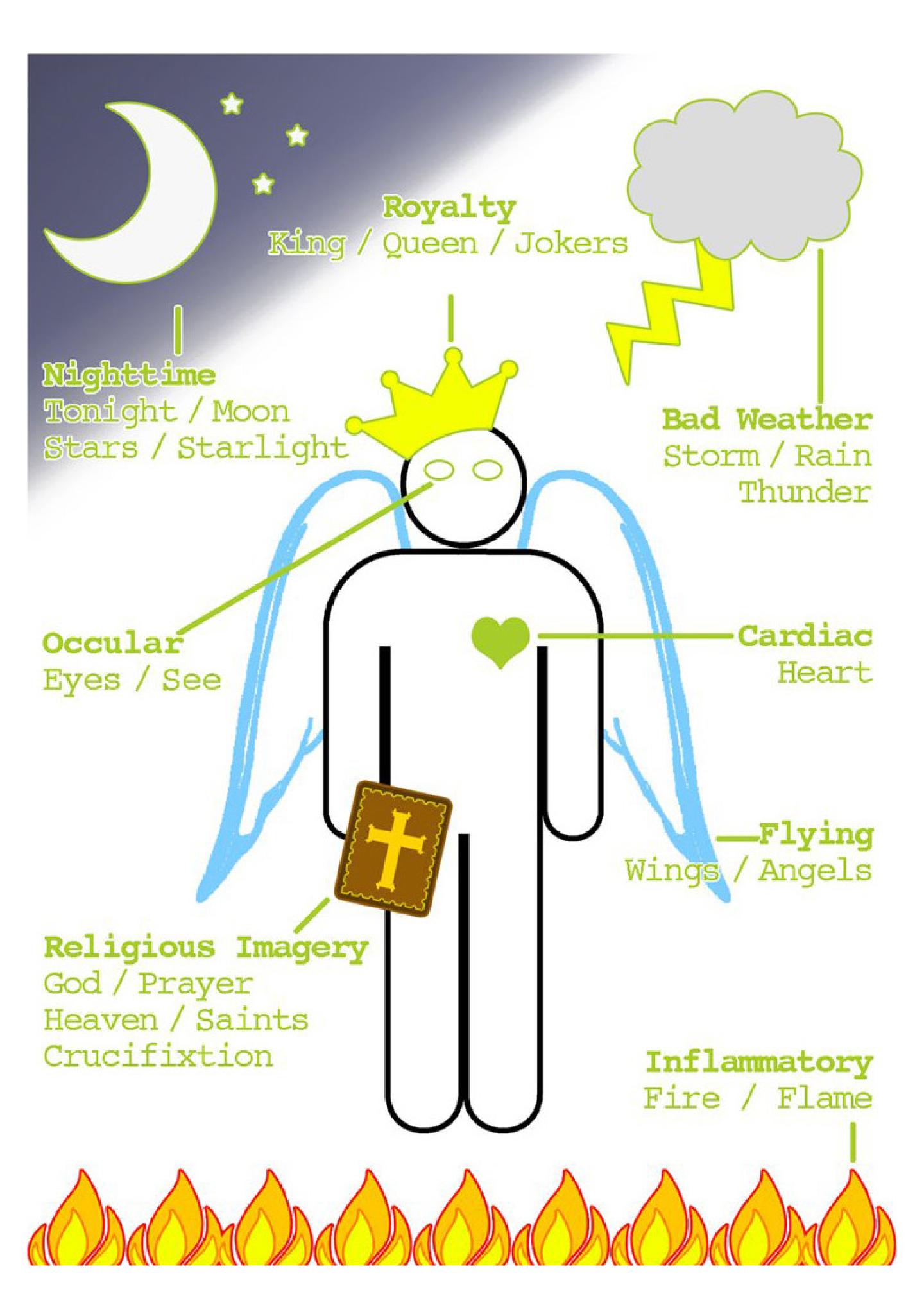
Positive

Calm

Energetic

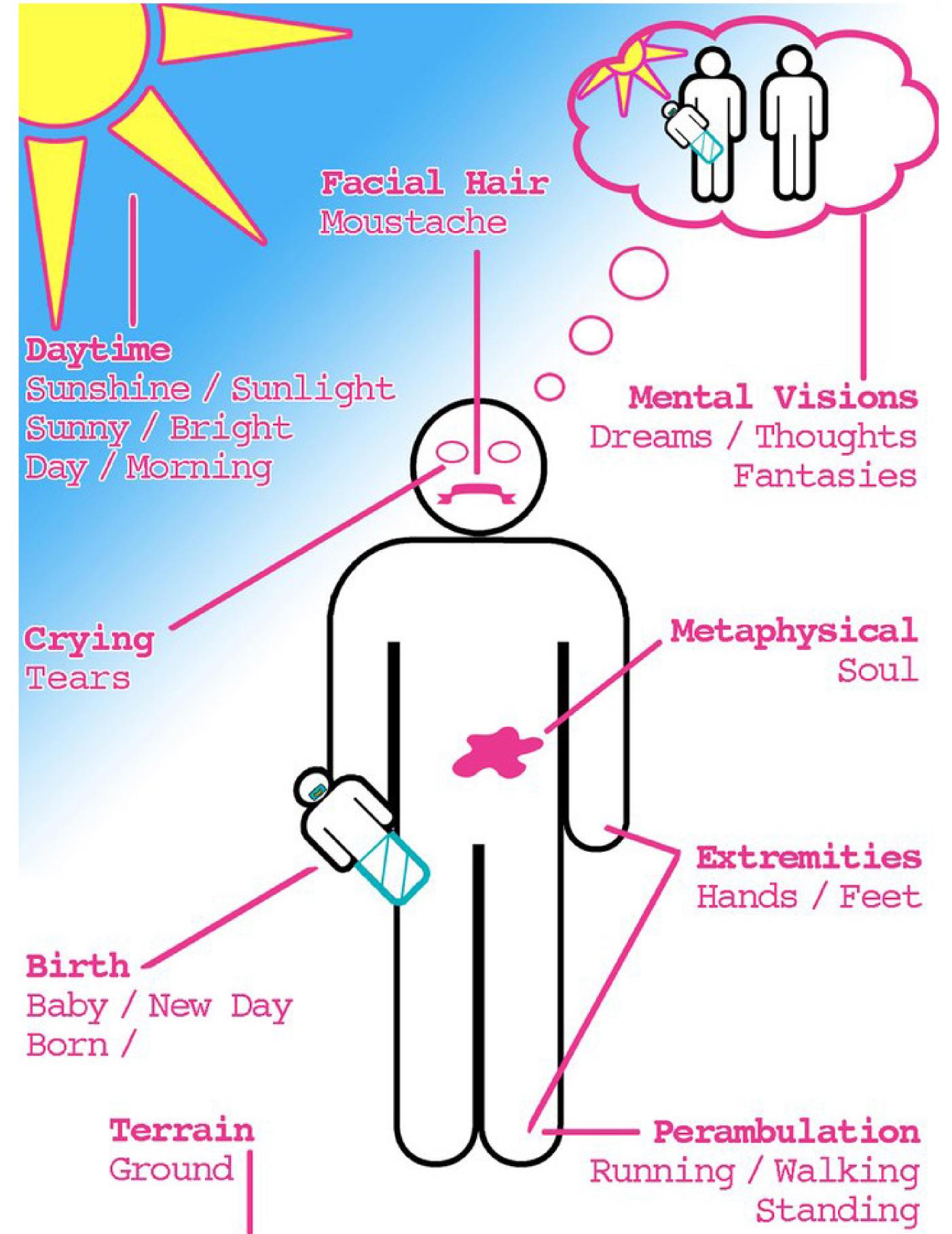
A Way With Words

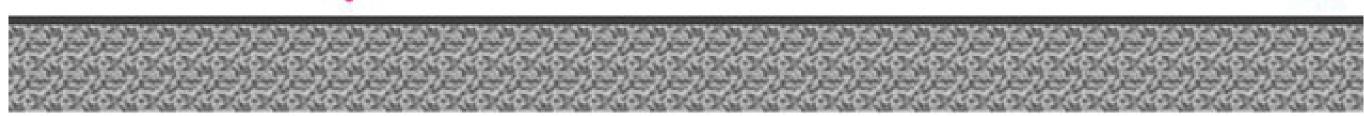
You might think that Eurovision lyrics are just a bunch of nonsense platitudes strung together in somebody's second language without much thought. Often, you'd be right. But there are a few patterns that have emerged with the winners...



