

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

Although only Gaudio and Valli remain, their UK 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 starched 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 wayside, notably "Genuine Imitation Life Gazette" and the best Motown album, "Chameleon", but other mysteries abound. The working relationship lately between Crewe and Gaudio and Valli and their various label tie-ups, for instance, would need the investigative power of the FBI. But the Four Seasons are 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?

Lakelander, Ohio, USA Autumn Quarter September 29th, Issue 4 1976/77.

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Valli Begins Interview Series



MARY BETH Horvath recently interviewed Frankie Valli to begin a new Lakelander series. The next interview will feature the Beach Boys.

By Mary Beth Horvath

He captivates his audiences with his famous falsetto voice, his sincerity and mountain of hit songs. Need some more clues? Try the little Italian with much charisma. None other than Frankie Valli.

This great entertainer has appeared throughout Ohio and his concerts are regular sell outs. Despite Valli's heavy on-the-road work load and recording sessions, he found time to talk with me a few weeks ago.

Valli began his professional career when he was fifteen singing at weddings, churches, and not so elegant night clubs. Nine years later Frankie Valli was a regular name in the world of entertainment.

He has had consecutive hit singles in the sixties and is still going strong today, though his famous falsetto voice is mellowing out. Discussing hit singles, Valli admitted that he had to be persuaded to record

"Sherry" as he wasn't fond of the song. Ironically it proved to be very successful.

Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons have been together thirteen years and only recently have the Four Seasons proved successful without the Valli voice in their recording of "December 1963 (Oh What a Night)."

Valli said, "It was hard for me to convince the record industry I could sing songs without the falsetto sound." He finally convinced the record industry but all his fans were aware of his talents long ago.

Valli is a down to earth natural type person. Though he feels "Frank Sinatra is the best,"

Frankie Valli is one of the long lasting dynamic performers in show biz.



Articles on Valli and the Seasons on Their 1977 Australia and New Zealand Tour

Australia... May 23, 1977 LAST TOUR FOR FRANKIE VALLI

American pop singer Frankie Valli will leave his group the Four Seasons in September and work at developing new talent....

Valli and his group arrived in Adelaide yesterday for one performance at the Festival Theatre tonight. After more than 14 years of continuous success in the pop world, Valli wants to spend less time performing and instead work on seeking out new talent. From September he and the group will go their separate ways, but continue to record. "Many of us in this business think only of ourselves and our own success and not enough about helping others to succeed," Valli said. "I've had it good for many years and now I want to help somebody else whose got the talent and the ambition to make the most of his career as a singer or musician." Valli said the group has been waiting to come to Australia for 10 years. "But nobody invited us until recently, so we're thrilled to finally be here," he said. Their Australian tour will be their last together. Valli and the Four Seasons first appeared in the pop world in 1962 with their hit SHERRY and have managed to stay at the top with other hits such as WALK LIKE A MAN, BIG GIRLS DON'T CRY and the more recent MY EYES ADORED YOU. They opened their Australian tour with a concert in Perth on Friday. Valli and producer and songwriter Bob Gaudio are the only original members of the group. The other members now are John Paiva (guitar and vocals), Don Ciccone (bass and vocals), Gerry Polci (drums and vocals) and Lee Shapiro (Keyboards).

NEW ZEALAND June 4, 1977 SO FRANKIE WAS SAD Grahme Kennedy

EVERGREEN American pop singer Frankie Valli had two good reasons to be miserable. Outside the warm little City restaurant, it was still raining - so no one was for tennis. Inside he had just been told that New Zealand was NOT the greatest country in the world for Italian food. "I love it," he said, almost sadly, "and Italian cooking is probably the thing I miss most when I'm away from home. "And tennis, well, it keeps me fit and I get out there on the court whenever I have the time. I'm not terrific at the game, but I enjoy it." Valli was in town with his backing group, the Four Seasons, for a series of concerts this week to sing the songs which have made him extremely wealthy since he joined the quartet 17 years ago. Songs like SHERRY, BIG GIRLS DON'T CRY and WALK LIKE A MAN have put Valli in America's super rich bracket. "But it's difficult to become a zillionaire anywhere these days," he said. "The tax structures see to that. "Sure I've got money - houses in New Jersey and California and plenty invested in land and other real estate. "And it allows me to do a lot of the things I've always wanted to do. "I'm a clothes freak, really. I can't resist buying clothes and my wardrobe at home is sure pretty big." Valli, in jeans and a sweater, said he would leave his group later this year to become a solo performer. "I want to write, produce and have a little more time with my wife and two children," he explained. "Last year the Four Seasons and I worked almost 200 days, travelled for 75 and did a lot of recording as well - that doesn't leave a lot of time to relax and enjoy yourself." Valli explained that he had been troubled constantly by deafness, but two operations had restored 97% hearing to his right ear. The left is 60% efficient and Valli has been told that nothing more can be done for it." Valli sips New Zealand beer - which he approves of - and yearns for raviolo and lasagne, knowing he can't order any in this restaurant. Now 42, Valli said he would continue as an entertainer "for as long as people want to hear me sing."



