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The Four Seasons UK Appreciation Society
Newsletter



Article From a UK Newspaper May 1976

A Seasonable message to our dull groups . . .

WITHOUT DOUBT the Four Seasons appearance on Top Of The Pops earlier this year produced five of the most entertaining minutes the show has offered for a long time.

Now, with an influx of other American "greats" imminent, including the Everly Brothers, Del Shannon, Roy Orbison, Bobby Vee and Gene Pitney, the opportunity is at hand to give television's top pop show the lift it badly needs. Given similar slots, these artists could display a standard of professionalism and presentation that would prove just what so many of today's "regulars" lack.

These welcome visitors are unlikely to make "number one" during the coming months, but their songs rank among the greatest of top pops. —John Frapwell, Rossiter's Road, Frome, Somerset.



UK New Musical Express 07/02/76

Valli, Seasons: British venues

FRANKIE VALLI and the Four Seasons are to undertake a British concert tour in April, their first in this country for three years. Highlight of their itinerary is an appearance at the London Palladium.

Prior to their visit, Private Stock Records issue a double-album compilation this weekend, titled "The Four Seasons Story". This is followed on March 5 by the Frankie Valli album "Gold"

and, one week later, his single called "Elise".

Tour dates are: Bournemouth Winter Gardens (April 3), Bristol Colston Hall (4), Croydon Fairfield Hall (5), London Palladium (6), Glasgow Apollo Centre (8), Southport New Theatre (9), Manchester Free Trade Hall (10), Wolverhampton Civic Hall (11), Brighton Dome (12) and Batley Variety Club (13 and 14). Readers should contact the respective box-offices for booking information.

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FRANKIE VALLI

& The Four Seasons

USA Billboard 22/11/75

THE FOUR SEASONS—Who Loves You, Warner Bros. BS 2900. With Frankie Valli, Bob Gaudio and two new members, one of rock's premier groups comes up with what may be their most commercial effort yet. Lots of good disco possibilities here, but not the pounding, wall of sound disco sound we have been used to. Rather, there is fine use of strings, easy horns and acoustic guitars here. Valli's lead singing is in his usual excellent and distinctive style, but the harmonics of the group are also used to a greater extent than ever before. Mostly uptempo, but an occasional ballad is also worked in well. All in all, a nice change for those who might have been expecting a bubblegum type LP.

Best cuts: "Silver Star," "Harmony, Perfect Harmony," "Who Loves You," "Mystic Mr. Sam," "Slip Away."

Dealers: Valli is hot, and "Who Loves You" is still going up the charts.



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Tema Original do Filme

GREASE
Frankie Valli
Brazil

UK Melody Maker
June 11th, 1976

FRANKIE VALLI: "Life And Breath" (Mowest MW3034)



BEATLES: compilation double album/
FRANKIE VALLI: new single

Programme Information for Garden State Arts Centre in Holmdel, New Jersey where Valli and the group spent The 7th and 8th of September 1976 in concert!



FRANKIE VALLI THE FOUR SEASONS

WILLIAM MORRIS AGENCY 1000

FRANKIE VALLI & THE FOUR SEASONS

The seasons may come and the seasons may go but the Four Seasons and their intrepid lead singer of the multi-octave range, Frankie Valli, endure.

It's easy to pull adjectives out of the hat to describe the Four Seasons, a musical institution if there ever was one. Is there a man, woman or child alive anywhere in the world today who cannot sing along with one their hits, from "Sherry" to "I've Got You Under My Skin?" Between 1962 and their last album two years ago, The Four Seasons had sold over 53 million records. They've recorded so many hits that "An Evening Of Solid Gold" (one of their three on-stage shows) lasts nearly two hours.

During the past ten years, the changing of musical tastes haven't changed the music of the Seasons, always refreshingly unique. As in many other groups, the personnel has changed since the group's formation. Former members Bob Gaudio and Tom De Vito have stepped out from under the spotlight in order to concentrate on the behind-the-scenes activities of the recording business.