Bad Language

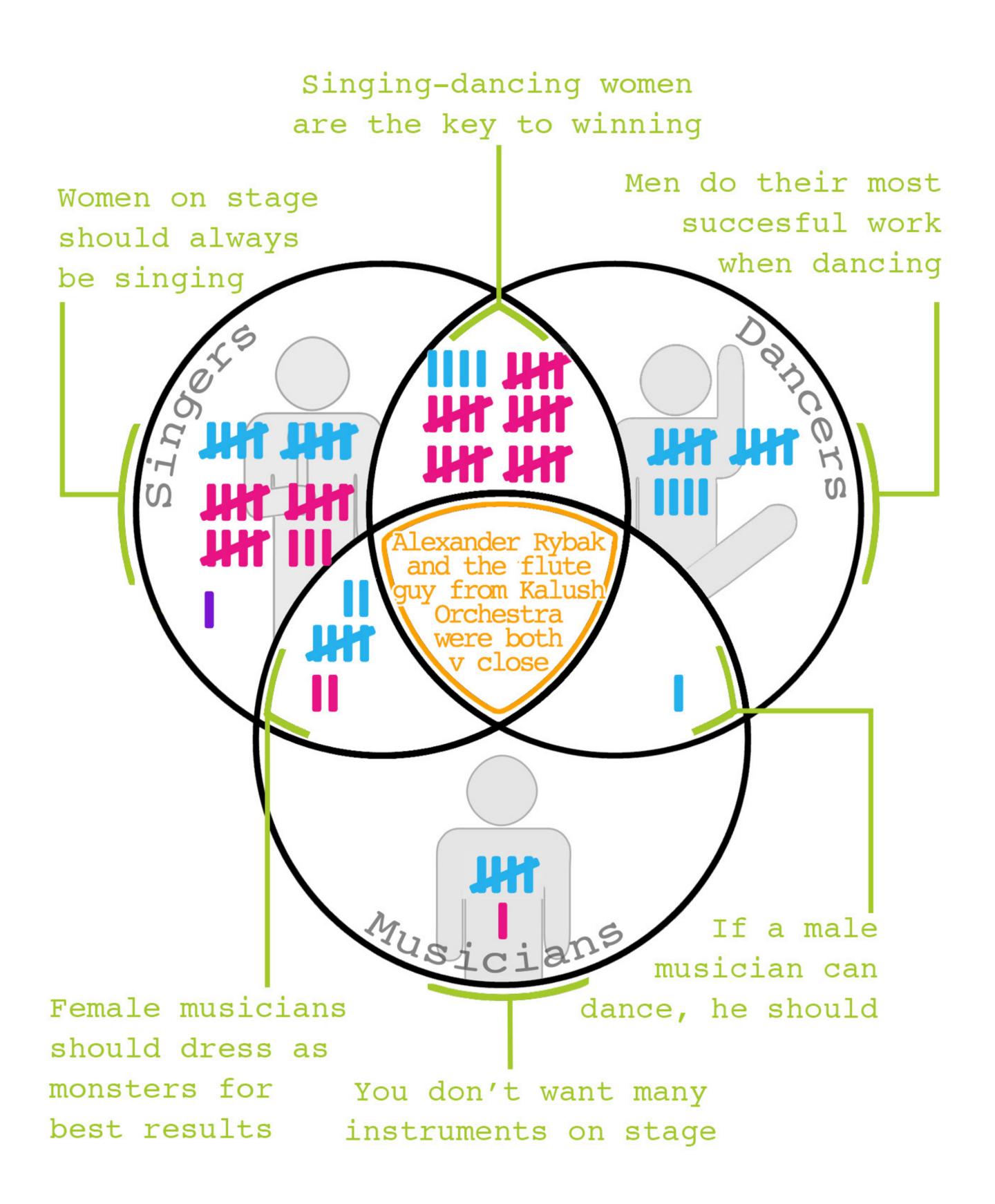
It's all very well knowing what to sing, but what should be left unsaid? There's a number of classic keyword traps that the novice Eurovision songwriter can fall into. So what words should you be avoiding if you don't want to come dead last?





