



Kavanagh & Fallon's Guide to the songs of Eurovision 2015

Adrian Kavanagh & Johnny Fallon

Welcome!

Another year, another Eurovision. Welcome to this year's guide to our thoughts on each of the entries. Whether you are an avid fan or someone who just wants to show a bit of knowledge at the Eurovision party you were invited to, you should find something here. It should be noted that Kavanagh and Fallon often disagree musically and the only thing that brings them together is the numbers. Voting and patterns speak volumes. We are delighted to give you the most honest run down of the songs that you will find anywhere. It is of course merely our opinion and we accept no responsibility for getting stuff wrong. We merely say that there is a mistake somewhere. However, we do firmly believe that to approach the Eurovision without reading this guide is like jumping into the deep end of the pool with no swim ring. It is important to remember that Kavanagh is a man still chasing his youth when it comes to music. His desire for being 'edgy' often leads him astray. He is like 'The Edge' trying to look cool but falling off the stage in the process. So, after a few glasses of red lemonade, a couple of packets of Tayto and a few huffy walk outs (Kavanagh is a real prima donna) we came to the following opinions on what we have heard...

Semi Final 1

Moldova:

AK: Dodgy lyrics, dodgy staging and not exactly the stand-out act that you want to see kick off this year's Eurovision contest. This is the sort of cheesy entry that gives the contest a bad name. Call the police and take this to semi-final exit jail please.

JF: I want your love? More like I want you to leave. Any Simpsons fan will remember the episode where Bart joins a boy band. This 'tune' is very similar to the efforts of that band. Generic, boring and probably put together in some teenagers bedroom with a Casio Keyboard.

Armenia:

JF: This is a fairly interesting number. There are moments where they seem to be sticking in notes just for the sake of it but overall it's the kind of song that could do very well. Staging will be all important here. I bet Kavanagh starts talking politics...

AK: As a song in itself, this isn't great and it gets swamped by the political message. But as a live performance, the vocal quality of the Armenian super-group makes it work. Highly likely to qualify.

Belgium:

AK: This is the sort of cool, modern, style of entry that could really bring this year's contest into the 21st Century and I was really impressed when I heard this first. If this is staged right, this could be exceptional, although if it is staged wrong then...

JF: Oh Please! This is about as 21st century as when Neneh Cherry teamed up with Youssou N'Dour back in the last century. It's different but trying way too hard to be cool and ending up looking tame and lame. It will gather a few votes but seems to me to be a very niche market.

The Netherlands:

JF: After The Common Linnets did so well last year I was nervous for the Netherlands. However, they have followed it up with a very strong effort here. My only wish is that the chorus was a little stronger and deeper but that aside this is a catchy song and she has a winning smile.

AK: Winning smile? This is Eurovision, not Colgate-vision Fallon! OK, she's a talented performer and her voice is great. But this song is so, so, so...repetitive. There's only so many times you can "walk along" before you "walk along" out of the competition. Why-aye-aye couldn't they have come up with some other lyrics???

Finland:

AK: Aina muna pitaaaaaaa!!! The contest's shortest ever entry (running to just 82 seconds) gives proceedings a much needed injection of punked-up life. This should sail into the final.

JF: There's a bit of an effort to recreate the Lordi effect here. However I'm not sure this one is quite so catchy. That said it should make the final and brings something very different to the contest.

Greece:

JF: **She** keeps saying she has only one last breath, but she takes an awful lot of them in singing this. A strong ballad and a good singer. I'm not sure if it has anything catchy or memorable but then the staging and performance on the night can change that. There is a danger of it getting lost but should probably make the final.

AK: This is quite similar to last year's winner, but lightning doesn't strike twice in the modern Eurovision. That said, the juries love well-performed ballads (which this is), while the televoters love Greece. On that basis, it's hard to see this not make it into the Final

Estonia:

AK: One of the contest favourites and deservedly so. This is really good and I would be happy to see Eurovision heading back to Taalin next year. Misery and heartbreak never sounded so good.

