



FRANKIE VALLI ♦ CUBA GOODING

TON ♦ GLORIA GAYNOR ♦

LENNY BROWN ♦ HERB ALBERT

ANDY GIBB ♦ SHARON PHILLIPS

LEO SAYER ♦ MARY MCKAY

OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN

PEACHES AND HERB

JOHN DENVER ♦ MANDY PATTON

# #1 HITS OF THE '70s: '75-'79



- 1 GREASE *Frankie Valli*
- 2 LE FREAK *Chic*
- 3 BEST OF MY LOVE *The Emotions*
- 4 DON'T LEAVE ME THIS WAY  
*Thelma Houston*
- 5 I WILL SURVIVE *Gloria Gaynor*
- 6 A FIFTH OF BEETHOVEN  
*Walter Murphy and the Big Apple Band*
- 7 I JUST WANT TO BE YOUR EVERYTHING  
*Andy Gibb*
- 8 HAVE YOU NEVER BEEN MELLOW  
*Olivia Newton-John*
- 9 LET YOUR LOVE FLOW  
*Bellamy Brothers*
- 10 THANK GOD I'M A COUNTRY BOY  
*John Denver*

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- 11 BLINDED BY THE LIGHT  
*Manfred Mann's Earth Band*
- 12 GONNA FLY NOW (Theme from *Rocky*)  
*Bill Conti*
- 13 LAUGHTER IN THE RAIN *Neil Sedaka*
- 14 TORN BETWEEN TWO LOVERS  
*Mary MacGregor*
- 15 WHEN I NEED YOU *Leo Sayer*
- 16 BEFORE THE NEXT TEARDROP FALLS  
*Freddy Fender*
- 17 DA DOO RON RON *Shaun Cassidy*
- 18 RISE *Herb Alpert*
- 19 REUNITED *Peaches and Herb*
- 20 TOO MUCH, TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE  
*Johnny Mathis and Deniece Williams*



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#1 HITS OF THE

'70s: '75-'79

AMIGO

- 1 Grease 2 Le Freak 3 Best of My Love 4 Don't Leave Me This Way 5 I Will Survive 6 A Fifth of Beethoven  
7 I Just Want to Be Your Everything 8 Have You Never Been Mellow 9 Let Your Love Flow 10 Thank God I'm a Country Boy  
11 Blinded by the Light 12 Gonna Fly Now (Theme from Rocky) 13 Laughter in the Rain 14 Torn Between Two Lovers  
15 When I Need You 16 Before the Next Teardrop Falls 17 Da Doo Ron Ron 18 Rise 19 Reunited 20 Too Much, Too Little, Too Late

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**D**isco dominated pop music in the latter half of the '70s, but there was still room on the charts and the airwaves for all sorts of unlikely gems: one-shots, comebacks, Tex-Mex weepers and fiddle-happy foot-stompers, smoldering old-school R&B duets, the rousing theme from a boxing movie and even a surprise cameo from Ludwig van Beethoven.

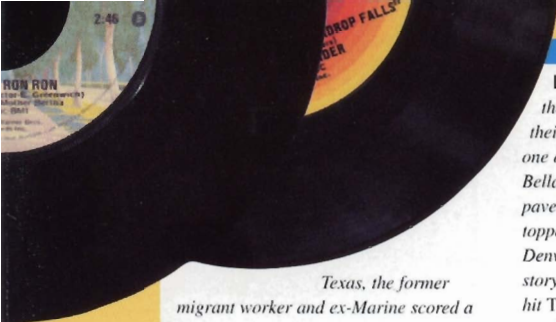
Best-selling instrumentals in every genre—from Sleep Walk to surf rave-ups, from Henry Mancini to Herb Alpert—were nothing new. Even classical great Johann Sebastian Bach had been plundered twice: in A Lover's Concerto by '60s girl group the Toys and for Apollo 100's Joy in 1972. Inspired by these hits, jingle writer Walter Murphy, a former arranger for The Tonight Show and a graduate of the Manhattan School of Music, decided to set grand symphonic passages to disco's infectious beat. The major labels rejected Murphy's demos, but his catchy adaptation of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 in C Minor impressed tiny Private Stock. The 24-year-old pianist played most of the instruments on the synth-drenched **A FIFTH OF BEETHOVEN**, his first and only No. 1.