The Winning Combo

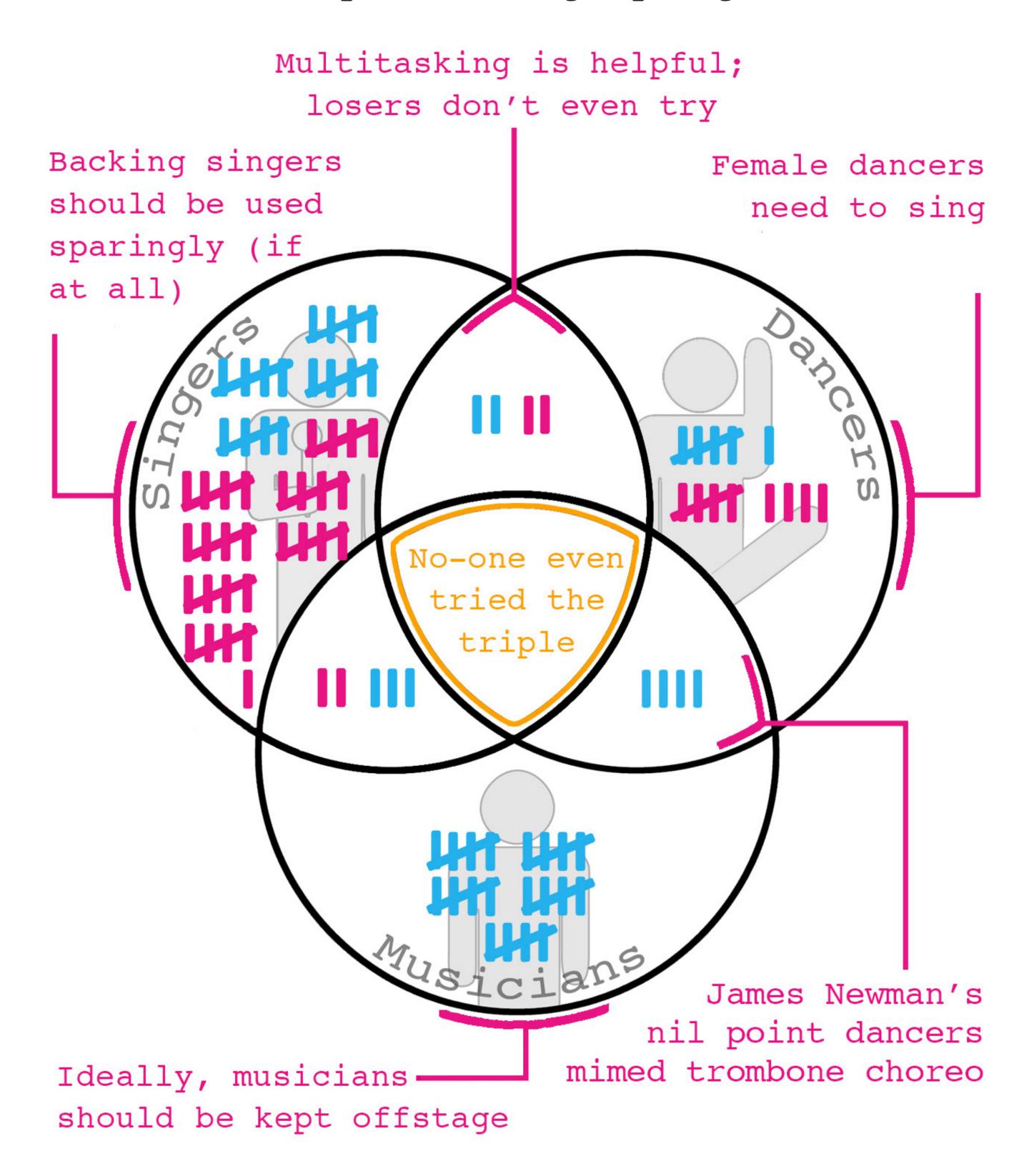
Up to six people can take to the stage per entry either as singers, dancers, musicians or a combination of all three. How do winners use those bodies best?



The Rest

A Bunch Of Losers

The more people you have on your stage, the more likely it is that someone will cock something up and kill your chances. So as well as making sure your backing performers are doing all the *right* things, you need to also make sure they aren't doing anything terrible...