WHAT'S

IN IT

FOR THE FOUR SEASONS

IT'S been eight long years since the Valli falsetto tones last rang around Britain, and it's taken a four year old recording 'You're Ready Now' to bring the Four Seasons back to make live appearances.



FRANKIE VALLI

After their massive hits with 'Sherry', 'Let's Hang On', 'Dawn' and many more the Seasons underwent some changes in their personal approach to music. Perhaps the most indicative recording of this being the recent 'Saturday's Father', which the group considered to be a 'feeler' towards a heavier market. It seemed when sales were low that this kind of music just wasn't wanted, and so further re-thinking followed.

"When something that you've written doesn't make much impact on an audience, O.K. You begin to search for the reasons," explained Bob Gaudio, hit writer of the team. "I wrote 'The Sun Ain't Gonna Shine' which was

released by Frankie Valli and wasn't a hit. But afterwards it was covered by the Walker Brothers and was successful. We took a long time finding out the reasons because you listen to whoever is your boss at the time and carry on."

"Our record company Phillips had other artists cover our songs," added Frankie Valli, explaining what he believes to be the major reasons behind the lack of hits. "Because they have to pay less royalty rights to other artists. At first if

something doesn't work you look at yourself you don't look at the company, but they have given us no help at all, and the distribution is so bad."

The sore is obviously still festering but in an attempt to maintain the position that Frankie has now achieved in the charts he will be releasing his next single in Britain through Warner Bros.

"We've decided to record here because Frankie's ready to release another single, and it will be some time before we get back to the States, and secondly we want to get into the local techniques.

We're going to try to be flexible so that it can be a Frankie record or a Four Seasons record."

"In America we had three records in the charts at once under the names of Frankie Valli, Worder Who and the Four Seasons," Joe Long explained. "It's a kind of corporate structure. There's never been any split professionally or otherwise. That way in the top forty we can take practically ten per cent of the chart, a great chunk. Otherwise we would be fighting against ourselves. So the eleven year association of the Four Seasons continues -

though for this trip Tommy de Vito was unfortunately left behind due to illness - and still amazes people with its durability.

"No guy would usually last that long," they agreed. "Unless he's Bing Crosby. And a new group usually have a couple of hits and for six months they're on top of the world. Maybe we've got five years of hits, and so we got the longevity from that accordingly. We could go back home and carry on working for the rest of our lives, and we'd be quite happy doing that."

And there are many lovers of the Seasons' superb harmony sounds who would be in agreement with that. The group still include a medley of their hits in their stage act, because the demand to hear these songs is so tremendous, but they also include 'Bridge Over Troubled Water', 'McArthur Park', 'The Sun Ain't Gonna Shine Anymore' and another Bob Gaudio composition, 'Can't Take My Eyes Off You'.

Whether you remember them from way back or have only just heard of Frankie Valli, capture a night of Four Seasons' sound this visit - even if you don't have another eight years to wait for another chance!

Review of a UK Manchester Apollo Theatre Concert in Record Mirror May 14th, 1977

FRANKIE VALLI AND THE FOUR SEASONS

Manchester

good. Segued white suits, clever lighting, all the right combinations.

