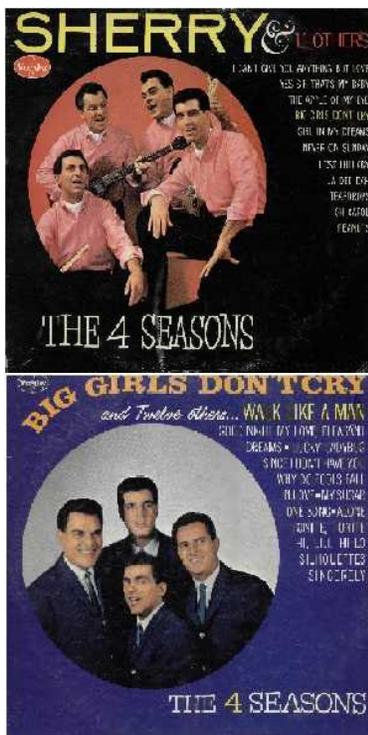


Sound Bytes - Mono V Stereo



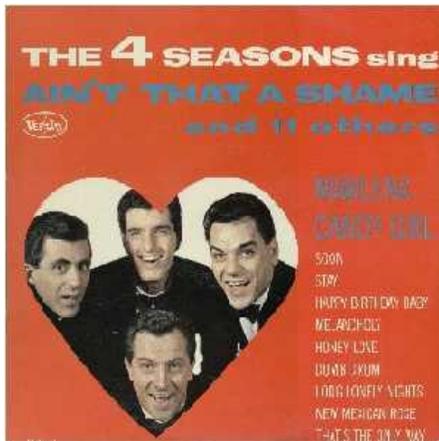
“**S**tereophonic sound allows more depth in its sound due to the fact that it is being put through two channels, whereas monophonic sound is processed by only one channel.

Monaural sound is lacking in the sense that it causes the sound to seem "centralized", or centered in the sound field of the projected sound area. In contrast, stereophonic sound allows the sound to seem much more natural because of the multiple channels.

In short, stereophonic sound allows sound to have more complexity and, more importantly, more depth. Stereo music sounds much nicer, it's interesting to hear different instruments/voices seeming to sound coming from different places around you Even with the TV/PC where the speakers are in

front of you but apart from each other, it's enough to tell different sound effects are from different directions so you can tell where certain things are happening within the scene on the TV, or within a game you're immersed in so know which way to turn . Stereo is better than mono because we hear in stereo naturally, so we can perceive a stereo sound field and our brain can interpret spatially."

"The "extreme STEREO separation" heard on a lot of 60's pop/rock recordings often had to do with the fact that these were multi-track recordings primarily intended to be heard via a mono mix. The individual tracks were on the session tape to give the artist/producer/engineer the ability to (often) overdub and allow control over the final mix. SOME people involved in 60's pop were thinking in terms of stereo as a final result, but more often than not the mono mix was the goal - stereo mixes would usually come, but they were very often considered secondary, notably for the "hits". With the limited # or tracks to play with, and what was recorded on each track of the tape, the stereo mixes many times had the "extreme separation". Notice as more tracks were added to the tape, this went away. Consoles ("desks" in the UK) also gained more mic inputs as time went on."
Martin Melucci

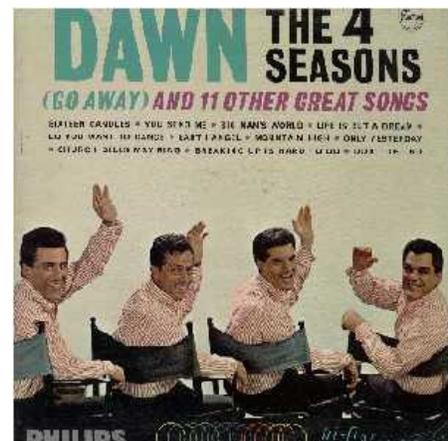


Rhino Records -- Nice 70's catalog, but...MONO MIXES???

First, I appreciate the fact that a lot of music from the 70's that would otherwise never surface on CD has thanks to Rhino. That said... what is this goddamn obsession with mono mixes of original stereo tracks? It is so frustrating for me to have to search elsewhere for stereo copies of songs I once owned in stereo on vinyl LP's, because some moron at Rhino decides we are better off with mono mix-downs. I won't list the titles

they have botched - there are too many - but the stereo counterparts were perfectly acceptable and could have been re-mastered to sound even better. I admit I am a huge true stereo aficionado, but even I understand why some early 60's tracks sound better in mono, when the left channel has the vocals and the right channel the instruments, with nothing between. But this was simply not the case in the 70's. Am I the only one who is pissed off about this? I can't tell you how long it took (and how much money was spent) to find the original stereo mixes of Tony Orlando's (and Dawn's) CANDIDA, or Melanie's PEACE ON EARTH (ACCORDING TO PLAN) or even HITCHIN' A RIDE by Vanity Fair. These songs may not be masterpieces, but they sounded fine in stereo, and for the Rhino producers to decide for us that mono is better makes me really resentful, in the way that I am when a car ten cars in front of me on a narrow curvy road decides to go twenty miles under the speed limit, essentially determining the speed everyone behind him can go. Anyway, rant over."

In very few cases, the stereo mix was, far different than the original "hit" mono mix. I totally understand what you're saying about preferring a stereo mix of your favorite song but some stereo mixes, from that era, leave out a key instrument, background vocal, or even replace the original vocal with a different one from another take. Examples: "Gimme Gimme Good Lovin" by Crazy Elephant. The stereo mix is a completely different from the original hit mono mix. The big drum sound in the hit mix is gone from the stereo version. The keyboards are brought forward, the BG vocals are mixed way low, and the lead vocal is from a different take altogether. "Bend Me Shape Me" from the American Breed. Everything in the stereo mix is the same from the hit mono version, except ..it is a completely different mix, either from another session or a different engineer.





