



Well seasoned:
Frankie Valli and co

Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons

The Classic Albums Box

★★★★★

Rhino/Warners 8122795939 (18CD)

Frankie Valli

Selected Solo Works

★★★

Rhino/Warners 8122795940 (8CD)

Audio With A G

★★★

Rhino/Warners 8122795847 (2CD)

From Jersey with love

in the Four Seasons box are typical of the time, sharing their titles with that of a hit single with the addition of ... *And Others*, but a few years on the group became more adventurous.

One album, from 1965, is comprised entirely of Bacharach-David and Bob Dylan songs (an interesting clash of Tin Pan Alley sophistication and newfangled folk), and in '69 the band made their equivalent of *Pet Sounds*, the adventurous and experimental *Genuine Imitation Life Gazette*. A psychedelic satire on US life, the complex, symphonic *Mrs Stately's Garden and Wall Street Village Day* were a far cry from the teen serenading of *Rag Doll* or *Big Girls Don't Cry*.

Chief writer Bob Gaudio continued to push the envelope into the next decade but with intermittent success. *Who Loves You* ('75) hit the bullseye with its soaring pop symphonies, spawning big hits with the title track, *Silver Star* and December '63, but *Helicon*, released two years later, was a largely forgettable post-disco comedown of tired and uninspired songs, prompting an eight-year hiatus before the nostalgic *Streetfighter*.

Valli's solo output is less interesting overall, his activities away from the group initially designed to market him as a mature cabaret act in the Bobby Darin or Tony Bennett mould. It's perfectly palatable stuff, the high points being *Our Day Will Come* and *Lady Put The Light On*, but though there's a reassuring familiarity to his expressive voice it seems only partially dressed without the accompaniment of sumptuous harmonies. Meanwhile, *Audio With A G* showcases Gaudio's songwriting, and features Four Seasons cuts alongside

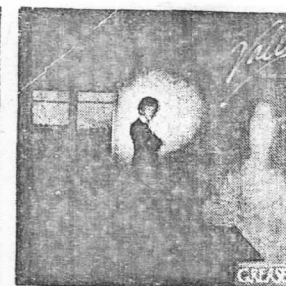
The award-winning Broadway success of *Jersey Boys*, the story of The Four Seasons, peppered with more than 20 of their best-known songs, was no big surprise considering that the events it depicts took place just a bridge or tunnel journey from the Great White Way. What's more remarkable is how the West End of London embraced the production, which is still playing to packed houses five years after it opened.

Jukebox musicals such as *We Will Rock You* and *Mamma Mia!* have taken the catalogues of star names and shoehorned them into a fictional narrative, but the real-life experiences of Valli and his cohorts – blue-collar struggle, brushes with the law and skirmishes with the mob – are pure theatre. It was almost inevitable that a film version would follow, and the Clint Eastwood-directed adaptation arrived at UK cinemas last month, followed by these all-encompassing box sets.

The Four Seasons were, to a degree, originally marketed as the East Coast's response to The Beach Boys: songs about girls and growing up transposed from



**From UK Record
Mirror 23/09/78
by Mike Gardner**



**FRANKIE VALLI:
'Frankie Valli Is The
Word' (Warner
Brothers K56549)**

AND YET another person benefits from the Midas dust that's freely sprinkled from the Brothers Gibb. If you've only suspected that the Bee Gees are trying to dominate the world then now's the time to believe it.

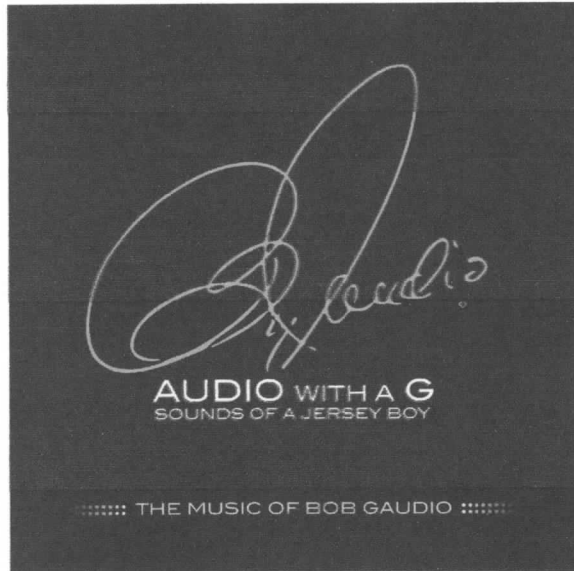
But the apparent submission is Valli's fault and the Bee Gees are not the only conquerors, though 'Needing You' has not-so-faint echos of Yvonne Elliman's 'If I Can't Have You'. The melodic blue-eyed soul strains of Boz Scaggs permeates the thoughtful 'Sometimes Love Songs Make Me Cry'. The light dancing flute and New Orleans shufflebeat adds to the impression that 'A Tear Can Tell' is Valli's Robert Palmer impersonation.