JF: Yep. This is one to watch. Good tune and something everyone can identify with. He thinks he wasn't good enough and like a big eejit he crept out and left her. She on the other hand is asking him why he didn't just say something and she could have told him to stop being such a tool. Anyway, he blew it. Goodbye to yesterday could well be Hello to Taalin 2016.

FYR Macedonia:

JF: How many analogies can you fit into the lyrics of a song? It's hard to make sense of what he is trying to say here but the underlying tune isn't too bad. With some strong ballads to contend with though I think this one may just fade into the background.

AK: Agree with the Fallonski. The song isn't bad, though not particularly memorable, but the dated staging is likely to see this exit at the semi-final stage.

Serbia:

AK: Strong voice belted out in Serbia's first ever entry in the English language, but this is not really my cup of tea.

JF: A ballad that turns into a dance tune. Always a neat catch all mix for Eurovision. This girl has a powerful set of lungs and this tune could well be a dark horse in this contest. If so, Kavanagh might have to switch to coffee.

Hungary:

JF: What would Eurovision be without a bit of the Love and Peace stuff? I think there is a bit of fatigue with this but that said this is a lovely simple number. Perhaps a bit too simple. With some clever staging it might just capture a mood on the night but it will need a little help.

AK: This is low-key and sometimes low-key doesn't work, but if one country can make low-key entries work then it is Hungary (think 1994 and...shudder...2013). Inventive staging should see this in the Final.

Belarus:

AK: Time is like thunder for Belarus this year, with added drama and added violinist. I've really liked this since it was first selected, but problems with the staging could see it lose out in this semi-final.

JF: In the videos the violinist seems to have to perform a bush tucker trial. The staging of that might be their gimmick. As for the song, well he starts by asking 'Where do I belong?' The only answer I can give is 'not in the final.'

Russia:

JF: Aaaaaaand we are back to love and peace. Nice girl and a nice song. Eurovision has its politics though and many fans will be all too aware that one of the top performing countries, Ukraine, is not here this year. All the love and peace from Russia may not sit well despite this song being a decent effort.

AK: This song is attracting a lot of positives and she's an excellent performer, but for me this is missing a certain spark or a certain something... Maybe a see-saw?

Denmark:

AK: Could Denmark suffer the curse of last year's host in 2015. I'm hoping so. This is obvious and derivative and the sort of song that a five year old would be embarrassed to have written. It actually makes Iceland 2014 and Malta 2013 look good! Anti Social Media??? No, Anti-Anti Social Media, more like it...

JF: I bet Kavanagh will still be tapping his foot when this one kicks off. It's kind of catchy and after a few songs trying hard to find deeper meaning this brings us back to a bit of fun. Fill up the wine glass and do some gentle bopping. If you see Kavanagh just smile and sing 'It's the way you are'

Albania:

JF: Whoever she is singing this to she really loves them. Its over the top in lyrics with the general thrust being 'I'm only alive because you love me'. I don't see this figuring, far too much of a formula being tried.

AK: Fallon, Fallon, Fallon... Your bizarre liking for the awful Danish "effort" has blinded you to real musical quality. This is a good song and Elhaida Dani is an even better singer, which is what you would expect from the winner of the 2013 Voice of Italy. This could be one of the dark horses in this year's contest. You can join the Danes on Final night in watching this reach the Top 10, or even the Top 5.

Romania:

AK: Strong message about the impact of Romanian immigration on those left behind, but the song doesn't have enough impact to stand out in a very strong competition. The late position in the running order, the juries and Romanian diaspora votes should see this into the Final however.

JF: You won't know what he is saying but you will wish you did. This is a strong effort and deserves to be in the final. The song has enough about it to be haunting but yet some catchy riffs populate it. I don't see it near the winning spot but it could do well.