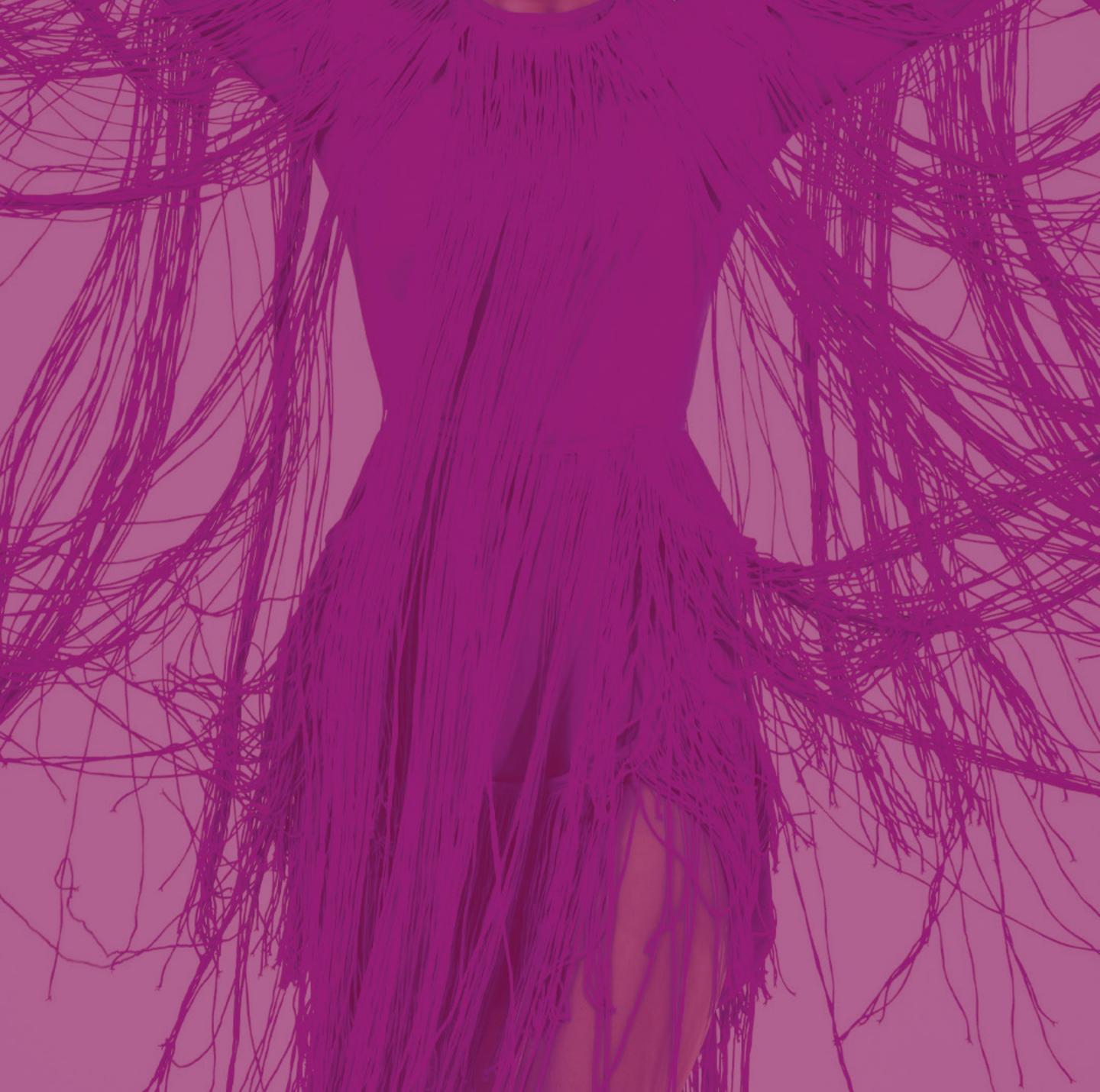
Luck Of The Draw

Most crucial of all though is where you get placed in the running order. What should you be aiming for?

1	X2008 X2001 _(a)
2	X2004
3	
4	Х2007 Х2001(ь) 🗸 2003
5	
6	
7	X2006
8	X2018
9	X2021
10	X2000 X2016 2004 </ 2015</th
11	✓2014 ✓2017
12	¥2012 ¥2010 √2019 √2022
13	X2011 X2022
14	X2002 X2014 X2015 / 2000
15	X2003
16	X2017X2019
17	✓2012√2007 √2006 X2005
18	✓2013
19	✓2011√2005
20	✓2009
21	√ 2016
22	✓2010
23	✓2002√2018
24	¥2009√2008 √2021
25	



The Ones We Left Behind



Malta

Shamelessly pilfering the three-piece Epic Sax Guy motif from Moldova, The Busker bring some fresh, weedy indie introvert energy to the party. A party they immediately want to leave in favour of making you play a complicated boardless board game they bought on import.



	The Busker Dance (Our Own Party)
Language	English
Key Change Tempo	F minor No 103bpm Five (inc. the band themselves)
Sounds Like Looks Like	DNCE Wes Anderson styled the Jonas Brothers
Gracenote Mood	Energizing -> Arousing Groove
Weird Lyrics	<i>"If you're keen / I got some indoor shoes I can offer you / Get you in the groove"</i>
Other Notes	The previous singer of The Busker was called Dario G. Sadly not <i>the</i> Dario G.