But the Bee Gees are the lucrative blueprint that manages to inject some vitality into the swampy blandness with the catchy 'Grease'.

It's sad reflection that so individual a voice as Valli's, with a pedigree that once had the Four Seasons on level par with Beatlemania in the States, should resort to producing material with built in obsolescence.



AUDIO WITH A G



Audio With a G surged to No. 70 on Amazon on the 14 July. This is a fantastic compilation by Charles Alexander (see track listing below).

Charles has also written the very informative track by track notes and starting with Short Shorts he writes “Bob Gaudio was born in the Bronx on November 17 1942 and apparently born to play and write music. He studied with jazz pianist Sal Mosca as a boy and gave a piano recital at Carnegie Hall at the age of seven. When he was a teenager his family moved to Bergenfield, NJ, setting Bob’s destiny as a Jersey Boy in motion. He was still only 15 in 1957 when as the keyboard player for the Royal Teens he co-wrote “Short Shorts” with bandmate Tom Austin. As novel as this song

may be it went to No 3 the following year and was the fount from which everything else flowed. Without this hit Gaudio might have stayed in high school, gone to college, become an astrophysicist and lived in obscurity for the rest of his life.”

Congratulations Charles on a great album – available from Amazon.

Disc: 1

1. Short Shorts - Royal Teens
2. Sherry (2007 Remastered Lp Version) - Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons
3. Big Girls Don't Cry (2007 Remastered Lp Version) - Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons
4. Walk Like A Man (2007 Remastered Lp Version) - Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons
5. What Ever You Want - Jerry Butler
6. Another Day - Chuck Jackson
7. Dawn [Go Away] (2007 Remastered Lp Version) - Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons
8. Rag Doll (2006 Remastered Lp Version) - Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons
9. Bye Bye Baby (Baby Goodbye) (2007 Remastered Lp Version) - Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons
10. Bye Bye Baby - Bay City Rollers
11. Silence Is Golden - The Tremeloes
12. The Sun Ain't Gonna Shine (Anymore) - The Walker Brothers
13. The Sun Ain't Gonna Shine Anymore - Cher
14. Can't Take My Eyes Off You (2007 Remastered Lp Version) - Frankie Valli
15. Can't Take My Eyes Off You (Digitally Remastered 00) - Nancy Wilson
16. Saturday's Father (2007 Remastered Lp Version) - Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons
17. Wall Street Village Day - Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons
18. Elizabeth [The Frank Sinatra Collection] - Frank Sinatra
19. I Would Be In Love [Anyway][The Frank Sinatra Collection] - Frank Sinatra
20. For A While - Nina Simone

Disc: 2

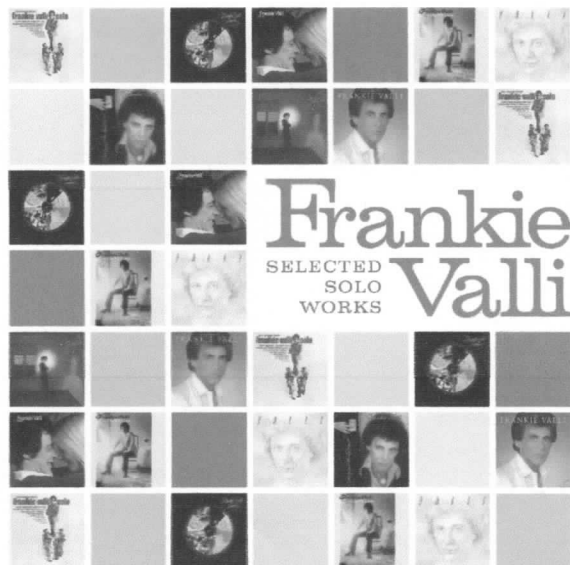
1. The Night - Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons
2. I Heard A Love Song (But You Never Made A Sound) - Diana Ross
3. Stone Liberty - Diana Ross
4. Deeper Than Love - The Temptations
5. Who Loves You (2007 Remastered Lp Version) - Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons
6. December, 1963 (Oh What A Night!) (2007 Remastered Lp Version) - Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons
7. Down The Hall - The Four Seasons
8. The Night - Lene Lovich
9. Can't Take My Eyes Off You - Boys Town Gang
10. Beggin [Pilooski Re-Edit] - Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons
11. When Someone Tears Your Heart In Two - Roberta Flack
12. This Time Around (From Peggy Sue Got Married London Cast) - Ruthie Henshall
13. Two Kinds Of Fire (From Peggy Sue Got Married London Cast) - Ruthie Henshall & Tim Howar
14. Ces Soirees-La - Tituss Burgess, Ensemble Featuring Erica Piccininni
15. Sherry - Jersey Boys
16. Who Loves You - Jersey Boys -Full Company

Also available from Amazon:-

Frankie Valli & The Four Seasons – The Classic Albums Box – 18 CD set.

FRANKIE VALLI and THE FOUR SEASONS

..... the CLASSIC ALBUMS box



and Frankie Valli – Selected Solo Works – 8 CD Set.