Right variety of numbers too. The

PROFESSIONAL, slick, tight, together - roll out the clichés, but they were good, very

perfect rendition of Silence is Golden. More recent material: 'Fallen Angel' and 'December 63'. Tracks off the new album: 'Happoody', 'Down The Hall'. Vocal harmonies agreeable.

amazing vocal range and great stage presence. And nice vocal efforts from drummer Jerry Polch, notably an

The audience loved it all. The girls loved it even more when Valli came down and sang among them. Big girls might not cry, but girls of all shapes and sizes were almost in tears as they touched or shook hands or even kissed the

the oh - no - neat haltrayle.

'December 63'. On keyboards and arrangements, a big hand for Leo Shapiro.

I wonder if they realized this would be the last time Frankie would be on stage with the Four Seasons in this country? Well, their last tour anyway. They ended on a high note. JIM EVANS

MUSIC

Everything but class

By Wayne Robins

Frankie Valli is living proof that you can take a punk off the street and polish him up until he looks like he just stepped out of a Las Vegas hotel barber shop. But you can't give him class.

The occasion was a show Valli and the Four Seasons headlined at Madison Square Garden Friday night marking their 14th year. It is a milestone worth being proud of since Valli, who is lead singer, and the Four Seasons, have recorded some of the great under-regarded classics of American pop music. But rather than showing pride in still valuable oldies like "Sherry," "Big Girls Don't Cry," and "Walk Like a Man," Valli came out defensive, as if someone on a street corner in his native Newark had just mangled his manhood.



Frankie Valli

"Oftentimes, we are criticized by reviewers for doing a lot of oldies in our show," Valli said. The audience responded on cue with a monumental "boo" at the mention of the word reviewers. "But we do not do shows for reviewers," Valli said, shouting. "We do shows for people!" The crowd roared.

As press baiting, it was right up their with Agnew in Des Moines, or Sinatra among the Australians, and it was sad to see Frankie Valli give vent to his insecurities with such vehemence. But Frankie Valli's audience is a strange aggregate. There was a smattering of your oldies-but-goodies types, but the audience Friday night was mostly young, white ethnics from the boroughs. The guys looked like off-duty cops. The girls looked like banktellers. Some smoked pot, while others were vociferous in their disapproval. "I don't believe it. I'm gonna call the cops," a girl said when a Valli fan sitting near her lit a joint. Her boyfriend managed to talk her out of it.

Valli and the Four Seasons don't have to live in the past. They've established themselves, both individually and as a group, as contemporary artists once again this year. Valli has had a number of disco hits, like "Swearin' to God," and "Our Day Will Come" while the Four Seasons have two terrific Top Ten singles this year: "Who Loves You" and "Oh, What a Night."

But aside from the two hits, the new material that dominated the show was substanceless filler and the oldies Valli defended so aggressively were cramped together in fast-paced medleys. "Walk Like a Man" is no longer a study of macho poetry in motion, while "Big Girls Don't Cry" was a

cacophony of a thousand untrained voices trying to imitate Valli's shrill, nasal yet often poignant falsetto. "Sherry," the song that catapulted the Four Seasons into its position as America's most prolific group (thanks to Valli's singing and Bob Gaudio's songs) before Beatlemania slowed the bands' momentum, loses its magic when Valli shouts "Everybody sing" and "All right" after each line. But "Sherry" would have to lose its magic when you're confronted with the fact that Valli perceives himself as a dime-store Sinatra whose idea of courage is alamping on invisible newspaper tigers. Weird.

Review of London Palladium Concert, April 6th, 1976

POP TOUR REVIEWS RATTLING OUT HITS FOR ALL SEASONS



FRANKIE VALLI.

Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons: London Palladium.

FOR fifteen years Frankie Valli and various combinations of Four Seasons have been rattling out hit records, so it might have been thought that the seasoned Valli was now approaching the autumn of his career.

Ho, ho. The diminutive Valli, with that ten-gallon voice inside a two-pint frame, is as electric as ever—only more so!

Taking the stage with a small army of strings and brass, three girl back-up singers and the highly accomplished Seasons, he machine-gunned hits for an hour and a half.

Old ones like "Big Girls Don't Cry," and "Walk Like A Man." New ones like "December '63" and "My Eyes Adored You." Such power, such talent, such CLASS.

As always with the Seasons, every song was arranged to within an inch of its life.

But with such stunning arrangements, and

with the impeccable drumming of Gerry Polci driving and disciplining the splendid orchestra, this only added to the magic of the evening.