Latvia

A little something for the 6Music lovers here. Sudden Lights chuck in just enough frantic beats and angular guitars to appeal to the indie contingent — and also play their verses in 5/8 to capture the vanishingly small prog-rock/Eurovision overlap vote.



	Sudden Lights Aijā (Translation: Hushaby)
Language	English; Latvian
Key Change Time Sig Tempo	A minor No Verses 5/8; Chorus 6/8 <i>(It's never won before)</i> 160bpm Four <i>(The band themselves)</i>
	15 Step by Radiohead Your brother-in-law's band
Gracenote Mood	Brooding -> Alienated
Other Notes	Other Eurovision songs that make use of unusual time signatures include: 7/8 Utopian Land, Argo (2016) 7/8 Mojot Svet, Karolina (2007) 7/8 Sti Fotia, Alexandros Panayi (1995) 5/4 Mou Les, Christie Stassinopoulo (1983)

Ireland

We're told Wild Youth were ones to watch in rehearsals. Not because the song is particularly good, but because the singer's bulge was featuring very prominently in his jumpsuit. Will be interesting to see what camera angles they've decided on...



	Wild Youth We Are One
Language	English
Key Change Tempo	Db Major (Down a key from their recorded version) No 112bpm Three (inc. one Swede – Jörgen Elofsson)
Sounds Like Looks Like	Baby U2 Harry Kane dressed as Harry Styles
Gracenote Mood	Excited -> Upbeat Pop Groove
Other Notes	Co-writer Jörgen Elofsson was part of the legendary Swedish hit factory Cheiron, alongside Denniz PoP and Max Martin.
	Other classic Jörgen cuts inc. Sometimes for Britney Spears, Fool Again for Westlife, That's My Goal for Shayne Ward and –



Azerbaijan

There was a point in the late 90s where every radio friendly one-hit wonder started with someone leaving their bandmate an answerphone message over a breezy beat. Drinking In LA by Bran Van 3000. Steal My Sunshine by Len. 25 years later, Azerbaijan is bringing it back.



	TuralTuranX Tell Me More
Language	English
Key Change Tempo	D Major (Major key is bad; Eurovision loves D though) No 96bpm Four (inc. Tural and Turan)
	The soundtrack to an American teen drama If Simon Amstell and Skrillex had twins
Gracenote Mood	Empowering -> Powerful/Heroic
Other Notes	Azerbaijan have often been accused of throwing massive amounts of money at the competition in an attempt to tip the scales in their favour, often by hiring teams of Swedes to come in and punch up their songs. This is the first time since Azerbaijan's debut entry (in 2008) that



The Netherlands

There's been a fair bit of nerves around Mia and Dion performing this love song. Not only have they had consistent difficulty hitting the notes, they apparently have the chemistry of "two people who said goodbye to each other, then started walking in the same direction."

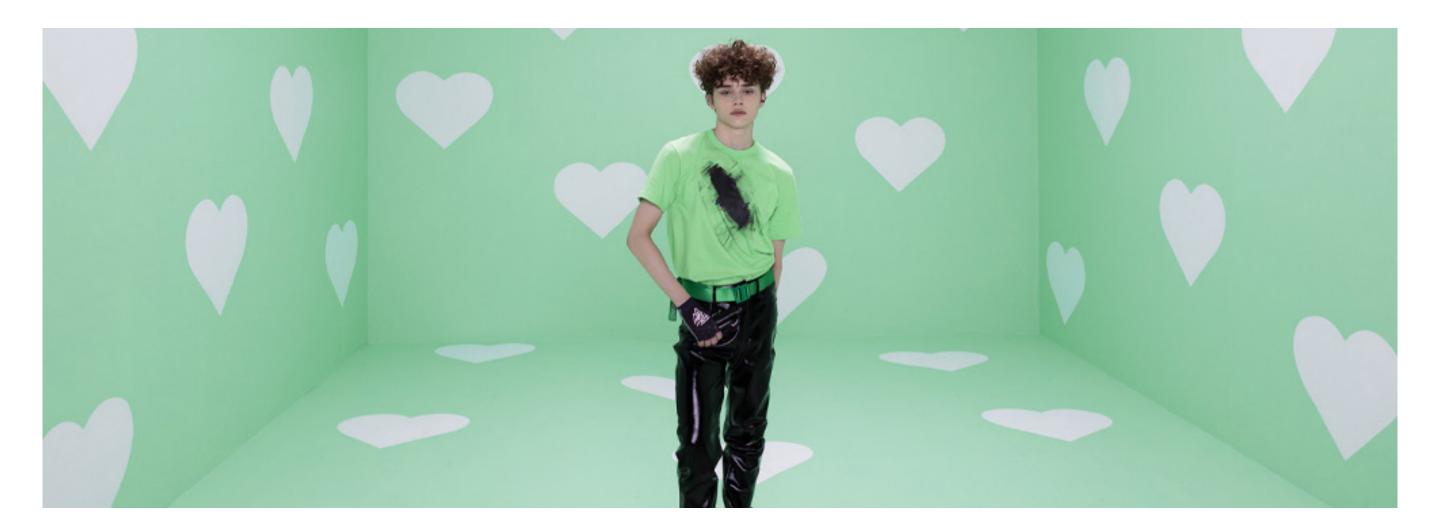


	Mia Nicolai and Dion Cooper Burning Daylight
Language	English
Key Change Tempo	Db Major (A significant shift in pitch from the original) No 75bpm Five (inc. former winner Duncan Laurence)
	Say Something (Great Big World/Christina Aguilera) Surie and a yassified Matt Berry
Gracenote Mood	Empowering -> Dramatic Emotion
Other Notes	Mia and Dion's performances at the Eurovision pre-party live events have been going so badly that it's become a bit of a running joke in the Netherlands. Someone was even suggesting the Dutch PM ought to intervene and jail them to spare the nation any ignominy – which is terribly

cruel	. Bl	jt r	nay	be	worth	COr	ISIC	eri	nc].

Denmark

Last decade, the big Eurovision trend was to send your X Factor/Got Talent winners. This decade is all about the social media influencers. Reiley isn't just a singer, he's giving Brooklyn Beckham a run for his money in the absolutely fucking hopeless chef stakes too...



Artist Song	Reiley Breaking My Heart
Language	English
Key Change Tempo	D Major No 97bpm Four (inc. one Swede)
Sounds Like Looks Like	Troye Sivan <i>(ft. Imogen Heap)</i> St Vincent
Gracenote Mood	Excited -> Euphoric Energy
Other Notes	The song was almost disqualified after it emerged Reiley had performed it at a festival in Seoul outside of the eligibilty window. The Danes have been pretty devil- may-care with the rules this year though, because one of the other shortlisted songs in their national final was called Beautiful



The Rest

Romania

Theodor did a Bucks Fizz at his national finals; getting a pair of topless lads to rip his shirt off to reveal a "Make Love Not War" slogan. Will he get semi-naked again? Unlikely, he's worn a different coloured shorts suit to each of his rehearsals and kept each one on.



	Theodor Andrei D.G.T. (Off And On)
Language	Romanian; English
Key Change Time Sig Tempo	
	A heavier Stop by Sam Brown A hobbyist magician
Gracenote Mood	Melancholy -> Light Melancholy
Talent Show	Vocea României Junior (The Voice Kids semi-finals) X Factor Romania (singing an Alexander Rybak song)
Weird Lyrics	"I'm beggin' you / I'm on my knees / Take your clothes off / Step on me"
	There's a massible Changebob Causeponte

Other Notes



Iceland

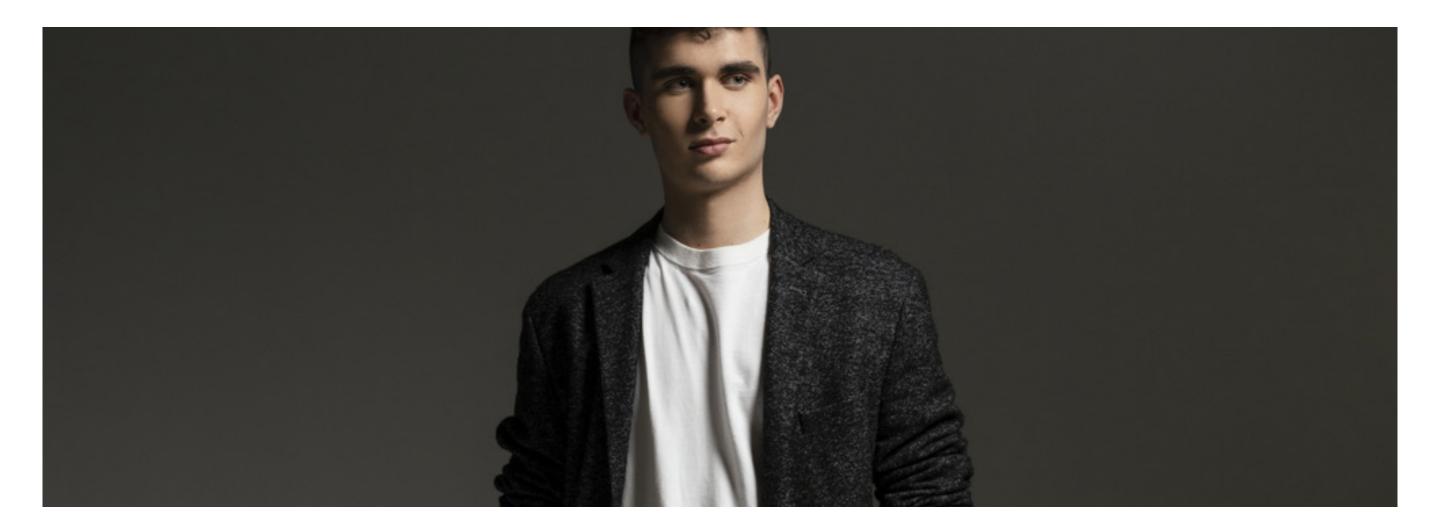
Iceland are always at their best when they bring something that showcases their national weirdness. While a bit of drum'n'bass acts as a useful shot in the arm midway through this semi, there's something a little too restrained about it. Glad to have it though.



Artist Song	Diljá Power
Language	English
Key Change	158bpm (Audiences do like a fast tempo)
Sounds Like Looks Like	N-Trance Daenerys Targaryen in a David Byrne suit
Gracenote Mood	Energizing -> Arousing Groove
Talent Show	Ísland Got Talent (2015) Vælið (2018)
Other Notes	Dilja's co-writer – Pálmi Ragnar Ásgeirsson – is part of the Icelandic production team StopWaitGo. They were previously behind Iceland's 2015 entry (María Ólafs' Unbroken). Elsewhere, StopWaitGo also did Disco Love for The Saturdays.

Greece

One thing missing this year is a proper heritage act: no Engelbert, no Bonnie, no Darude, no Rasmus. There's a couple of more mature entrants, but nothing in the babushka granny leagues. Greece is putting all its eggs firmly in the TikTok basket. Victor is just 16 years old.



	Victor Vernicos What They Say
Language	English
Key Change Tempo	C Major <i>(Generally bad news)</i> No 155bpm One <i>(Victor himself)</i>
Sounds Like Looks Like	James Arthur Young Cillian Murphy
Gracenote Mood	Empowering -> Idealistic/Stirring
Other Notes	Victor actually wrote this song a couple of years ago, when he was just 14. So a year older than Kate Bush was when she wrote The Man With The Child In His Eyes, or Taylor Hanson when he wrote the verses of MmmBop. But a year younger than Lorde when she wrote Royals or Stevie Wonder



Georgia

Everyone's making a big fuss that Loreen is a returning winner at this year's contest, but very little has been made of Iru's previous Eurovision success. (Probably because admitting you recognise her from the 2011 Junior Eurovision is grounds to get your laptop seized...)



Artist Song	
Language	English
Key Change	145bpm
	Florence And The Machine Another Targaryen
Gracenote Mood	Cool -> Wary/Defiant
Talent Show	Georgian Idol (2019) The Voice Georgia (2022)
Other Notes	Making the entire Iru/Loreen/previous winners narrative even more curious, Iru won The Voice Georgia – and therefore her place as Georgia's 2023 Eurovision entry –



San Marino

Did #MeToo ever make it to San Marino? Not from the sounds of it...



	Piqued Jacks Like An Animal
Language	English
Key Change	128bpm (The killer tempo; bad luck, boys)
Sounds Like Looks Like	Reef At The Drive In
Gracenote Mood	Brooding -> Dreamy Brooding
Weird Lyrics	"Come on baby, come and find me / I can smell you like an animal"
Other Notes	San Marino was once famous in Eurovision circles for offering their spot to whichever rich vanity act stumped up the most cash. This year, they tried a five month selection





UNITED BY MUSIC

GRAND FINAL LIVE IN CINEMAS SAT 13 MAY





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