



Timepieces

Four Seasons Stories from the past



'Motown Unreleased—37 years of myths and mis-information : Part 3

Although we feature a 'tongue in cheek' song with this article, looking back to the more serious side of the Four Seasons contract at Motown takes us back to the first recording session in 1972 and the great sense of anticipation everyone had that this Motown/Seasons marriage would be fruitful.

This is an excerpt from our e-book 'The Rise and fall of The NEW Four Seasons Chapter 4 (draft)



"A speedy phone call to the Motown Corporation President, Berry Gordy, resulted in the group signing with Tamla Motown in October 1971. They were the second white group ever to do so and were placed upon the newly formed Mowest label. During the September tour of the UK the writing of much of the what was to become the 'Chameleon' album took place as the Seasons accepted Berry Gordy's commitment to work closely with them and bring back the success they had achieved in the 60's with a new sound. The Four Seasons became the first group to sign with the label in the fall of 1971, following negotiations between Gordy and Valli himself. The deal involved Gordy taking personal charge of guiding them back to the top, and with his team of writers and producers, collectively known as The Corporation."

Even Motown's own in-house Newsletter provided appetizing news of the early sessions. **8 tracks would find their way to release** as singles or on the 'Chameleon' and 'Inside You' album but **7 remain unreleased** and are still in the vaults at MU. (See below in red)

From **TCB Motown monthly January 1972**

"The group has already finished recording an album with 15 tracks in all being cut at the Mowest studios in Los Angeles. It is thought that a single will be taken from these sessions. The tracks are.....

When The Morning Comes
Save The Children (written by Marvin Gaye et al and included on 'What's Going On')
Thank You (wr Willie Hutch)
It Would Be Easy
Don't Take Your Love From Me
You're A Song That I Can't Sing
Never Gonna Give My Love To You
Loving You, That's My Thing
Sun Country
The Night
Touch The Rainchild
A New Beginning
My Heart Cries Out For You
Time Will Tell



Love Isn't Here Like It Used To Be"

And we also have a fans note of one of these sessions....as John Hornsby found. "The following was written in Steve Bailey's handwriting on the back of a FV4S International Organization Newsletter. Not sure of the date, but during Dimitri Callas era. (1971-73)

"Seasons finished recording of "My Heart Cries Out For You". Absolutely great. A '64 vintage Seasons sound. Got in on musical track of "Love Will" (Lovewell?) Music is great! Official billing: Frankie Valli and the 4 SeasonsFrankie had already done lead vocal and musical tracks were finished. Joe and Demitri with Mel Larsen did background tracks and then Frankie did some doubling and backgrounds. It is a fantastic song. Maybe the new single. I sure hope so." Based on the above we can now date these 15 tracks to November/December 1971 sessions. Anecdotal information indicates that a Valli 'solo' album was planned but it is not clear if the Valli material that ended up on the 'Chameleon' album was originally part of this plan.

Having the **Artists cards** info and the tape index to cross check would enable us to do more background research for a '**Master Sessionography**' and to support a '**Rarities**' release on CD. What is clear is that the research to find these is well worth doing given the comments of Steve Bailey.

We know that most of these unreleased tracks appear in the Motown Universal tape index although '**My Heart Cries Out For You**' is proving elusive but may simply not be listed by the 1970 interns who compiled the tape index or is perhaps an alternative title. We know from the above comment that it was recorded at the same session as '**Love Well**' which appears in the Tape index on **Reel P2111**. Until the tapes are fully reviewed no-one can say if this '**vintage Seasons sound**' as Steve described it has survived.

We will in our final part include one more '**lost gem**' and provide the list of found and still to be found songs that represent the groups remaining work at Motown.