



The End Of The Series



All good things come to an end and after 6 years celebrating the production, arranging and backing skills of Bob Crewe, Charles Calello, Bob Gaudio and the rest of the Four Seasons, we've reached our final volume, for the time being at least. We could of course gather the disparate and pretty undistinguished efforts by the pre-Four Seasons including tracks by the guys performing as the Village Voices or by Bob Gaudio as Turner Di Senti.

But we thought how many people would get any listening benefit from these. They are pretty dire! When we started Volume 1 we had lots of diverse and entertaining 60s rarities to feature. Real quality! And since then, we have been able to create good mixes of male, female and group efforts to achieve an entertaining set for CD. Our latest collection once again achieves a good mix although we jump around the first half of the 60s quite a bit with some very different styles. This shows how much the guys tried there hand at many approaches.

Charles Calello's productions with Lou Christie always provide some strong tracks and we kick off the collection with Lou's most controversial release, **'Rhapsody In The Rain'**. (MGM K13473) Opening with Seasons like chimes and guitars it was so suggestive of a sexual liason it was banned by many US radio stations and had to be re-recorded with the lyric changed from 'making out in the rain' and the 'windshield wipers seem to say ..together ...together ...together'. Seems quite bland today in this original version but those were the conservative days of the early 60s and of the controlling 'older generation' in music. It didn't stop the song from getting to #16 in the U.S. and #37 in the UK.

Ruby Roberson had a superb soulful voice and **'Shame'**(written by by Bob Boulanger,) on **Southern Sound 120** is a great example of Charle's Calello's ability to relate to the soul sounds emerging in 1963 in his arranging. Produced by Frank Slay, who was Bob Crewe's partner at XYZ back in the late 50s. Of course Bob Crewe was very much at ease with the teen boy/girl ballad (after all he had tried many solo efforts himself) and with Jon Corey he produced a typical teen ballad **'Hey Little Runaround'** (Vee Jay 514) in 1963, arranged by Charles Calello , with backing by Nino & The Ebbtides. Written by Crewe - D L'Heureux(later known as DC Larue) it didn't achieve any success however.

Nick Massi's ability as a vocal arranger appears on a few side projects and with The Carmels he

achieved a good harmonic group sound on **'I Can't Shake This Feeling' (MGM K13869A)** Gaudio and Valli also helped in this production.....and nice string arrangements on this track show what they had learned from Charles Calello

We've featured Bob Crewe's attempts to produce solo male artists with very limited success and some are very creditable songs like **'People Forget So Fast'(MGM K13301)** by Michael Allen. A good song with a nice melody and the arrangement is only let down by a dated vocal phrasing by the artist which was never going to appeal to teenagers, but it is worth a listen to hear the Four Seasons with Valli's vocal very noticeable on the closing harmonic outro. Another example of their backing work with Crewe.....and of Calello's great arranging. A rare, Crewe-Calello-Linzer composition from 1964, when Charles first introduced Sandy Linzer to Bob as a writer.

Bob Crewe asked arranger Herb Bernstein to produce a number of tracks in the second half of the 60s and with Barbara Banks he produced the superb **'Living In The Past' (Veep 1247)** which oozes soul and class. It was released in 1965. Not much is known about Ms. Banks, although she also had a release on MGM records and Philips records (about 1966-67). A popular 'floater', in Northern Soul circles.

More Calello class arrangement on a great Lou Christie melody with great stepping piano intro, **"Have I Sinned' (Colpix CP753)**. This is a real 60s lost gem, with good falsetto and variety of pace prevalent in many of the Lou Christie – Twyla Herbert compositions we have featured. Recorded in October 1964, arranged by Charles Calello. It was produced by WESLU productions which would have been Wes Farrell & Lou Christie

The Page Boys might have included member of the Four Seasons in the mix of vocals as the track **'If Tears Could Speak' (Decca 31505)** was produced by Bob Gaudio and Frankie Valli. The group probably comprise the guys who are accredited as writers, Ralph Rizzolo, Ralph DeCapua and Phil Melillo and many believe Nick Massi and Tommy Devito may be joining in on vocals. A Seasons like sound and arrangement not surprising give the pedigree of the producers. Arranged, of course, by Charles Calello. It was the very first collaboration by the "new" production team of Bob Gaudio & Frankie Valli in 1963. They would go on to produce / collaborate on about 15 records during the 1960's, with one (Jackie Hill - "Come Closer" / "My Man, He's Everything") on their own private label called Mar-Brit, named after their wives first names. This Page Boys release was their only release on this one off, short lived label.

