



part of the orchestra. Due to be released at the beginning of September the album is called 'Valli' with 'Can't Get You Off My Mind' and 'Easily' being performed in live USA concerts"

September came around and Bob Gaudio was working on Neil Diamond's latest album as producer... 'I'm Glad You're Here With Me Tonight' was released by Columbia Records. It includes a solo version of the song 'You Don't Bring Me Flowers'. Neil Diamond would score a number one hit with a new version recorded as a duet with Barbra Streisand the following year.

October had Valli in the studio as producer. 'One Night Affair' was co-produced with Terry Randazzo with Jay Black on Roulette Records and then Frankie Valli and Four Seasons attended the opening night of the music documentary 'All This And WWII' on 11th November in Hollywood California. 'We Can Work It Out' from the movie b/w 'Harmony, Perfect Harmony' was the latest single release by the group and it entered the UK charts on 20th Nov at #53 reaching #34 for 2 consecutive weeks.

The Four Seasons spent over 6 weeks in the Sound Factory studio LA to end the year recording their new 'Helicon' album for Warner bros. Due out in the USA in Jan and the UK Feb the penciled single was 'If We Should Lose Our Love'. Valli would only sing lead on 3 of the 10 tracks and on two this was a shared lead with Don and Gerry.

The album tracks when presented to the Warner-Curb execs drew the comment....." We don't hear a single" so accordingly a more commercial song was written by Bob Gaudio and Judy Parker to appease the company. 'Down The Hall' was developed "around the piano" according to John Paiva and quickly recorded and added to the album. 'Rhapsody', a potential album title was not considered strong enough.

The group were in great demand and recorded the Dick Clark New Years Rockin' Eve Show on Dec 15th (for showing on New Years Eve) and the group featured on 3 songs without Frankie Valli...including the then unreleased 'If We Should Lose Our Love.'

In what was turning out to be a whirlwind year, 'December 63' went platinum selling over 3m (Record World) making it the biggest ever seller in the Four Seasons 14 year career. It reached N 10 in the BBC chart of the best selling singles of the year...in the USA it was #4. Record sales continued to be phenomenal with Private Stock's 'Four Seasons Story' going 'Gold' in the UK

A Valli solo EP was released on Dec 2nd 1976 in the UK featuring 'Boomerang' and 'Swearin To God' B/W 'My Eyes Adored You' and 'Fallen Angel'

The group was positive re their own future in an interview with Brian Gari for The Entertainment Spectrum in the same month.

"Spectrum: Lee.....You arranged all the medleys that are performed on stage and even some dynamite instrumentals like 'The Warsaw Concerto'. Have these instrumentals ever been recorded and, if so, will they be released?"

Lee Shapiro:'Brian's Song' got recorded, but never got released. 'The Warsaw Concerto' was going to be recorded and come out under a new group name, somewhat along the lines of what was done during the



John Paiva and Lee Shapiro on stage 1976. Photo courtesy of John Paiva

mid-sixties with The Seasons, but because of some legalities, it never saw the light of day.

Spectrum: Aside from your fine arranging abilities you are showing great promise in becoming a successful composer. What are your plans in that direction?

Lee Shapiro: Well, Don Ciccone and I have written several songs together that have been getting some very good response; 'Carrie (I Would Marry You)' was, of course, recorded by Frankie and we have a couple more that we think would be right for him. I've also written with other people and have started a publishing and

production firm. Don and I both together and individually, want to get into more record production.

Spectrum: Don?... Are you writing songs now with the Seasons in mind?

Don Ciccone: As a matter of fact, the group's success has inspired many new songs, several of which were written specifically with Frankie in mind. Lee and I are in the process of finishing up some demonstration tapes on these tunes and hope they'll be finding their way into future releases.

Spectrum: Gerry?... Being the first 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 Valli 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 Polci: I think Don and Lee are writing some great material. Their songs might be exactly the right creative direction for the group."

Frankie Valli had told audiences of the plans for an instrumental album during the 1976 tour.....but as Lee recently explained this was not possible. "An exec from Private Stock heard us do 'The Warsaw Concerto' arrangement and asked me if we could sign for an album of instrumentals. I told him we couldn't as we were signed to the Partnership and they had signed the group exclusively to Warner-Curb. So although it would have been nice, legal complexities meant it was impossible.....and, yes we did do some writing together in the hope it would be good enough for a future album". In fact this was confirmed by a European collector who told us in 2009...."4 demos have survived from this period. 'From Day To Day', 'Funny What A Honey Can Do', 'Free Ride' and 'I Was Better Off'. "

The bands solo potential in 1976 had been proven and their ambitions were being accepted by Frankie and Bob. 1977 would be the year to prove they could achieve that. But the winds of change were blowing through the music industry and their impact would be disastrous for some record companies, the group and the fans.



References: Goldmine Article – The Four Seasons - A Lesson in Survival by Rex Woodard 1981: Article From A Warner Bros Circular November 1984 by Joshua Baer Titled “4 Seasons To Consider” ; “Out Of Season” by John Paiva (unpublished biography); Four Seasons UK Appreciation Society Newsletters: Brian Gari for The Entertainment Spectrum Dec1976: Special thanks to : Charles Calello: Lee Shapiro: Frank Rovello: Ken Charmer: George Ingram: Lynn Boleyn: Ray Nichol: