

= Marina and the Diamonds =

Marina Lambrini Diamandis ( Greek : ?????? @-@ ???????? ???????? ; born 10 October 1985 ) , known professionally as Marina and the Diamonds , is a Welsh singer @-@ songwriter .

Born in Brynmawr and raised in nearby Pandy , she moved to London as a teenager to become a professional singer , despite having little formal musical experience . In 2009 , Diamandis came to prominence upon placing second in the BBC 's Sound of 2010 . Her debut studio album , The Family Jewels ( 2010 ) , incorporates indie pop and new wave musical styles . It entered the UK Albums Chart at number five and was certified gold by the British Phonographic Industry . The album 's second song , " Hollywood " , peaked at number 12 on the UK Singles Chart .

Her follow @-@ up record Electra Heart ( 2012 ) , is a concept album about a character of the same name . It integrates prominent elements of electropop , and its producers include StarGate , Dr. Luke and Diplo . It became her first number @-@ one project in the United Kingdom , where it was also certified gold , and its lead single " Primadonna " is her highest @-@ charting track in the UK Singles Chart , reaching number 11 . Diamandis describes Electra Heart as " tongue @-@ in @-@ cheek " and considers it to have been better received in the United States , while some British fans disliked the change in musical direction . The song " Electra Heart " portrays the death of the character . Diamandis 's synthpop @-@ inspired third studio album Froot ( 2015 ) became her third top @-@ ten album in the United Kingdom , and her first top @-@ ten entry on the US Billboard 200 where it charted at number 8 . Produced entirely by Diamandis and David Kosten , it was praised for its cohesive sound and introspective lyrical content .

Diamandis has described herself as an " indie artist with pop goals " and often analyses components of human behaviour in her music . She is additionally recognised for her retro , surreal and cartoonish fashion styles , and has been described as an artist with a cult following , and a gay icon .

= = Early life and career beginnings = =

Diamandis was born in Brynmawr in Wales , and grew up in the nearby village of Pandy . She has one older sister , Lafina Diamandis . Their Welsh mother and Greek father met at university in Newcastle @-@ upon @-@ Tyne , and divorced when Marina was four . Following the divorce , her father returned to Greece but would visit on occasion , while Marina lived in a bungalow with her mother , sharing a bedroom with her sister ; she described her childhood as " simple and idyllic , " as well as " peaceful , very normal , poor . "

In her childhood , she attended Haberdashers ' Monmouth School for Girls , reflecting that " I sort of found my talent there ? I was the one who always skived off choir , but I had an incredible music teacher who managed to convince me I could do anything . " However , she felt that she " stuck out " by being from a lower @-@ income family than the other girls at the school . At the age of 16 , she moved to Greece with her father " to connect with my heritage and learn to speak the language " and sang Greek folk songs with her grandmother . Having earned an International Baccalaureate at St. Catherine 's British Embassy School in Athens , she returned to Wales two years later . She and her mother then moved to Ross @-@ on @-@ Wye , Herefordshire . " Obsessed with becoming a singer , almost as if it was a disease , " she worked for two months at a petrol station in order to earn money to move to London .

Despite not having a musical background , Diamandis was able to create lyrics due to her childhood love of writing . She first began writing music when she was 18 years old ; she moved to London to attend dance school , but quit two months later . She studied music at the University of East London and transferred to a classic composition course in Middlesex University the following year , but after two months she dropped out .

Knowing that the Spice Girls were formed by an advertisement in The Stage , Diamandis applied for auditions listed in that newspaper . She travelled for several unsuccessful auditions , including opportunities with the musical for The Lion King and a boy band organised by Virgin Records , during which she managed to leave her CV to an A & R Representative , but was unable to audition

at the time of the appointment as she felt sick . In 2005 , she created the stage name " Marina and the Diamonds " ; after coming to prominence , " the Diamonds " was established as a reference to her fans , instead of her backing band .

