

Don't count Vardalos out despite some big fat failures

By Stacy Jenel Smith

Dear Stacy:
When the low-budget movie "My Big Fat Greek Wedding" became a huge hit, the lead actress/writer was the toast of the town! She went on to do a TV show that turned into a big flop. Now I don't even remember her name. What is she doing now?

— GENE P., Los Angeles

Dear Gene:

Nia Vardalos also wrote and starred in the big-screen "Connie and Carla," with Toni Collette, in 2004. That also proved a huge flop, grossing under \$10 million domestically. But don't count out the talented Vardalos. She's got several projects in the works, including a sequel to "My Big Fat Greek Wedding," and she's writing a script for

Ask Stacy

buddy Tom Hanks (he and wife Rita Wilson produced "Big Fat," you may recall). It's called "Talk of the Town," and has Hanks as a man forced into a career change when he least expects it.

Dear Stacy:
Please give us the scoop on Zac Efron.

— DANA B., Cleveland

Dear Dana:

The 18-year-old native of San Luis Obispo broke into show business after he took singing lessons as a young teen, and before long he was chalking up stage credits in such musicals as "Peter Pan," "Mame," "Little Shop of Horrors" and "The Music Man." His TV credits include

guest appearances on "CSI: Miami," "ER," "The Guardian" and "Summerland," which led to his regular role on the show as Cameron Bale. "Summerland" led to his learning to surf. He's also a golfer and skier, and plays the piano and the guitar.

Dear Stacy:
Does ABC have a shop where you can purchase items from "Lost," "Desperate Housewives," "Grey's Anatomy," and the news?

— P.D., Lodi, N.J.

Dear P.D.:

The ABC network's merchandise can be ordered online at <http://abctvstore.shopthe-scene.com>.

Dear Stacy:

I am a fan of Mark Russell, who always made fun of our politi-

Sudoku

			6					
	1		7	4			4	
	3						3	8
	9	7					2	9
								2
3						9	4	
5	8						6	
1	7			3	2		9	
		9			1			

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HH-17

Today's level: Hard

Fill the grid so that every row, column and 3-by-3 box contains the digit 1 to 9. That means no number is repeated in any row, column or box. For solutions, tips and computer program, go to www.sudoku.com.

Solution to Saturday's puzzle

6	9	8	2	7	4	1	5	3
1	4	5	3	8	6	9	7	2
7	3	2	5	1	9	6	4	8
2	5	9	8	6	7	3	1	4
3	7	1	4	5	2	8	6	9
8	6	4	9	3	1	7	2	5
5	8	7	6	4	3	2	9	1
9	1	3	7	2	5	4	8	6
4	2	6	1	9	8	5	3	7

MM-34

cians, etc. He used to be broadcast on [Brooklyn's] Channel 13, but I haven't seen him in years. What happened to him?

— URSULA S., Brooklyn, N.Y.

Dear Ursula:

At age 73, the piano-playing political satirist does dozens of concert dates a year, including a recent run at Ford's Theater

in Washington, D.C., the city where he resides in close proximity to the leaders he loves to skewer.

Dear Stacy:

What happened to the young man who played J.J. on "Good Times"?

— DORIS C., Springfield, Mass.

Dear Doris:

Jimmie Walker's a stand-up comic who plays clubs all around the country in addition to appearing on TV shows, including "ER" and "George Lopez" in the past couple of years. He's also done political talk radio and TV shows.

Send your questions to Ask Stacy in care of the *Daily Breeze*, 5215 Torrance Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503-4077.

VOICE

FROM PAGE B1

With primal intensity, Corsaro begins to commune with this larger-than-life artwork. Her senses are on overdrive as she absorbs the energy and emotion from artist Uran Snyder's work with raw sensitivity.

Now she finds her voice and intones a low, guttural cry that ascends to higher pitches. First soft, then loud, then beautifully melodic, then a chant. She interprets the artwork through her senses and out of her mouth.

Each "performance" is spontaneous, unrehearsed and differs radically depending upon Corsaro's mood, the vibe in the room and the subject matter.

Just as Snyder bore her soul to create the charcoal panels on view through March 25, Corsaro is responding to the work on an equally personal level.

Her body undulates, sometimes rigidly, sometimes gracefully, with arms flapping in a frenzied fury. Breaths come short and sharp.

After 10 minutes, she concludes, hands together prayer-like, bowing. She is physically drained, like a psychic after a

trance.

Within seconds, Corsaro is once again the girl next door — warm, enthusiastic, humble — about what her considerable gift means and where it might lead her. One thing she believes, she says, is that her unusual ability is grounded in a positive force.

"For me, this is a vehicle for channeling creative energy," says Corsaro, who grew up in the rural Westfield area of the Palos Verdes Peninsula, riding horses and raising rabbits in the 4-H Club, the fifth of six children.

Corsaro has a degree in communications and worked as an account executive. She climbed up the ladder with a major advertising agency before dropping out of the yuppie world about 13 years ago to seek her own spirit, she said. This quest took her to various parts of the country and around the world, including remote areas of Alaska and Africa. She arrived alone at these locales without knowing a soul and stayed for weeks or months, spearheading programs that solved community needs.

In Alaska, she stayed a year in Sitka, working on a job-mentoring program that allowed the

town's teens to become employed locally after high school. In an area near Mount McKinley, she arrived in the dead of winter in 40-below temperatures and wound up completing a technical writing project.

Now Corsaro has come full circle. She plans to stay in the South Bay to share her creative insights through future vocal performances, classes and workshops for groups of varying ages and interest levels.

"It is not so much about using your voice. It's more about getting in touch with your creative energy, which is the life force in the universe," says Corsaro, who teaches classes through the Manhattan Beach Recreation Department for parents of small children and for teens on how to tap into creativity.

She also offers creative coaching for life changes and business development, including non-profit and community projects.

"Regardless of what you do, finding that creative energy is vital," she says. "Whether you are an entrepreneur or an inventor, or a housewife who

makes a beautiful home and feeds the family with love, the key is motivating that creative energy into action."

With spontaneous performances such as the one at the Loft Gallery, Corsaro is practicing what she preaches.

"Giving Voice to Vision," the name of the joint venture between visual and vocal arts, actually is the birth of a new art form, artist Annemarie Rawlinson said while introducing the performance.

Corsaro and the artist, Snyder, met years ago at an Orange County peace rally and reconnected in early 2005.

Snyder's five, 9-foot-tall panels measure more than 33 feet wide and hang on all four walls of the gallery. Snyder, who was born in Japan, completed the work 20 years ago as part of her Master of Fine Arts project at California State University, Long Beach.

Despite her vocal clarity and pitch, Corsaro is not interested

in a career as a vocalist. Her voice, she says, is merely the vehicle through which she reaches her creative force and inspires others to find theirs by living fully in the present.

"My intention is to deliver — to be a vehicle for more light, more awakened consciousness in this world — for that is what will keep this world alive," she says.

"What matters most to me now is not about me," Corsaro says. "Instead, it is all about empowering others to become alive, too."

A private person, Corsaro says she at first was reluctant to "stick her neck out" in such a public way. But she says she's willing to trust her instincts, which have served her well so far.

She rejects being labeled a healer or bearer of a higher power, preferring only to let any result that may occur for viewers speak for itself.

"Through many paths and journeys, I have finally come to accept that my voice delivers. And the rest is not up to me," Corsaro says.

"I wish to provoke others to feel, to be, to wake up, to really feel the air and see the sea ... to know the look of sincerity in a child's face, to know the power of the Holy Spirit ... as it moves past them through someone's voice ... and so much more."

By helping others to "come alive," she says, she is doing her job to help create a society in which people care more about one another and their world.

News shows

By The Associated Press

Guest lineup for today's TV news shows:

"This Week," 8 a.m., Channel 7: Sens. Bill Frist, R-Tenn., and Russ Feingold, D-Wis.; political satirist Art Buchwald. 56831

"Face the Nation," 5 p.m., Channel 2: Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill.; Gov. Mike Huckabee, R-Ark. 2367

"Meet the Press," 8 a.m., Channel 4: Sens. George Allen, R-Va., and Joseph Biden, D-Del.; retired Marine Gen. Bernard Trainor and Michael Gordon, chief military correspondent for *The New York Times*. 14831

"Late Edition," 8 a.m., CNN: U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad; Sens. Carl Levin, D-Mich., and John Warner, R-Va. 208855

"Fox News Sunday," 8 a.m., Channel 11: Sen. Chris Dodd, D-Conn.; Reps. Duncan Hunter, R-Calif., and Mike Pence, R-Ind.; opera singer Placido Domingo. 67819

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FAILURE TO LAUNCH (PG-13) 2:10-5:10 • 8:00-10:20
HILLS HAVE EYES (R) - ID REQUIRED 1:45-4:30 • 7:25-10:10
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CAPOTE (R) - ID REQUIRED 1:20-4:20 • 7:20-10:05
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