To brighten the mix, a bouncy feel-good sound from Eddie Rambeau who always managed to sound upbeat with the saddest of song situations. **'I Miss You' (Dynavoice 221)** was a Brown-Bloodworth-Nader song. Ed told us..."Two of my favorite people wrote "I Miss You".....Bloodworth and Brown. They were staff songwriters for the Bob Crewe organization and two of the nicest guys in the music business. Bloodworth went on to write many top 40 hits". Of course Brown and Bloodworth were The Distant Cousins, featured on earlier Volumes and writers of several Valli/Seasons songs.

We've included Vi Velasco who Charles Calello arranged and conducted on a Vee-Jay album **VJ1135**. Vi was a good vocalist as she demonstrates on this track **'Follow My Heart'**. Written by D. Irwin and J.B.Wellington

You can read all about the Victorians at chameleons blog (http://movementbureau.blogs.com/chameleon/2007/03/what_did_the_vi.html) and in this set we present their other single release, which Nick Massi produced after he left the Four Seasons. A Nick Massi – Ralph Parla composition **' Merry Go Round' (Bang 550)** was a good harmony track but

This CD features all the artists shown on these picture/label sleeves who worked with Bob Crewe and/or Charles Calello. Right: Bob Crewe with Eddie Rambeau Front: Ellie Greenwich 1967.

The tracks on this CD are sourced from original vinyl which is over 40 years old. Whilst cleaned and re-balanced some 'artifacts' and stylus noise could not be removed.

Contact Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons UK Historical Group for track history/sleeve notes.

Bob Crewe Presents.....'Seasons' Connections Vol 8

1	Rhapsody In The Rain	Lou Christie
2	Shame	Ruby Roberson
3	Hey Little Runaround	John Corey
4	I Can't Shake This Feeling	The Carmels
5	People Forget So Fast	Michael Allen
6	Living In The Past	Barbara Banks
7	Have I Sinned	Lou Christie
8	If Tears Could Speak	The Page Boys
9	I Miss You	Eddie Rambeau
10	Follow My Heart	Vi Velasco
11	Merry Go Round	The Victorians
12	Diary	Lou Christie
13	I Cried A Tear	Gerri Hall
14	Daddy Ooh Long Legs	The High Keyes
15	I Fell In Love So Easily	Eddie Rambeau
16	For Adults Only	Jim Eller
17	Shake Hands	Lou Christie
18	Stay With Me	Nancy Ames
19	She	Russ Saintry
20	I Was Born To Wander	Rhode Islanders
21	Goodnight Good Night	Ellie Greenwich
22	The Prettiest Girl I've Kissed Today	John Corey
23	Dirty Lies	Evan Mitchell
24	Talk Is Cheap	The Shirelles
25	Pot Of Gold	Lou Christie
26	The Plan	The Trains
27	I've Cried Before	The Four Seasons
28	River Of Tears	Barbara Banks
29	Bob Crewe Message to DJ's	Bob Crewe

very dated for the progressive harmony sounds of 1967.

We feature another good track from the 'Lightnin' Strikes' album, **'Diary' (MGMLP 4360)** recorded in January 1966. Arranged and produced by Charles Calello, this is a great ballad beautifully arranged and delivered. Also recorded by Charles with another artist that year, Anne-Marie, (MGM13534) for R.P. Marcucci Enterprise Inc.



The soulful performance of **"I Cried A Tear" (Atco 6260)** by Gerri Hall is a

beautiful but little known 1963 Julia composition. The B side 'Mr. Blues' is written by Bob Crewe and Sid Bass. This version of the A side is better than the 1958 original by LaVerne Baker and has a fuller smoother arrangement. The record was released on two labels..... Atco records, and RIA with the name Bob Crewe as producer in 1963 on Atco. The record was initially released on a small southern USA label RIA (101) by Gerri with both sides identical, but the producer was Bob Robin, so we believe Bob Crewe used an alias. No arranger is listed, but it was probably Sid Bass, as he usually was the arranger on songs that he co-wrote. This Crewe alias was used for more than one record. Mike Miller found a record with the same "Robin" producer from a Van Broussard on Mala with "Feed The Flame", and this may be Van Trevor, but we can not be sure. There is also another record by Lenny Damon & The Humbugs on either the Jubilee or Josie label with the same Bob Robin name as producer.

