

ALIKI VOUYOUKLAKI

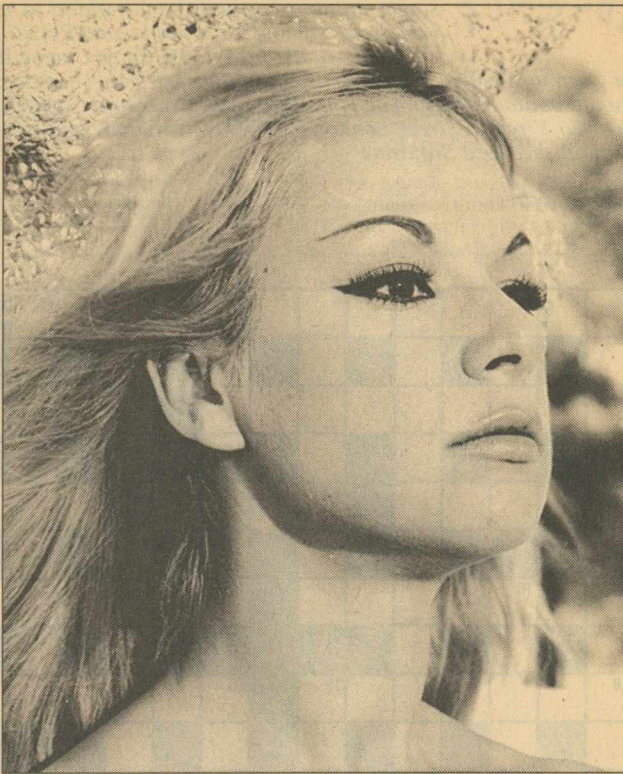
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Aliki Vouyouklaki, Greek actress, died from cancer on July 23 aged 63. She was born on July 20, 1933.

ALIKI VOUYOUKLAKI was regarded by Greeks as their homegrown answer to Marilyn Monroe and Brigitte Bardot. She combined two apparently contradictory types in her screen persona, the unspoiled girl-next-door and the sex bomb, wrapped up in one alluring package. She was unheard of abroad, but in Greece there was few bigger stars. After years of war and civil war, the sort of light-hearted, patriotic films she released during the 1950s provided a pleasing antidote to the horrors from which the country had only recently emerged.

Her exact birthdate was a well kept secret, and as journalists were too polite — in her case — to push the matter, her age remained a question of informed guesswork. She was the daughter of a senior civil servant who was killed by the Germans during the Second World War. There was no history of the stage in the family, but after local schools in Athens and a few acting lessons she landed her first job in 1954, modelling in a poster which advertised beer. The poster was widely distributed to the nation's tavernas. Vouyouklaki followed it with a few plays before catching the eye of a studio chief in Athens. He suggested that she bleach her dark hair blonde, a clever piece of marketing as it singled her out from the rest of her Mediterranean sisters, and provided a striking foil for her brown eyes.

Her first film, *The Little Mouse*, in 1954, cast her as an *ingénue* schoolgirl. She had to wait until 1960 to have a real hit, with *Aliki in the Navy* (also her first screen appearance with the actor she later married, Dimitris Papamichail). Few of her films were seen outside Greece, but one



which went to Cannes was *Madalena* in 1961. The first of her patriotic war films, in which she played a resistance heroine, was *The Blonde Schoolteacher*, in 1969. There were about forty films in all, the last in 1981 (afterwards she concentrated on stage work). She sang in most of these, although she was the first to admit there was nothing exceptional about her voice.

Unlike her near contemporary, Melina Mercouri, Aliki Vouyouklaki refused to become involved with left-wing politics, and so avoided the difficulties which embroiled so many of her more radical colleagues in the business. Through years of alternating democracy and dictatorship, Vouyouklaki soldiered on, making her unabashedly populist contribution to the film industry.

Although she was rumoured to have had a romance with the Crown

Prince Constantine in the early 1960s, she married only once, her long-time screen lover, Dimitris Papamichail, in 1965. The marriage quickly foundered, but she remained fond of her ex-husband and years later she asked him, on a chat show, to remarry her. That offer, however, was not accepted, and she never did remarry, although she was publicly escorted by a succession of strikingly younger-looking men. Far from alienating the conservative Greek public, this uninhibited behaviour only served to make her more popular.

Earlier this year, illness made her break off a string of appearances in a Greek stage version of *The Sound of Music*. She had developed cancer, as a result, it was widely believed, of years of dependency on untested and unsafe anti-ageing treatments.

She leaves a son from her marriage.

Αλίκη Βουγιουκλάκη

Άρθρο αφιερωμένο στην Αλίκη Βουγιουκλάκη, εγχώρια Marilyn Monroe και Brigitte Bardot, που συνδύαζε στην οθόνη το κορίτσι της διπλανής πόρτας και την σεξοβόμβα. Δεν ήταν γνωστή στο εξωτερικό αλλά ήταν από τις λίγες μεγάλες στην Ελλάδα. Δεν αναμίχθηκε στην πολιτική όπως η Μελίνα Μερκούρη. Αρχές της δεκαετίας του '60 είχε ένα ειδύλλιο με τον τότε διάδοχο του ελληνικού θρόνου αλλά παντρεύτηκε τον συμπρωταγωνιστή της Δημήτρη Παπαμιχαήλ. Από αυτόν τον γάμο άφησε ένα γιό. Τα τελευταία χρόνια οι συνοδοί της ήταν πολύ νεώτεροί της.

Κάνει μνεία των ταινιών Μουσίτσα 1954, Αλίκη στο Ναυτικό 1960, Μανταλένα 1961, κλπ. Τέλος ευρύτατα πιστεύεται ότι η ασθένειά της, προσβλήθηκε από καρκίνο, ήταν αποτέλεσμα της εξάρτησής της από αντιγυραντικές θεραπείες αδοκίμαστες και όχι ασφαλείς.