"I Fought The Law"-Bobby Fuller Four. This one is tough. The stereo mix is great and the only give-away is in the main vocal. But, it is a different performance than the mono hit version. They were both done in the same session, but they are two separate performances.

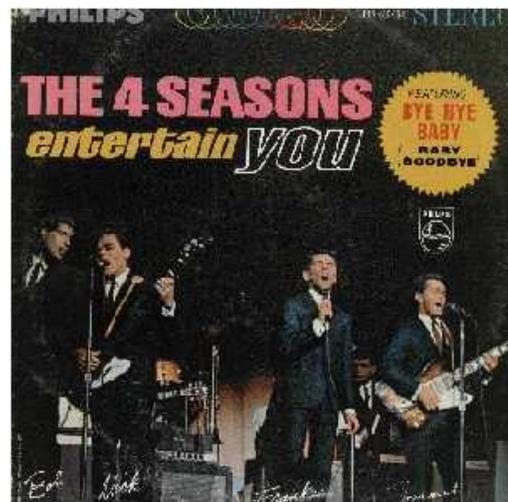
In the early 80's, some bands or publishing companies were shopping around -re-recorded stereo versions of songs that never existed in stereo. They might have the original lead singer in most cases or all of the original members in a few cases. But, they were new recordings. Rhino has been the very best

in sorting out bad or different versions that were available. Again, it doesn't make it right but some songs until the mid 70's were not mixed for stereo until after they were hits on AM radio and then there were done in haste or without the original studio participants. Much of it had to do with smaller labels buying the recorded song from either the band or the composer's publishing company. Once the major labels starting gobbling up the smaller ones, they didn't release anything they didn't own.

The Beach Boys are a great example of alternate takes. There is a recent Stereo mix of California Girls, that was made from the original hit version and it's really very good. The album it came from "Summer Days (and Summer Nights) used Capitol's "Duophonic" process that took mono songs into stereo by mixing frequencies instead of separating the tracks, so the "stereo" version prior to...six years ago wasn't stereo at all. There are alternate takes of everything recorded from '63 on, sitting in the Capitol vaults.

Brian Wilson mixed everything into mono in the 60's and not because of his deaf right ear. He (& Buck Owens too) mixed into a small speaker to catch the flavor of AM radio. Beginning with the Little Deuce Coupe album, everything was recorded in whatever multi-track format that was available...so authentic stereo versions could and should be done.

I have come across a "better" stereo version of a 60's song that was better than the original Mono mix. Check out "Come On Down To My Boat" by Every Mother's Son in stereo some time. Same tracks, different remix engineer and a much better version!



One final catch....the Mono version of "Please Please Me" is a different vocal performance than the stereo. It's easy to spotthe stereo version has a miffed vocal from John Lennon, in the last verse! McCartney is singing one thing and Lennon another. George Martin left it for the stereo version, because the performance was so good. Well put me firmly in the I want it in stereo camp. I don't care if the hit mono version had different vocals had instruments the stereo didn't or whatever. I just prefer stereo sound. Motown starting doing this too, releasing albums in mono only or at least all the early stuff in mono. I can definitely understand were the tracks only appear in the fake stereo. If a track was only recorded in mono then it should stay in mono."

But the final word goes to George Schowerer who was Bob Crewe's sound engineer on the 65—67 tracks recorded at Mirasound Studios.

"As to Bob's mixing 67-70, all he was ever interested in doing was mono single mixes, and he would then take the mix to Bell Sound for mastering. Occasionally he would add echo at Bell, who had what I consider a mediocre live chamber. that could be identified immediately as to where the session was recorded. However, there were many times that I struck a stereo mix on my own.. "What Now My Love" by Mitch Ryder comes to mind as one of those occasions...also many of Bob's Girl Watcher sessions, from which he did use my stereo mixes. 'Let's Hang On' was done at Mirasound via multi-track...that's why it's a natural stereo mix. Many of the earlier mixes were done by Gordon Clark (a very close friend who worked with me at Allegro prior to my being drafted into the army. Lennie Stea also did many of the early songs (at Sound Center) which was a "loaded room" (heavy low end, and low ceilings) Since they didn't have multi-tracks (8 or 16) early on, there is a lot of overdubbing involved, where you bounced tracks to reach a final mix. Doing sessions that way is a nightmare because you lose early tracks and must really have a good idea as to how everything is going to sound at the final stages. So there is little prospect for a stereo mix to sound non 'ping pong' and /or lopsided...plus the group (as you indicated) cannot be spread out in an ideal manner. Since much of it was 4 track bouncing, there became a huge problem because Bob would add last minute things that interfered with the engineers' best laid plans for subsequent balance. Even at Mira, we had one 8 track recorder at the time of the ideal songs the group did, I'll wager that we effectively used 32 tracks in some cases, which led me to use playback off the play head...since the sync playback off the record head was terrible. I think this had a lot to do with Sound Centers' mixes which at times sounded restricted and heavily limited. Also, don't forget that Bob loved to add several tracks of foot-stomps, handclaps, tambourines and any thing else laying around the studio at the time. (Think Freddie Cannon..for reference)....**Thanks George... so our approach is ..why be dogmatic, after all 'mono' is just another form of distortion. So what was recorded can be mixed till it sounds great. Mono, stereo, duophonic or 5.1 surround sound. Starting with Bob Crewe's mixes for Edizione D'Oro as our reference point.....More soon. Casey Chameleon**