The High Keyes deserved more success for their efforts with Crewe, and **'Daddy Ooh Long Legs' (ATCO #6268)** was an unlikely title, but is a fun bouncy pop song with a soulful delivery. written by Crewe and Troy Keyes and arranged by Charles Calello However it is not up to the standard of the other Crewe soul artists The Invitations 2 years later in 1965.

More from Ed Rambeau with **'I Fell In Love So Easily', released on Dynavoice LP 9001**, written by Al Kooper with Brass and Levine in 1965. Once again it was produced and arranged by Charles Calello and remains a favourite of Eddie's as he told us.... **"....this song came into the Bob Crewe office and the moment I heard it I knew it was for me. I just loved the melody and knew instantly that I just had to record it and was pleased to see that Bob Crewe and Charlie Calello felt the same."**

Jim Eller is an unknown performer, and **'For Adults Only' (Chicory Records #1602)** is the only known record under this name. He has a sound like Toby Grogan, who released one record on Vee Jay records in 1963 called "Angel" a 4 Seasons sound-a-like record. Intriguing title and fun lyric on this Calello arranged, F. Slay – B. Crewe song on Frank Slay's own small label in we suspect 1963.

Another Lou Christie classic from 1967 which Kingsley Abbott includes in his **'500 Lost Gems of The Sixties'**. **'Shake Hands, and Walk Away Cryin'**(CBS 2718 in the UK), writers Christie-Herbert. **"On this CBS outing the king of the 'tortured 'song story maintains his heartbreak persona on a song that interweaves several song titles from the 1962/1963 era – that suggests that it was written a few years ahead of this issue" A complex arrangement but one that maintains the interest with changes in pace."**

Nancy Ames has a great voice and is better known than we thought.....**"A lot of people remember Nancy for how she introduced the TV show 'That Was the Week That Was' with vivacious renditions of Tom Lehrer tunes, but she was also a Broadway lead and quite a singer with a natural**

bent (her grandfather was President of Panama!) for the south-of-the-border stylings “ says the intro notes for her rare Collectors Choices CD set. The song we feature is “**Stay With Me**” which was arranged by Charles Calello and produced by Al Kasha on what we think was a 1966 release on Epic. An excellent song, and performance.



Michael Allen’s version of the Bob Crewe and Charles Calello composition ‘**She**’ is pretty hard to find, but the best version we found was by Russ Sainty,(**Columbia DB – 7708**) a UK artist who had a briefly successful time in the mid 60s. He played the California Ballroom, Dunstable most weeks from 1962.

All Four Seasons fans know the song, ‘Born To Wander’ from the folk flavoured album of the same name, but not many will know that this songs origins are somewhat early than that 1964 release. In 1961 the song ‘**I Was Born To Wander**’ (**Warner Bros 5280**) was produced by Bob Crewe with a group called The Rhode Islanders....and Charles Calello did the arrangement. It is interesting to compare this version with the more polished one by the Seasons.



Queen of the girl ‘popsters’ and big friend of Bob Crewe, Ellie Greenwich helped him produce her on a song they wrote in 1968, ‘**Goodnight, Goodnight**’ (**United Artists 50151**). As well as singing lead she also sang background with former Rag Doll Jean Thomas. Although the ‘B’ side (to the raucous ‘Want You To Be My Baby’) this was by far the best side. Great melody and superb harmonies....reminiscent of the Seasons sound.

Jon(not John) Corey and the other side of the 45 we featured earlier is another teen ballad typical of the early 60s. Crewe producing and Calello arranging on this Bob Boulanger song ‘**The Prettiest Girl I’ve Kissed Today**’ (**Vee Jay 514**). The harmony backing is by Nino and

The Ebb Tides.

Another catchy song by Evan Mitchell, ‘**Dirty Lies**’(**Mala 486**) features great girl group backing which sounds very much like Jean Thomas and the Rag Dolls. We can’t verify that from Jean’s logs and Bob had several girl line-ups for backing vocals. Mike Miller found out that Evan Mitchell (AKA Kevin McQuinn, real name Eddie Quinn), was an original member of the Mello Kings (of Tonight, Tonight fame)

One girl group with an unmistakable sound are the Shirelles and ‘**Talk Is Cheap**’ which appeared **only on the Scepter LP 511** was the only Crewe – Gaudio track they ever recorded. Excellent song as you would expect and could have made some chart action if released on a 45. Produced by the legendary Luther Dixon, this song was also recorded by the Shepherd Sisters on Atlantic Records with an identical arrangement by ‘Calello’ and produced on that occasion by Bob Crewe. We liked this styling by the vocalists best.