R. J. Stone filled the first forty minutes adequately, but it was rather like a summer shower preceding a thunderstorm.

With luck the Seasons will always be around. Ah, how evergreen is my Valli.

BILL HAGERTY

Valli-victory!

FRANKIE VALLI AND THE FOUR SEASONS:

Royal Albert Hall

EARLY SIXTIES contemporaries like Bobby Vee and Del Shannon have faded from the scene but Frankie Valli is still packing them in.

And it's easy to see why. The original Seasons' sound of Sherry and Let's Hang On was built on an uptown rhythm and blues formula—and that happens to be the backbone for today's disco dancing generation.

So it's little wonder the hits that span nearly two decades come fast and furious in Valli's one-and-a-half hour show.

He's had some of his three octave range but prefers to pull out his falsetto trademark only on the oldies.

And of course it was smashes like Big Girls Don't

Cry and Walk Like A Man that had the audience on their feet.

But the skinny 43-year-old singer from New Jersey rises above mere sentiment by using an extra three musicians in addition to the Seasons—forming an updated band that rips along at a cracking pace.

Moving

Particularly effective are the Latin percussive rhythms which Valli leads in the new direction in which the band is moving.

Add a couple of excellent dancing back-up singers and you have one of the tightest, best-arranged acts to visit London in a long time.

Valli hopes to make it an annual event. And if it's as good a show as this time the ticket touts will no doubt be as pleased as the parental fans.

DAVID HANCOCK

Review of Royal Albert Hall Concert.

May 13th, 1977

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INTERVIEW WITH THE FOUR SEASONS

By Brian Gari. From The Entertainment Spectrum,
December 2 1976.

The Four Seasons is one of the most consistently successful American Groups in the history of contemporary music. During the past 14 years, Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons have gone from being a local phenomenon to establishing themselves as an institution with lasting influence on pop music. They have sold more records than virtually any other American group (with the sole exception of The Beatles), have had more top 40 hits than any other act and will celebrate their 15th anniversary during the coming year.

Their first single, "Sherry" (written by Bob Gaudio) went straight to the number one spot when it was released in 1962. The Four Seasons gained national recognition and Frankie Valli became famous for his three-and-a-half octave range (from baritone to falsetto soprano). "Sherry" was followed consecutively with the number one hits "Big Girls Don't Cry" and "Walk Like A Man".

In 1971, Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons signed a recording contract with Motown but the relationship between the group and the record company turned out to be a poor one. Soon after the 1972 release of their "Chameleon" LP, Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons left the label. While signed to Motown, however, Frankie recorded a solo record, "My Eyes Adored You". When Motown decided not to release the song Frankie bought the rights to the record from the company.

Valli then signed as a solo artist with Private Stock. The first release was "My Eyes Adored You" and the song, now certified gold, was a huge success.

Frankie followed that solo record with another chart hit, "Swearin' To God", Frankie now has three solo albums on the market, "Gold", "Our Day Will Come" and "Closeup". Although he was successful on his own, Frankie was determined to see The Four Seasons back on the charts as well. The group has undergone personnel changes and the new members were Don Ciccone, John Paiva, Gerry Polci and Lee Shapiro. The Four Seasons signed a contract with Warner Brothers and under the supervision and guidance of Bob Gaudio and Frankie, they recorded new material (all written by Gaudio and Judy Parker). The Four Seasons' first Warners release, the single "Who Loves You" is one of the most powerful hits of the 1970's. The group's debut Warners album (also titled "Who Loves You") contains the smash singles "December, 1963 (Oh What A Night)" and "Silver Star". Gerry Polci sings lead vocals on both these songs.

The Four Seasons and Frankie Valli are both now back on best selling charts around the world. After 14 years in the industry as recording artists and live performers Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons show no signs of slowing their pace. They stand out as one of pop music's most important successful and enduring institutions.

Don Ciccone (Bass, Vocals). Don was raised in New York and New Jersey. He started playing accordin when he was nine years old and for three years performed locally with a group of young musicians. Don later learned to play piano, organ and drums but, at the age of 12, he picked up guitar and immediately decided he preferred that to the other instruments, he started writing songs and put together local bands. One of the groups he performed with was called the Vibratones. They later changed their name to the Critters and recorded on the Kama Sutra label. Don was lead singer on the Critters hit "Younger Girl" and he wrote and sang lead on "Mr. Dylingly Sad". Don attended Villanova College where he majored in physics. He was drafted and, after four years in the service, he returned to work as a studio musician and singer. He was writing and recording jingles when Frankie Valli heard about Don through mutual friends at RCA. Frankie asked Don to join the Four Seasons and, after seeing one of the group's performances at Madison Square Garden, he accepted Frankie's offer.