And while his follow-up, Flight '76 (based on Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's Flight of the Bumblebee), reached only No. 44, A Fifth displayed staying power well into 1977, especially after its inclusion on the Saturday Night Fever sound track.

**GONNA FLY NOW** (Theme from Rocky) was an instrumental from the Academy Award-winning film, until composer Bill Conti decided it needed lyrics. He played the track for veteran songwriter Carol Connors (also known for singing on the Teddy Bears' 1958 hit To Know Him Is to Love Him), and the words came to her in the shower a few days later. With its signature trumpet fanfare, Gonna Fly Now soared to No. 1 and earned Conti and Connors an Oscar nomination.

Like the underdog protagonist of Rocky, Freddy Fender paid his dues. Born Baldemar Huerta in San Benito,

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Texas, the former migrant worker and ex-Marine scored a regional hit as El Bebop Kid with a Spanish version of Don't Be Cruel. He played the Chicano roadhouse circuit until he was busted onstage in Baton Rouge on a marijuana charge. After three years in prison, Fender returned to the music business and met Cajun producer Huey Meaux, who convinced him to record a song done by country vocalist Charley Pride, **BEFORE THE NEXT TEARDROP FALLS**. Fender's plaintive quaver helped carry the song to the top of the pop and country charts in 1975.

Despite the presence of Fender and the "outlaw" movement led by Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson, country embraced the pop mainstream like never before. Hailing from rural Florida, Howard and David Bellamy scored in 1976 with the upbeat, sunny **LET YOUR**

**LOVE FLOW**, which owed more to their long stint in Los Angeles than to their backwoods upbringing. Written by one of Neil Diamond's roadies, it was the Bellamy Brothers' only pop No. 1, but paved the way for several country chart toppers. Laid-back Colorado folkie John Denver was another crossover success story. Though his million-selling 1971 pop hit **Take Me Home**, Country Roads received some country airplay, it wasn't until 1974 that Denver became a bona fide C&W star. Riding the success of **Annie's Song**, he played a week of sold-out shows at the Universal City Amphitheater in Southern California, where he taped his crowd-pleasing live version of **THANK GOD I'M A COUNTRY BOY**. It gave Denver a No. 1 country and pop hit and helped make him the Country Music Association's Entertainer of the Year. Doe-eyed Australian Olivia Newton-John made her own transition from pop singer to Nashville diva, though some Music City purists grumbled that her polished sound wasn't real country. A year after being named CMA Female Vocalist of the Year, Olivia scored her fourth cross-over smash with **HAVE YOU NEVER BEEN MELLOW**, penned by her producer



and fellow Aussie John Farrar. Newton-John soundalike Mary MacGregor hit with **TORN BETWEEN TWO LOVERS** in 1977, but it was a brief fling at the top: Her only other top-40 appearance, *Good Friend*, from the movie *Meatballs*, reached just No. 39.

By mid-decade, record sales proved once and for all that country was cool, but disco still ruled. Few commanded the explosive scene like the so-called *Queen of the Discos*, Gloria Gaynor. A song suite from her debut album, highlighted by a blistering remake of the Jackson 5's *Never Can Say Goodbye*, became an early dance-floor favorite. Then came Donna Summer, and Gaynor's career took a nosedive. In 1979, she teamed with producers Dino Fekaris and Freddie Perren, whose song about a spurned lover seemed to sum up Gaynor's own fortitude: **I WILL SURVIVE** became an anthem for liberated women (and men) everywhere. Weeks later, Fekaris and Perren pulled a similar career-reviving feat with the veteran soul duo Peaches and Herb. With his third Peaches, *Linda Green*, Herb Fame delivered the propulsive top-10 *Shake Your Groove Thing*, followed by Fekaris and Perren's slow-dance ballad **REUNITED**, a No. 1 pop and R&B crossover smash.

Former Stax-Volt act the Emotions were

without a label when Earth, Wind and Fire leader Maurice White signed them to Columbia. With White at the helm, the sister trio from Chicago went platinum (and snagged a Grammy) with **BEST OF MY LOVE**, one of the few disco standards to celebrate romantic love rather than lust. Even bands who found disco distasteful fell prey to its irresistible lure. Bernard Edwards and Nile Rodgers performed in New York jazz clubs and even made a brief stab at new wave as Allah and the Knife-Wielding Punks before breaking through with the high-concept group Chic. With its funk minimalism and chilly female vocals, **LE FREAK** became the band's biggest hit, dominating the charts for 25 weeks in the waning days of disco.