The three new additions, Lee Shapiro, Gerry Polci and Don Ciccone, are filling the gap left by the departure of Gaudio and De Vito. Their pride in themselves and their desire to be on top are mixed with inexhaustible energy. The "sound" that has always been identified with the Seasons is being preserved, matching the efforts that kept the group at the top of the record charts so many times before. In contrast to the British uprising in the mid-60's, well-known music authority Jim Nettleton commented in a documentary entitled "Rock Genesis" that the Seasons were "the one American rock group that consistently rode out the British storm with their unique sound; a sound that heavily influenced the vocal styles of many rock artists."

Lee Shapiro became a member of the Season's family in March, 1973. He is the arranger and keyboard player. Lee feels very strongly that there is still a place for their brand of music which not only keeps up to date by lyrics but by musical innovation as well.

Don Ciccone sings baritone and handles a guitar like Van Cliburn handles a

piano. Don has played professionally since 1960. He was formerly lead singer with The Critters and wrote many of their hits including "Younger Girl" and "Mr. Dieingly Sad." He is currently writing for The Four Seasons. Since joining the Seasons in January, 1974, many hours of hard work have been spent on learning the new material and coordinating the talent of each member into a solid recording and performing style unduplicated in the industry.

Gerry Polci sings tenor and displays a strong jazz influence as the Seasons' talented percussionist.

Joe Long, a Season since 1965, sings bass and plays the bass guitar. Besides his musical contributions, Joe "hams it up" on stage and carries the audience right into the group's concert, making them feel a part of the show. His antics on stage keep the hypnotized audience entertained and amused.

Frankie Valli is the topping to this delightful recipe of entertainment, capable of singing baritone to soprano with a vocal range of 3½ octaves.

In 1967 Frankie recorded "Can't Take My Eyes Off You" which became a million-seller. This effort proved that Frankie was an individual talent while retaining an identification with the group as well, with the encouragement of the others backing him up. Both in solo and group efforts, the Seasons earned 17 Gold Records for million-selling discs including 9 singles and 8 albums.

The Four Seasons are in big demand these days for rock revival shows. As one of the few big name groups from the early 1960's still performing, they have been co-billed with such groups as Jay Black & The Americans, and drew 22,000 to Madison Square Garden.

Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons will continue to record and perform as long as the public indicates that they still want the type of music that the Seasons offer. With the leadership of Frankie Valli and the multi-talented supporting cast, there's only one way to go. The road is straight up the record charts and into the history of music. Then the world will know just what a talented bunch of guys the Seasons really are.



TUESDAY POP PARADE ★ ★

THE FOUR SEASONS OF SUCCESS

THERE may be constant change in the hit parade, but The Four Seasons remain one of the most consistent selling groups in contemporary music.

Even The Morning Star has written the group have: "Polish, balance, expertise and controlled excitement," whilst the record books record over 30 hit singles and an estimated 60 million plus sales.

The Four Seasons were born and raised in the New York-New Jersey area of the United States and were once called the Four Lovers.

During the 1960s they charted with such popular numbers as Big Girls Don't Cry, Rag Doll, Let's Hang On, C'mon Marianne and I've Got You Under My Skin.

The group's popularity waned toward the end of the '60s, but became rejuvenated into considerable chart success when in 1975 they re-emerged on Warner Brothers with an outstanding album titled Who Loves You.

From that LP there came three hit singles —

The Four Seasons (right) — 60 million records sold — play Manchester on Saturday. A concert to look forward to.



due for release in early June with the same title. The Rollers have had yet another producer and this time it's Harry Maslin.

The track, It's A Game was written by Chris Adam, an original member of String Driven Thing and recorded without success by the group.

Silver Star
Loves You

by TONY JASPER

their way once more in Manchester during the forthcoming tour which starts at Liverpool on May 5 but the date which matters for you is at the Apollo on Saturday.

It's A Game say the Bay City Rollers. About what? The answer is on their latest single. But are they still a major group?

Watch the charts with extra special interest for the answer in the next few weeks.

A new BCR album is

the title track, December 1963, and Silver Star. Their best known member is Frankie Valli, but more and more other members have come into play and on the latest album — Helicon — Valli has only the title cut.

Initially, the album doesn't have the melody of its predecessor but several plays suggest a number of potential hit singles, particularly on the stronger second side.