Inspired by the example of Daniel Johnston , Diamandis decided to compose her own music and stop going to auditions ; she taught herself how to play the piano and recorded music on a keyboard . She self @-@ composed and produced her earlier demos with GarageBand , and independently released her debut extended play Mermaid vs. Sailor through Myspace in 2007 . She held discussions with fourteen music labels , rejecting all but one as she believed it was the only one which would not dictate her image . She came to the attention of Neon Gold Records ' Derek Davies in 2008 , which managed her for six months , and was hired as the supporting act for Australian recording artist Gotye . In October , Diamandis finalised a recording contract with 679 Recordings ( eventually renamed 679 Artists ) , a subdivision of Warner Music Group .

= = Musical career = =

= = = 2009 ? 10 : The Family Jewels = = =

Diamandis 's debut single " Obsessions " was released on 14 February 2009 through Neon Gold Records , while her first extended play The Crown Jewels EP followed on 1 June . That summer , she performed at BBC Radio 1 's Big Weekend , the Glastonbury Festival , and the Reading and Leeds Festivals . She also performed at iTunes Live , releasing a second EP in July 2009 of performances from that festival .

In December 2009 , Diamandis was ranked in second place on the Sound of 2010 poll organised by BBC , behind singer @-@ songwriter Ellie Goulding ; she was one of three nominees for the Critics ' Choice Award at the 2010 BRIT Awards , which also went to Goulding . " Mowgli 's Road " was released on 13 November 2009 , with Diamandis describing it as " uncommercial " , but it received attention after its video was shared by bloggers including Perez Hilton and Kanye West . It was followed by " Hollywood " on 1 February , which reached number 12 on the UK Singles Chart .

Diamandis 's debut studio album The Family Jewels was released on 15 February 2010 ; it debuted at number five on the UK Albums Chart with first @-@ week sales of 27 @,@ 618 copies , and was eventually certified gold by the British Phonographic Industry . Atlantic Records signed Diamandis to Chop Shop Records in the United States in March 2010 . Through the label , she released her third extended play The American Jewels EP on 23 March , and later released The Family Jewels in the United States on 25 May . The latter project debuted at number 138 on the US Billboard 200 with first @-@ week sales of 24 @,@ 000 copies . On Billboard 's Top Heatseekers and Top Rock Albums charts , it peaked at numbers 2 and 49 respectively .

" I Am Not a Robot " was serviced as the third single from The Family Jewels on 26 April , and peaked at number 26 on the UK Singles Chart . " Oh No ! " followed as the fourth single from the record in July , and reached number 38 in the United Kingdom . The fifth and final single " Shampain " peaked at number 141 on the UK Singles Chart , consequently underperforming by comparison with its preceding singles . To further promote The Family Jewels , Diamandis embarked on The Family Jewels Tour , which visited Europe , North America and Australia throughout 2010 and 2011 . In January 2011 , in an Australian radio interview , she expressed disappointment at her career , particularly in her failure to attract an American audience . She put this down to inaction by her label and American listeners ' contemporary taste for " pumping beats " by artists such as Lady Gaga .

= = = 2011 ? 13 : Electra Heart = = =

In summer 2011 , Diamandis and Swedish recording artist Robyn performed as the opening acts for American recording artist Katy Perry 's California Dreams Tour . On 30 September , Diamandis released the track " Radioactive " through the iTunes Store ; it peaked at number 25 on the UK Singles Chart . Her second studio album was preceded by its lead single " Primadonna " in April

2012 ; the song is notable for being Diamandis 's highest @-@ charting track on the UK Singles Chart , where it reached number 11 . It is certified silver by the BPI and platinum by the respective authorities in Australia , Denmark and New Zealand .

The final product *Electra Heart* is a concept album lyrically united by the ideas of " female identity " and " a recent breakup . " Diamandis created the titular character " *Electra Heart* " as a protagonist for the project ; she portrays the personas " Teen Idle , " " Primadonna , " " Homewrecker , " and " Housewife , " which represent several female archetypes of stereotypical American culture . The project was released on 27 April 2012 , and debuted at number one on the UK Albums Chart with first @-@ week sales of 21 @,@ 358 copies . It became Diamandis 's first chart @-@ topping album in the United Kingdom , although at the time it was additionally distinguished as the lowest @-@ selling number @-@ one record of the 21st century in the country . The album was certified gold by the British Phonographic Industry for exceeding shipments of 100 @,@ 000 units , and gold by the Irish Recorded Music Association for surpassing 7 @,@ 500 sales .

" *Power & Control* " was released as the second single from *Electra Heart* on 20 July , although it peaked at number 193 on the UK Singles Chart . Later that month , it was announced that " *How to Be a Heartbreaker* " would be released as the second single in the United States and the third single in the United Kingdom . Diamandis commented that she had written the track while *Electra Heart* was being pressed in the United Kingdom , and consequently missed the cut @-@ off for initial inclusion on the record ; however , it was featured in the revised track listing for the American version . It peaked at number 88 in the latter country . Throughout 2012 , Diamandis travelled for *The Lonely Hearts Club Tour* , her second headlining concert tour , and *Mylo Xyloto Tour* headlined by Coldplay , for which she served as an opening act . On 8 August 2013 , Diamandis released a music video for the previously unreleased title track " *Electra Heart* " ; it depicted the death of the character , and symbolically ended the promotional campaign for *Electra Heart* .

== 2014 ? 16 : Froot ==

After spending one month in New York City , Diamandis announced in February 2013 that she had begun writing material for an upcoming third studio album . The single " *Froot* " was released on 10 October , her 29th birthday , and announced as the title track .

The album was announced to be released on 3 April 2015 with a new track from the album being announced each month . However , due to an Internet leak , the release was brought forward . Entirely produced by Diamandis and David Kosten , the album was praised for its cohesive sound . *Froot* debuted at number 8 on the *Billboard* 200 chart , and is currently her highest charting album in the United States . It also peaked at 10 , 6 and 4 in the UK , Canada and Ireland respectively .

In early 2015 , it was announced that Diamandis would perform at *Lollapalooza Brazil* , *Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival* and the *Boston Calling Music Festival* in March , April and May 2015 respectively . From October 2015 to the following October she embarked on the *Neon Nature Tour* across Europe and the Americas ; each performance was split into three acts , one for each of her albums , with most songs coming from *Froot* . Her 4 November performance at the *House of Blues* in Boston was broadcast live by Yahoo . During a question @-@ and @-@ answer video , Diamandis said that subsequent tours would be different , as her usual tours had been " a hard lifestyle . " In April 2016 , she said she would take a break from music after her tour . She returned to performing two months later , clarifying that she would rather work on a consistent basis than a cycle of touring and resting .

== Artistry ==

== Musical style and influences ==

As a child , Diamandis took inspiration from the differing musical tastes of her parents ? Dolly Parton , Enya and George Michael from her mother , and Haris Alexiou from her father ? while also

admiring pop acts of the era including the Spice Girls , Britney Spears and S Club 7 . Diamandis has revealed that " Madonna was the reason I wanted to be a pop star from the age of 15 , " however she also stated that she did not listen to music " properly " until the age of 19 , when she took influence from acts including PJ Harvey , Fiona Apple and The Distillers . She began smoking two years later in an attempt to sound like The Distillers ' frontwoman Brody Dalle , " but it never worked , and now I 'm just stuck with a bad habit . " She has cited Dalle and Spears as her musical influences , and has expressed a particular interest in Daniel Johnston and the lo @-@ fi production he uses . She has jokingly stated that " I probably have a bit of a different sound because I don 't really know what I 'm doing ! , " referencing her lack of formal musical training . Diamandis has synesthesia , and as a result associates particular colours with musical notes and days of the week .

A self @-@ described " DIY musician " and " indie artist with pop goals , " Diamandis considers her music to be " alternate pop " . Lester wrote in 2008 that Diamandis 's musical direction was " hard to fathom " , given the frequency with which she alternated " simple keyboards @-@ based ballads " and " quirky new wave @-@ inflected numbers . " Whereas The Family Jewels incorporated prominent elements of new wave music , Electra Heart was heavily inspired by electropop musical styles . Diamandis opined that the United States was more welcoming of said musical transition than the United Kingdom , and suggested that the American audience embraced the humour behind the latter " tongue @-@ in @-@ cheek record " . Froot is a pop record , with elements of europop and pop rock .

At the start of her career , Diamandis was compared to other British female singer @-@ songwriters , with Paul Lester from The Guardian writing that she had a " zeitgeist @-@ y female essence " , although she took exception at such comparisons and said that all she shared with Kate Nash was " a vagina and a keyboard . " During the Electra Heart era , she called comparisons to Lady Gaga , Katy Perry and Lana Del Rey " really annoying " , preferring to be classed as herself . Her vocals have been compared to those of Karen O , Regina Spektor , Kate Bush , and Florence Welch , with an androgynous timbre akin to those of Annie Lennox and Heather Small . When reviewing The Family Jewels , Joe Copplestone from PopMatters noted that Diamandis 's vocal delivery occasionally overpowers the " inventive " melodies showcased in her songs .

Diamandis 's lyrical content typically analyses components of human behaviour ; she has noted that she would have become a psychologist had she been unsuccessful in the music industry . The song " Savages " , from Froot , reflects on humanity 's proneness to violent acts . She is a feminist and wrote her song " Sex Yeah " as a " feminist statement . " Rory Cashin of Slate lauded Diamandis 's lyrics as " esoteric , " likening her to an " emotionally intelligent outsider who knew how to perfectly articulate those weird thoughts and reactions we all have but would never admit to . " Laurence Day of The Line of Best Fit considered Froot to be " an anthology of astute nihilistic , existentialist discussions " .

= = = Public image = = =

Diamandis has identified Sophia Loren , Leigh Lezark , Shirley Manson and Gwen Stefani as her fashion icons , and Asli Polat and Mary Benson as among her favourite designers . As part of Selfridges ' " Sound of Music " , Diamandis and Paloma Faith designed their own window display for the London Oxford Street branch in May 2010 , and additionally appeared as a " live mannequins " for the display . In November , Diamandis was featured on the website for the British edition of Vogue , where she contributed to the " Today I 'm Wearing " column that month . In February 2011 , she became a brand ambassador for Max Factor , who called her " colourful personality " a perfect fit for the brand . In 2013 , she launched a fashion brand named 11 Diamonds and designed a line of T @-@ shirts for it , but has had little involvement with it since .

According to Emily Jupp of The Independent , despite various changes in musical direction , an " unconventional fashion sense " has been a constant in Diamandis 's career . In the video to " How to be a Heartbreaker , " she " subverts the norm " by wearing more clothes than male models in the background ; she reflected that " I don 't think it suits me to wear very little clothing , it just wouldn 't " .

t feel right . I ? d rather people listen to what I have to say instead of staring at my bum . " In 2011 , when promoting The Family Jewels , Diamandis described her fashion styles as " vintage , cheerleader , and cartoon . " Four years later , she described her costumes then as " very badly put together vintage , kind of glittery ensemble " , and her outfits for Froot as a " mix of ' 70s with digital fiberware ... something surreal and ' 70s . "

She has been described as a " pop enigma " , an artist who " never felt like she belonged to the masses " and one with a cult following . She has criticised the Brit Awards for ostensibly being too corporate focussed , and has called for a new ceremony ideologically between the Brits and the " left @-@ field " Mercury Prize . Diamandis used to meet fans after each performance , but ended this practice for safety reasons during the Neon Nature Tour , instead having ten pairs of fans chosen to meet her before the show .

Diamandis estimates that gay people comprise 60 % of her concert audience ; she attributes her status as a gay icon to her campness and sense of humour , in addition to lyrics on being a societal outsider . In 2012 , she won the Best Music Award at gay magazine Attitude 's award show . She headlined an NYC Pride event in June 2016 in the aftermath of the Pulse nightclub shooting , wearing a rainbow @-@ striped cape . Diamandis plays down her popularity in the gay community in order to avoid sounding like a " cliché pop star " and hopes for a time when acceptance will mean that people do not label themselves by their sexuality .

She has been physically compared to her friend and label mate Charli XCX . In March 2016 , the two feuded over Charli XCX 's photoshoot which Diamandis considered to be derivative of her own image on Froot .

= = Discography = =

The Family Jewels ( 2010 )

Electra Heart ( 2012 )

Froot ( 2015 )

= = Tours = =

Headline Act

The Family Jewels Tour ( 2010 ? 11 )

The Lonely Hearts Club Tour ( 2012 ? 13 )

Neon Nature Tour ( 2015 ? 16 )

Opening Act

California Dreams Tour ( 2011 )

Mylo Xyloto Tour ( 2011 ? 12 )

= = Awards and nominations = =