Far from the pulsing rhythms and glittering mirror balls, some stubborn old-timers got a chance to show off their old-fashioned sounds. A consummate pop-song crafter of the late '50s and early '60s, Neil Sedaka had gone more than a

PERT

WALTER MURPHY  
THE BIG APPLE BAND  
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decade without a hit when a stint in England revitalized his career. After signing to Elton John's new Rocket Records, Sedaka released **LAUGHTER IN THE RAIN**. A No. 15 hit in Britain, the single shot to No. 1 in the U.S. in early 1975, launching Sedaka's comeback. Former Four Seasons leader Frankie Valli enjoyed a steady solo career, but he hit a dry spell in the early '70s. The dry spell ended in 1975 with his No. 1 *My Eyes Adored You*, and by '78, Valli's distinctive voice was everywhere, thanks mostly to popular Hollywood portrayals of earlier decades. The Vietnam War movie *The Deer Hunter* featured his '67 hit *Can't Take My Eyes Off You*, and a favorite musical—a success at the box office if not with critics—was buoyed by Valli's rendition of the title song: **GREASE**. Pop crooner Johnny Mathis had been absent from the top 10 since 1963, but he returned to form with **TOO MUCH, TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE**, an R&B duet with Deniece Williams, a

former backing singer for Stevie Wonder. One of the most impressive comebacks of the decade was that of '60s icon Herb Alpert. After a string of memorable instrumental hits, the trumpeter and leader of the Tijuana Brass spent most of the '70s as a businessman, running his record label, A&M. Alpert's nephew Randy Badazz suggested that his uncle update his old songs for the disco generation, but only minutes into a slick new version of his 1962 top-10 *The Lonely Bull*, Alpert decided it was a bad idea. To make use of the studio time, he recorded a song Badazz had recently written, slowing down the tempo of the instrumental dance tune to a moody jazz-funk groove that dug in for a full seven minutes. **RISE** debuted at No. 83, and received an unexpected boost from appearing in several episodes of the popular daytime drama *General Hospital*. Soon after, it reached No. 1 and stayed on the charts for 25 weeks as the decade came to an end. Roll over Beethoven, and tell Walter Murphy and Donna Summer the news: Disco was dead, and Alpert's taut trumpet tones ruled America's airwaves once again.

—Eddie Dean



# ◆ DISCOGRAPH

## 1 GREASE

*Frankie Valli* • (Gibb) RSO 897 (1978) No. 1<sup>st</sup> Gibb Brothers Music, B.M.I. © 1978 RSO Records, Inc. Produced under license from Barry Gibb.

## 2 LE FREAK

*Chic* • (Edwards-Rodgers) Atlantic 3519 (1978) No. 1<sup>st</sup> Bernard's Other Music/Sony/ATV Songs LLC, B.M.I. © 1978 Atlantic Recording Corp. Produced under license from Atlantic Recording Corp.

## 3 BEST OF MY LOVE

*The Emotions* • (White-McKay) Columbia 10544 (1977) No. 1<sup>st</sup> EMI April Music Inc./Steel Chest Music, ASCAP. © 1977 Sony Music Entertainment Inc. Under license from Sony Music Special Products, a division of Sony Music, a group of Sony Music Entertainment Inc.

## 4 DON'T LEAVE ME THIS WAY

*Thelma Houston* • (Gamble-Gilbert-Huff) Tama 54278 (1977) No. 1<sup>st</sup> Warner-Tamerlane Publ. Corp, B.M.I. © 1979 Motown Record Company, L.P. Courtesy of Motown Record Company, L.P.

## 5 I WILL SURVIVE

*Gloria Gaynor* • (Fekaris-Perren) Polydor 14508 (1979) No. 1<sup>st</sup> Universal PolyGram International Publishing Inc, ASCAP. © 1979 Polydor, Inc. Courtesy of Polydor, Inc.

## 6 A FIFTH OF BEETHOVEN

*Walter Murphy and the Big Apple Band* • (Murphy) Private Stock 45073 (1976) No. 1<sup>st</sup> R F T Music Publishing Corp, B.M.I. © 1976 Valentino, Inc. Courtesy of Valentino, Inc., by arrangement with Celebrity Licensing Inc.