The Four Seasons find

UK Record Mirror January 22nd, 1977

Four Seasons for week at Palladium

FRANKIE VALLI and the Four Seasons kick off their first British tour in a year with a week at the Palladium in London on April 25.

There will be one extra show on the Wednesday and Saturday of that week and tickets, on sale now from the booking office, are priced at £5, £4, £3, £2, 50 and £1, 50.

The rest of the tour is as follows: Blackpool Opera House May 6, Sheffield City Hall 6, Manchester Apollo 7, Wolverhampton

Civic 8. There will be two shows at each of these venues.

A new Four Seasons album will be released on Warner Bros. in early March.



FRANKIE VALLI



December 1963

Valli steps back to avoid over-exposure

by REX ANDERSON

BACK IN October '75, when the British public was welcoming the return of the Four Seasons by putting Who Loves You into the Top Ten, Frankie Valli was wondering if his career was nearing an end. For Valli, who had led his group into the charts several times between 1962 and 1969 and also established a solo career, was going deaf.

He had only 25 percent hearing in one ear and in December he went into hospital for an operation knowing that he might come out completely deaf. "In conversation I was reading lips more than I was hearing," he recalls, "and the level I was listening to in the studio was beyond what anybody could stand."

The operation was successful, although Valli's other ear still has only 40 per cent hearing and another operation is inevitable.

The present line-up of the Seasons is three years old and now, as was seen from their concert appearances, they are attempting to bring other members of the group more into the limelight. Already, December '63 featured lead vocals by other members of the group and particularly drummer, Gerry Polci who takes the lead throughout Silver Star, the third single to be released from their Who Loves You album and which features Valli not at all.

Says Valli: "We will probably be doing some recording in the future where we switch the lead around a lot. What we are trying to do right now is develop the Four Seasons as individual singers so that at any time we wish to have any individual singing lead we can."

Part of the reason for this is to avoid personal over-exposure for Valli. He has an independent career with Private Stock which began with My Eyes Adored You and is even more established now as a result of his chart entry with the Guy Fletcher and Doug Flett song, Fallen Angel.

He says: "Many people tend to suffer by having too much product out. The people I have are talented enough that we can develop them into entities of their own in future". It is not a new formula. The four members of the group are all highly competent musicians and keyboard man, Lee Shapiro is also an arranger. This means that on recording all the basic work can be done by the group and session men are only required to add brass or string backing.

There is, of course, a fifth Season, Bob Gaudio who produced, and wrote all the tracks on Who Loves You and also adds rhythm in the studio although he no longer plays with the group on stage. Now the tour is complete, Valli and the Seasons have returned to California to record the next album.

They will do it in a month — a very short period for such a well established group to spend in the studio. Valli points out: "There's no sense in blowing all our royalty money in making an album."

Apparently former Seasons producer, Bob Crewe, still has a number of tracks on tape that the group never completed and Valli intends to rework some of these. Why was Crewe dropped as a producer in favour of Gaudio? Says Valli: "I'm very happy working with Gaudio. He is my partner and on the



Frankie Valli

last of the Four Seasons records he had as much to do with the production as Crewe. Bob Crewe is a super-talented guy who has been making hit records since the early Fifties and will probably continue to do so."

Crewe is possibly one of the world's most successful producers, but is also a very enigmatic figure. Valli explains: "Crewe can be really crazy to work with but he can also be delightful to work with. We have a long standing friendship and I have enjoyed working with him. I've also had my moments with other producers."

A Four Seasons album, however, tends to be a team effort. Valli himself selects the tracks and the

Can't Keep My Eyes Off Of You, and furthermore he can produce anything, not just his own material, and has a good ear for a hit song. It was he who found Fallen Angel for Valli.

Has there ever been a time, in all the years he has been operating, that Valli thought his chart career was coming to an end? "I thought it was all over when we were signed to Motown. That was the most depressing period although it was while we were with Motown that we recorded My Eyes Adored You. When we left we bought back the track and put it with Larry Uttal and here we are."



Frankie Valli: just some lawsuits and good music

SO MUCH OF pop music history is tied up with the career of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons it would be possible to fill volumes about their exploits. There's been no scandal, no tragedy — just some litigation and a big bunch of good music.

The group shot past their second ten years in the business almost as strong as ever, and, while they were never teen idols, as such, the last few years has brought them to a wider audience than ever.