Georgia:

JF: She is a warrior apparently. To be fair if she arrived to slap you around a bit you probably wouldn't complain. A touch of the poor man's Ruslana about this though (remember Wild Wild dancing?) But while I loved Ruslana I'm not taking to the music of this entry at all.

AK: I can get what Fallon's saying here. This is not the type of girl you want to bring home to Mammy, unless you want to scare the life out of Mammy... But she sells this song very well and Georgia has really upped the ante in terms of their staging this year. Given the excellent position in the running order, Georgia looks very likely to make it to the Final. After that, who knows?

-oooOOOOOOooo-

Semi Final 2

Lithuania:

JF: Welcome to Eurovision! What a great way to kick off the second semi final. Nice tempo and an intriguing song. This one is going to do well.

AK: I hate to admit it, but I agree with Fallon. A great choice to open the second semi-final and a major change of pace for Lithuania from their usual dour and downbeat ballads. This is really catchy and Monika and Vaidas have excellent chemistry. Performing first before a series of ballad style entries should work very well for Lithuania here.

Ireland:

AK: If we were just “playing with numbers”, it would seem that Ireland is facing a struggle to get out of this semi-final, with strong competition and a very poor position in the running order (although helped by the fact that the United Kingdom and Australia will be voting in this semi). But the song is good, we seem to have put more thought into the staging this year and Molly Sterling has a great and unique voice. A strong performance in the jury semi-final on Wednesday night could prove crucial here...

JF: This is an entry we can be proud of. Molly has an unusual singing style and that 'breathy' approach is very much in fashion right now. The big danger is that the lyrics can get lost on the night so it will need a big performance and good staging. If it gets it right then this song really deserves to make the final. We may indeed be playing with numbers but it might just be worth the gamble.

San Marino:

JF: More of the save the world lectures here. Somebody needs to call this pair's parents and tell them to get them home to bed. Snore fest.

AK: Anita Simoncini and Michele Perniola, the youngest act in this year's contest (even younger than Ireland's Molly) are encumbered by a fairly limited song, but they sell it as well as they can. Anita makes contest history this year as the first person to compete in two separate Eurovision contests (2014 Junior Eurovision and 2015 Eurovision) during the same year.

Montenegro:

AK: Good solid Balkan ballad and good performer, not too much wrong here, but not exactly memorable either.

JF: Not much wrong if you were thinking of nodding off to sleep. This is about as interesting as a doctors waiting room. Don't be surprised if you start looking for any old pamphlet to read just to pass the time.

Malta:

JF: This one will be all down to the performance on the night. It's another ballad just when you might have been hoping for something a bit more up-tempo. However, it has enough strength in parts to grab your attention if it is performed well and has good staging.

AK: This is a pretty good song, but it's not that dissimilar to other songs in this semi-final, such as the Latvian and Swiss entries. And these entries have better positions in the running order. Likely to be one of the entries fighting for the final qualification spots in this semi-final.

Norway:

AK: Dark theme and very different to most of the other entries in this year's contest. Norway either make Top 10 or completely bomb at Eurovision. If they get the vocals right, this will be another Top 10 for Norway this year, but if the vocals are not right...

JF: This is certainly darker and will require some concentration on the part of the audience if it's to do well. However, I suspect it has enough and is going to do well.

Portugal:

JF: No idea what this is about she looks fairly pissed off and doesn't seem like the kind of girl you should annoy. The fact it's a bit more up-tempo is welcome at this point and it may help it though unfortunately the language barrier may sink it.

AK: Portugal's record at Eurovision is not good and it won't be any better once the 2015 results are factored in. She's a good singer, but this song goes nowhere.

Czech Republic:

AK: The Czechs have never made it to the Eurovision Final. They return after being out of the contest for the last six years and with a second-last finish in 2008 as their best performance to date. This well performed, rocky, duet will improve on that record but I'm not sure if this is a qualifier. They could well be yet again Czech-ing out (ha ha...er) at the semis.

JF: Some decent voices on show here but the song itself is just too much of the same. In a very ballad heavy contest there is not enough here to make this stand out. Five minutes later you won't be recalling it. Welcome back Czech Republic and goodbye.

Israel:

JF: This guy says someone broke his heart. The fact that he is singing to his Mama might explain why the poor girl did it. He then decides he is going dancing. Whether he is bringing the mammy or not we don't quite know. He is then singing how he is the 'king of fun, the golden boy who has come to enjoy'...Oh please. Someone get his Mama to take him home he's drunk.

AK: Fortunately, unlike Fallon, I'm down with the kids. This is the sort of song you need at this stage of the semi-final to give everything a lift after a parade of ballads. It starts off like a ballad but then ramps up a few gears and we suddenly get into full-on Justin Timberlake, Tel Aviv style.

Latvia:

AK: The best Latvian entry in well over a decade, if not ever. Latvia have not qualified for a Final since 2008 (with those bloody pirates) but this cool, edgy, entry should sail through, if there is any justice.

JF: This is a quirky one. It may well have a touch of the Marmite entry about it. You will love it or hate it. Kavanagh says he is down with the kids and that they will like this. I'm not so sure at all.

Azerbaijan:

JF: Back to the ballads. As far as they go this isn't a bad one. Given Azerbaijan's record and ability to attract some votes I don't see this one having much bother in qualifying. One to watch.

AK: Elnur returns to Eurovision for the first time since appearing as part of the double act that formed Azerbaijan's debut entry in 2008. He may have lost his wings, but he's coming back as the Voice of Turkey. The song is not bad – though not one of the best in this year's contest – but the sheer quality of his vocals brings this to another level entirely. This could be a dark horse to make the Top 3, especially as the juries will love this, as also will the Turkish diaspora voters.

Iceland:

AK: I really like this. This is as catchy as hell and is the sort of song that the second semi-final needs after what equates to a ballad traffic jam over the previous ten entries. The country-ish feel to this could appeal to the same audience who voted for the Common Linnets last year and this could give Iceland (and let's forget last year's horror...) its best result in years...if not ever.

JF: I get worried when Kavanagh says he likes something. However, on this occasion he has a point. Good voice, in a great position after so many slow ballads. Simple clear lyrics. Good diction. It

should be well able to travel. Iceland lacks neighbours but this deserves to do well and could be a dark horse. One step at a time.

Sweden:

JF: The Common Linnets may not have won last year but they have left a thread of influence throughout this year's contest. This has a country riff to kick off but Sweden has to revert to type and get dancy very quickly. It should make it to the final but it is no Euphoria.

AK: Strong song and great staging saw Mans win the Swedish Final in a landslide. He's using the same staging at Vienna, although his stick figures have now put on a few pounds. This will sail through to the Final and probably will win this semi-final in the process. It's a serious contender for the overall prize.

Switzerland:

AK: Good song but may well be appealing to the same audience that the Latvian and Maltese entries are looking to win over. An interesting staging and late position in the running order gives this a good chance of making the final, however.

JF: Another wild woman. Not too much wrong with this as a song but it will struggle to stand out. For that it will rely on the staging. I am not sure if it is her time to shine but it could be a very long range shot.

Cyprus:

JF: A ballad simply done and words easily understood. There is a lot to be said for that. I have a feeling this one is going to do well.

AK: This is similar to our entry in terms of its sheer simplicity. It might well be the case that only one out of Cyprus or Ireland qualifies. I think Molly has the better song and is the better singer, but the position in the running order here really helps out Cyprus in this semi-final.

Slovenia:

AK: This is one of the highest ranking entries in this year's contest based on the Bookie odds and there is a lot to like about this. It's one of only a few really good dance acts...actually it's the only one...in this year's contest. But Slovenia have cornered the market in terms of acts who do less well than expected at Eurovision.

