

# Forgotten Vocalists of Pop and Jazz

by Sheila Kaplan

So many authors have written about early jazz instrumentalists, and to a lesser extent solo vocalists, but rarely, if at all, have the great vocal trios and quartets of the past been included in their texts. This is a distorted view of America's music from the 1920s to about 1960.

Many of the early vocal groups were as equally talented and important as their instrumental counterparts; yet, these vocal groups continue to be ignored or overlooked in books about American music. The musicianship of these early singers had to be excellent, as their arrangements, many of which were very complex, were performed by memory as opposed to performing while reading sheet music on stands. Also, some groups included choreography in their acts while singing, further challenging the singers.

Early vocal groups, such as the Boswell Sisters, the Mills Brothers, and the Ravens dramatically helped bring about the acceptance of jazz, as their music appealed to national and international audiences, evidenced by the popularity of their recordings.

One of the most interesting, jazziest, and influential of these groups was the Four Freshmen, a group that has been viable from 1948 to the present time. This group remarkably continues to thrill audiences via concerts or recordings. Along the way their music has strongly influenced such groups as the Hi-Lo's, Manhattan Transfer, and The Beach Boys, to mention a few.

# The Largo Event- A Nice Surprise! and Here's Why.

by Mel Myers

COVID you've heard of that - It took away our 2020 convention. That gave Bob enough time to retune the sound resulting in a favorable adjustment in the Freshmen sound.

The Performance Center hosted two concerts on the same day. They removed all of the floor seating and added tables of four 6 ft. apart. Barb and I had the pleasure of being seated at a table.

At the intermission, we sold CDs and masks at a pretty good rate. The Center folks were very cordial and cooperative, making sure we could do our "thing." But here's the thing... Bob, during these days of COVID, has managed to "recast" the group.

Retaining command, he hired Ryan Howe to sing lead and play bass, Tommy picked up the #2 voice and is playing guitar, Jake Baldwin with trumpet in hand, landed on 3rd voice, and of course Bob continued as #4 bass. The net result is we now have a Four Freshmen sound with a rich, vibrance across the entire four voices.

We haven't heard the Guys for so long, that everything old is new again. They wowed us and everyone at both shows. They had two shows because of the new seating issues.

Here is the line up and we loved every minute:

## Set One

*Day In Day Out*  
*The Simple Life*  
*You Stepped Out of a Dream*  
*It Could Happen to You*  
*Let Me Love You*  
*Laura*  
*Social Call*  
*Love is Just Around the Corner*  
*Angel Eyes*  
*It's All Right with Me*  
*I Will Wait for You*  
*In This Whole Wide World*  
*There Will Never Be Another You*

## Set Two

*Ain't Seen Nothin Like You*  
*Poinciana*  
*Stompin at the Savoy*  
*Guilty*  
*So Danco Samba*  
*The Girl From Ipanema*  
*Jake's Walking Horn Interlude*  
(Awesome)  
*Someone Like You*  
*The Day Isn't Long Enough*  
*Make You Feel My Love*  
(Bob's new solo. GREAT)  
*Blue World*  
*Route 66*  
Encore - *Graduation Day*



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