AS K-TEL have done their television best to point out, the 20-year recording history of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons (and particularly the last 14) has produced some of the finest and purest pop ever committed to vinyl.

For real Four Seasons freaks the high point of the "Greatest Hits Of Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons" Tel compilation is the first British release of "A Patch Of Blue" (previously an American hit).

For everyone else who has

contributed to the 100 million plus sales of Seasons' records (Slotting them, unbelievably, behind only Elvis and the Beatles) the album is also a chance to replace all those worn-out singles.

"Sherry" in 1962 was the first (two) million seller. For eight years before that, Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons were Frank Tyler, the Four Lovers, the Variations, the Village Voices, the Romans, Alex Alda and Turna Decentury to name but a few.

They sang black, were white New Jersey Italians, and they lived through rock 'n' roll.

When they turned up in the hit parade with tuxedos and crew cuts they looked like they'd lived through two world wars, if not doo wop and "uptown rhythm and blues."

THE SEASONS' line-up today still includes Bob Gaudio, who joined Valli, Tommy DeVito and Nick Massi from the Royal Teens in 1960.

The three-part ingredient for success was made up by Bob Crewe, publisher, producer and label owner throughout the 50s.

Gaudio and Crewe wrote

together, and the vocal harmony, with Valli's three and a half octaves at their disposal, was perfect and bendable.

Although Valli and the others had had their varying monikers stamped on every conceivable label during the 50s, the first Crewe/Gaudio outing, "Bermuda" was an assigned master to the small End/Gone label.

Black sounding, it was the first to bear the Four Seasons in name. The next single was "Sherry", and this time the tape was handled by the black-owned Vee Jay label in Chicago.

Only a month after "Sherry" hit the top of the charts "Walk Like A Man" was up there too — a winner all the way.

Although it took eight years to hit it, the group's chart vein was rich.

Rock 'n' roll had faded away, and a few teen idols (Dion, Bobby Rydell) littered the charts. But there wasn't much else ... except the Beatles.

In contrast every Four Seasons song was different (from the last that is,

stylistically they owed a lot to the black vocal groups of the 50s).

Come Merseyside high water and licensing battles (as both did), the Seasons were changing. And staying.

ONLY THE Beach Boys and the Four Seasons really kept up with the Beatles, as a chat with any active pensioner will tell you.

Vee Jay had never signed a contract with the Four Seasons, and when the group moved to Philips they continued to release material.

The result was a double chart assault: "Candy Girl" and "Stay" from Vee Jay, and "Rag Doll", "Bye Bye Baby" and "Let's Hang On" among a host of others from Philips. The group swept the board, beat Spector at his own game (with "Big Man In Town"), and had just the right balance.

In 1965 Valli had a shot at proving he didn't wear tight trousers all the time by beginning a solo career as well as working with the Seasons.

While he had a minor hit with "The Sun Ain't Gonna Shine Anymore" (yes, before the Walker Brothers) the Four Seasons had "Let's Hang On".

Then a further extension was the Wonder Who's (also the Four Seasons) concurrent success with "Don't Think Twice (It's Alright)" in which the trilling falsetto and tenor refrain was an instant giveaway.

SINGLE SUCCESS continued unabated for two

musically it was exceptional. At the time pop groups with something to say dropped like hot bricks.

The intolerance spread as far as the record company who were reluctant to finance the venture (including the expensive imitation newspaper sleeve), and the following four years saw a messy break with Philips.

The last noticeable 60s hit was "And That Reminds Me", on Bob Crewe's own label. Two years later they sued Bob Crewe, finally left Philips, and kept on touring.

In 1972 they signed with Tamla Motown. Various group changes followed but despite Valli's solo efforts ("You're Ready Now", released from 1966, was a monster hit in 1971) the hit magic seemed to have disappeared.

Philips, however, released the best selling hit compilation, "Edizione d'oro" in 1972. Many regarded it as the essential double album until K-Tel came along.

Through Ewart Amber, formerly Vee Jay president when the Seasons were signed to them in 1962, Bob Crewe also went to Motown as producer, re-uniting with Gaudio to produce the Four

Private Stock album produced by Bob Gaudio), while the Four Seasons milked "Who Loves You", for the title track; "December 1963 (Oh What Night)" and "Silver Star".

Although only Gaudio and Valli remain, their U.K. visit earlier this year proved that they haven't lost their 60s appeal. They do full justice to their classic hits and the more recent songs alike.

If anything, too, they look younger now than when they made their first starved TV appearance back in 1962.

TO CHRONICLE the change from what Nik Cohn called "the group that explained pop with one record" to what became of them in the early 70s awaits exhaustive probing.

Valli survived one alleged breakdown, and a lot of good music got lost along the way.

notably "Genuine Imitation Life Gazette" and the best Motown album, "Chameleon", but other mysteries abound.

The working relationship lately between Crewe, Gaudio and Valli and their various label tie-ups, for instance, would need the investigative power of the FBI. But the Four Seasons are



FRANKIE VALLI





Sex & the Four Seasons: What a Night for a Hit

BY MICHAEL BARACKMAN

LOS ANGELES—Last year, after nearly an eight-year absence, the Four Seasons with Frankie Valli found their way back to the Top Ten. This year's hit, "December, 1963 (Oh, What a Night)" is a high-energy, disco-pop number with two underlying strengths: engaging lyrics and a strikingly sophisticated melody. The lyrics, by Bob Gaudio, an original Four Seasons member, and Judy Parker, detail a young man's first sexual encounter. Three different vocalists recount the episode, and conclude that "as I recall, it ended much too soon."

"I had these flashbacks from my first time," said Gaudio, who was also the song's producer. "Some of the ideas are

Record Review of "Who Loves You" album from USA Rolling Stone Magazine March 23rd, 1976

S I N G L E S



Don Ciccone sang a separate falsetto interlude. Valli, the lead vocalist on every past Four Seasons sin-

gle, readily approved of the format. "I found Gerry's lead refreshing and felt the other two voices coming in at different times took a little of the

years, as did live appearances. "I found them together for the hit or Christmas" albums, and they wanted more.

Valli cracked through as a major soloist finally in 1967 with "Can't Take My Eyes Off You", but as a group they felt they wanted a substantial album.

"Genuine Imitation Life Gazette" was it. Gaudio teamed up with a folk singer, Jake Holmes, to try and blow the gaff on the American Dream, the Four Seasons way.

"Life Gazette" became the most talked about bomb since "Pet Sounds", although

Seasons. Crews also teamed up with Valli for his first solo album on Private Stock, "Close-up".

The new freshness teamed with commercial success came for Valli first, as a tenor soloist.

The Four Seasons' last album for Motown produced a minor hit in America, "Life And Breath" (from "Inside"), and after complex legal and personnel problems they turned up on Warner Brothers in 1975 with "Who Loves You".

Valli scored with "Swearin' To God", "My Eyes Adored You", and "Fallen Angel", (the only track on the second

back, nevertheless. Calling them the third best record sellers ever doesn't explain much. Listening to any of the "greatest Hits" tracks does.

I heard somebody listening to the album saying: "I know all these songs... but I didn't know they were all the Four Seasons". And the rest. Right up until 1976.

They don't make pop groups anymore like the Four Seasons; there wouldn't be time to get anything remotely as good.

I couldn't help liking them, then and now. How could anybody else? — John Shearlaw

tension off," he said. "Why should it annoy me to have somebody else sing lead?"

Though Gaudio later sweetened the recording with horns and congas, the LP cut was a bit flat and, at 3:36, too long for AM. For its single, Gaudio returned to the studio, chopped off the last 15 seconds of the fade-out and aharpened the mix. "The album cut is a little mushy," he agreed. "I wasn't happy with the bass and felt the piano sound wasn't fat enough. I also wanted more vocal echo on the lead voice. It was too dry."

Ironicly, "December, 1963" wasn't originally about sex at all. Gaudio and Parker first wrote it about the night prohibition was repealed and titled it "December 5, 1933." Valli recalled that he, Gaudio and Parker decided they "didn't believe the lyric was right for the song's melody." After three... "hair-splitting" days, Gaudio returned with the

time reference for the title and simply changed the date's last two digits. more universal (and commercial) sexual theme. As a result, Gaudio kept a specific