JF: History is against this one. Slovenia have often let me down in the past. Putting that aside this is a decent number and if you wait until the chorus I have no doubt you will be quite satisfied. It

definitely deserves to be in the final and score well there too. Let's hope it doesn't end up 'Down down Low'

Poland:

JF: If you don't remember the Polish song from last year I bet you remember the Polish women. This year's effort is a ballad far more at ease in polite society. An accomplished performer, Monika, will have no problem delivering on the night but with so many ballads this corner of the market is a bit of a lottery.

AK: The song itself isn't amazing, but Monika performs it well and Poland has tended to do well in the past with well-performed ballads. The fact that this will be performed last on the night in the second semi-final means that it has an excellent chance of making it to the Final.

Automatic Finalists:

Spain:

AK: There's been a lot of hype about the Spanish entry this year. If you strip that away, you're left with what is a pretty good song. If the staging and performance is right on Final night, this could do very well for Spain.

JF: On so many occasions I have tipped Spain as a dark horse only to see them fail to pull in the votes. For that reason I'm nervous again. Language barrier won't help even if she does sound very good whatever she says. Spain can have high hopes but we will have to wait and see.

United Kingdom:

JF: Now this one is definitely quirky and a bit of a cross over but if you like it, you really like it. I think the UK might really be on to something here. Performed well on the night I think this is certainly in for a top 10 finish and maybe just maybe...

AK: Oh dear... The spirit of Scooch is strong in this one. Jeeves and Wooster meets Strictly Come Dancing with this one. The BBC seemed to be moving towards a more credible approach to Eurovision last year, but this year they've reverted back to the tired stereotypes. The duo do have charm, but the song is awful; it's got terrible lyrics and it's just plain cheesy. A good staging and good performance might help this to a respectable showing.

Italy:

AK: The winner of this year's San Remo and currently the second favourites to win the contest. Opera has never won Eurovision, but then again heavy metal had never won Eurovision before Lordi came along. If this is staged right and it gets a late position in the running order, this should be there or thereabouts when the final Eurovision points are counted.

JF: Operatic numbers from the likes of France and others have been much hyped in the past only to fail. The jury votes should help this one a lot though. The public vote will be harder to judge until we see the performance on the night. There is no doubt this is a strong song, a great trio of singers and lots of power in the tune. That tends to go a long way.

France:

JF: The purists in Eurovision, filled with nostalgia, will always be suckers for a woman singing in French. This is a lovely ballad but it will face a heap of others coming in from the semi finals. It's a very well put together song if it can hold the audience attention.

AK: France have gone back to what they do best, but unfortunately they've had to go back to the 1970s to do so and this sounds quite dated, especially to someone who's down with the kids. That's not to say it won't do fairly well and I could see this scoring well with the juries.

Germany:

AK: The big story about this song has revolved around the controversy at the German selection, but this is a pretty decent song in its own right, though it's not very likely to be figuring among the main contenders on Final night.

JF: It's a little bit different but tends to go into the plain shouty category. I don't see it vying for honours.

Australia:

JF: Not the kind of song that I tend to like but I do feel this will do well. We all want the Aussies to enjoy the experience and it's a fairly decent effort. It should pick up enough votes to start the case for Australia becoming a permanent fixture.

AK: Leaving aside the debate as to whether Australia should be in the show or not, this is a pretty credible debut entry for them (and I'm assuming that the one-off appearance will become a permanent one). This song doesn't exactly excite me, but it seems to be pretty popular with other

folk based on the Bookies odds and Guy Sebastian is a good performer. What's that Skippy? Top 5 finish? Probably...

Austria:

AK: This sounds sort of interesting for the first ten seconds of the song and then twenty seconds in it sounds like something you've heard before on many, many occasions... Thirty seconds in and you've lost interest...

JF: Long hair and a beard. Women or men must all be the same in Austria. Anyway this is another good ballad and quite catchy in its own right. With Austria hosting they are sure to pick up a few votes and this song should do quite nicely for them.