Spectrum: You've had success as a performer/writer even before you joined The Seasons. What was it like at that time for you?

Gerry Polci (Drums, Vocals). Gerry, the lead singer on the Four Seasons' current hit records "December 1963 (Oh What A Night)" and "Silver Star", is a native of New Jersey. When he was 13 years old he was given his first drum set and soon afterwards he started playing locally at weddings and school functions. He attended Montclair State College, majoring in music, and later studied with Joe Morello. Gerry joined the Four Seasons early in 1973. Gerry is 23 years old.

first

Spectrum: Being the/singer to ever share the solo spotlight with Frankie on record, where do you think the Four Seasons will go from here?

Gerry Polci: I personally feel the Seasons will go solo. From what I understand, Don and I will be sharing the lead vocals while Frankie continues with his solo records.

Spectrum: Do you think there will be a need for an image change?

Gerry Polci: I definitely feel the Seasons without Frankie will not be totally accepted until we have at least three solo hits in a row. I think we should get into a more FM progressive direction; not like Elton John or Earth Wind And Fire, but I suppose more like a Grand Funk. I'd like the group to be considered good listening rock utilizing arps. It's kind of a long range process, but I'm certainly happy where we are now.

Spectrum: Whose material do you think would be appropriate for the new Seasons?

Gerry: I think Don and Lee are writing some great material. Their songs might be exactly the right creative direction for the group.

John Paiva (Guitar, Vocals). John, who was raised in Rhode Island and New York, was exposed to music at an early age. His father, an amateur musician performed locally with friends and when John started playing the guitar at the age of 14, he often joined his father and entertained at weddings and other small gatherings. When he was 17, John went into the Navy for four years. After his discharge, John joined a group called Cal Ray and the Classaires. They had a local hit called "Lovely Lies". Everett Miles picked up the group and John spent five years performing in a nine-piece show band. He then formed his own group called "The Time Machine". They were playing at the Mill Hill Club in Cape Cod at the same time that Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons were at the Melody Tent. Frankie heard John perform and asked if John would like to join The Four Seasons. His first professional appearance with the group was before 22,000 fans at New York's Madison Square Garden.

Spectrum: You were directly involved with the recent change over in instrumentation. How were you affected?

John Paiva: Well, I had been playing rhythm guitar in the back-up band for about a year and a half when Joe Long left the group. Don decided he could handle the chores on bass, so there left an opening for a Season who played guitar. I was very happy to accept the position.

Spectrum: Was this change planned for a long time?

John Paiva: Definitely not. As a matter of fact, the change occurred very suddenly when we were about to begin the "Who Loves You?" album. I did the guitar work and Don found himself on an instrument that he never played before on an album.

Spectrum: Do you want to get into any other related projects in the future?

John Paiva: I've always wanted to produce. Maybe I'll get the chance soon. I've also been dabbling in writing, which I'd also like to get into a little more.

BOB GAUDIO'S writing and producing talents have been a major force contributing to The Four Seasons' enormous popularity and success. From the group's formation in 1961 to 1971, Bob was not only a performing member of The Four Seasons, but was also the co-writer/producer of such major hits as "Sherry", "Big Girls Don't Cry", "Walk Like A Man", "Dawn" and "Rag Doll". He also wrote "Can't Take My Eyes Off You", which was one of Frankie Valli's first big solo hits. Bob now devotes all of his time to writing and producing, and although most of his work is still done with Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons, he has worked with Frank Sinatra and Diana Ross and his songs have been recorded by the Bay City Rollers ("Bye, Bye Baby"), the Tremelos ("Silence Is Golden"), the Walker Brothers ("The Sun Ain't Gonna Shine Anymore") and the Osmond Brothers ("The Proud One"). Of his association with Frankie Valli, Gaudio says, "Accolades are not exactly my speciality. I think that a 16-year creative and financial partnership that still exists on a handshake sort of speaks for itself."