## 7 I JUST WANT TO BE YOUR EVERYTHING

*Andy Gibb* • (Gibb) RSO 872 (1977) No. 1<sup>st</sup> Gibb Brothers Music, B.M.I. © 1977 Polydor, Inc. Courtesy of Polydor, Inc.

## 8 HAVE YOU NEVER BEEN MELLOW

*Olivia Newton-John* • (Farrar) MCA 40349 (1975) No. 1<sup>st</sup> John Farrar Music, B.M.I. © 1975 EMI Records Group UK, Courtesy EMI Records Group UK, under license from EMI-Capitol Music Special Markets.

## 9 LET YOUR LOVE FLOW

*Bellamy Brothers* • (Williams) Warner/Curb 8169 (1976) No. 1<sup>st</sup> Figs D. Music Inc, B.M.I. © 1976 Curb Records, Inc. Courtesy of Curb Records, Inc.

## 10 THANK GOD I'M A COUNTRY BOY

*John Denver* • (Sommers) RCA 10239 (1975) No. 1<sup>st</sup> Cherry Lane Music Publishing, ASCAP. © 1975 BMG Entertainment, Courtesy of the RCA Records Label, under license from BMG Special Products.

## 11 BLINDED BY THE LIGHT

*Manfred Mann's Earth Band* • (Springsteen) Warner 8252 (1977) No. 1<sup>st</sup> Bruce Springsteen, ASCAP. © 1976 Westbrook Limited on exclusive license to Creature Music Limited, Courtesy of Creature Music Limited.

## 12 GONNA FLY NOW (THEME FROM *Rocky*)

*Bill Conti* • (Conti-Connors-Robbins) United Artists 940 (1977) No. 1<sup>st</sup> EMI U Catalog Inc, ASCAP, EMI Unart Catalog Inc, B.M.I. © 1976 EMI Records, Courtesy EMI Records, under license from EMI-Capitol Music Special Markets.

## 13 LAUGHTER IN THE RAIN

*Neil Sedaka* • (Sedaka-Cody) Rocket 46313 (1975) No. 1<sup>st</sup> Welbeck Music Corporation/SRL-ESL Song Company/EMI Jemaxal Music Inc, ASCAP, EMI Soaba Music Inc/Songs of SRL RSL Music Company, B.M.I. © 1974 Neil Sedaka Music, Courtesy of Neil Sedaka Music.

## 14 TORN BETWEEN TWO LOVERS

*Mary MacGregor* • (Jarrell-Vartow) Ariola America 7638 (1977) No. 1<sup>st</sup> WB Music Corp, ASCAP, Muscle Shoals Sound Publishing, B.M.I. © 1976 Arista Records, Inc. Courtesy of Arista Records, Inc.





**15 WHEN I NEED YOU**

*Leo Sayer* • (Bayer Sager-Hammonds) Warner 8332 (1977) No. 1\*  
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Melodies Inc. BMI, Leonard Cohen Stranger Music Inc. SOCAN,  
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Rhino Entertainment Company by arrangement with Warner  
Special Products.

**16 BEFORE THE NEXT TEARDROP FALLS**

*Freddy Fender* • (Peters-Keith) ABC/Dot 17540 (1975) No. 1\*  
Shelby Singleton Music Inc. BMI. © 1974 MCA Records, Inc.  
Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc.

**17 DA DOO RON RON**

*Shawn Cassidy* • (Barry-Spector-Greenwich) Warner/Curb 8365  
(1977) No. 1\* ABKCO Music Inc./Mother Bertha Music Inc./Trio  
Music Co. Inc./Universal Songs of PolyGram International. BMI,  
© 1977 Curb Records, Inc. Courtesy of Curb Records, Inc.

**18 RISE**

*Herb Alpert* • (Armer-Alpert) A&M 2151 (1979) No. 1\* Almo  
Music Corp./Badazz Music Company, ASCAP. © 1979 A&M  
Records, Inc. Courtesy of A&M Records, Inc.

**19 REUNITED**

*Peaches and Herb* • (Fekaris-Petren) Polydor 14547 (1979) No. 1\*  
Universal PolyGram International Publishing Inc. ASCAP. © 1978  
Polydor, Inc. Courtesy of Polydor, Inc.

**20 TOO MUCH, TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE**

*Johny Mathis and Deniece Williams* • (Kipner-Veffins) Columbia  
10693 (1978) No. 1\* Homewood House Music. BMI. © 1978 Jon  
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\* Indicates highest Billboard chart position

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