Another classic Lou Christie ballad was ‘**Pot Of Gold**’ (**Colpix CP – 753B**) Again written by Herbert-Christie, it was arranged by Charles Calello, and produced by WESLU productions. Released in 1964 with ‘Have I Sinned’ it was described in the Egyptian Shumba sleeve notes as...”**a romantic delight orchestrated in tones of deep gold and unimaginably rich purple**”. You have to hear this to accept that comment. Great background, by The Tammy’s.

A Four Seasons sound-alike group The Trains didn’t make it out of the station with ‘**The Plan(I Love You So)**’ (**Swan S -4196-T**) in 1963, but this was a garage version of their more refined sound. Penned

by the young and ambitious producers John Linde – Pete Antell, (who would try a solo release later with Crewe) this was obviously the guys early attempts at learning about producing with Crewe who allowed them to arrange and conduct the track. The Trains were Bobby Bloom, John Governali and Bob Kneiper. The full John Linde - Peter Antell story is found at the Spectropop web site. (<http://www.spectropop.com/percells/index.htm>).

Just to remind us why we did this project our closing tracks feature the classic 'B' side to 'Sherry' '**I've Cried Before**' (**VeeJay 456**). This Bob Gaudio ballad has always been haunting, and amazingly never available on CD in its original classic form. We re-mastered the vinyl to produce all of the glorious harmonies and Frankie's soulful, sad rendition of this important track. One of the '4 songs' Bob Crewe asked them to bring him before he would record them as the Four Seasons ?...so the Jersey Boys script tells us!

Musically we close with a soulful track Bob Crewe had Herb Bernstein arranged for him in the post Calello days of 1967. '**River Of Tears**' (**Veep 1247**) by Barbara Banks is a Baker – Knight (Gary Knight we think, who wrote extensively with Crewe during this period). This track has a good Northern Soul following and although a Crewe production we believe it is largely Herb Bernstein's work. Mike Miller believes it was also released on the flipside of the Vala Reegan & Valerons classic Northern Soul single for Atco records around 1964-1965.

And to end the series we have the **Bob Crewe promo to DJ's** introducing the Bob Crewe Generation competition for an alternative title to 'Miniskirts In Moscow'. The winner of the competition got a trip to NYC and attendance at the next BCG session. Now that would have been interesting.

Looking back on this series and the research we have done, the one thing that strikes me is the huge talent of both Bob Crewe and Charles Calello. Listening now I always feel Bob's best productions feature Charles Calello's arrangements and Charles equally benefited from Bob's perceptive producer's ear. But don't take my word for it.....we close the series with the words of Eddie Rambeau who worked so much with them both and is better equipped than any of us to capture what perhaps we all feel.....

"The duo of Bob Crewe and Charlie Calello was unsurpassed. They seemed to be unstoppable when it came to churning out hits. Bob had a terrific ear for a hit song and Calello worked closely with Bob to come up with the perfect arrangement which made their collaboration a successful combination of hit producing recordings throughout their entire professional career. And they seldom didn't see eye to eye. They always appeared to be having great fun working together and both enjoyed their part in the making of hit records. Their 4 Seasons catalogue speaks for itself. One after another. I can recall when Bob returned from the studio and called both myself and Bud Rehak into his office to hear a song they'd both finished in the studio. He excitedly placed the acetate on the turntable and played it for us. It was "Rag Doll". Both Bud and I said, "SMASH!"and a smash it was. Recently Bob called me and took me to see Jersey Boys on Broadway and as I sat in the theatre it brought back so many wonderful memories that I welled up and cried. I was so happy that Bob got to see a tribute to his amazing career while he was still alive and I was glad to be apart of it all. As for my own personal recordings I can attribute the success of "Concrete and Clay" to both of them. Bob, for finding the song in England and Charlie, for not only turning out an incredible arrangement but for also producing it. So my hat goes off to both Bob and Charlie and many others join me when I say, "Bob Crewe and Charlie Calello were an inspirational contribution to the world of pop music." Chameleon.

Charlie Calello conducts...



Note; This article is based on research via the internet. The music is only available on vinyl via e-bay and on some commercial CD's and we found out about it by contacting collectors. This CD is in the Appreciation Society library, for further information contact the following e-mail addresses.

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