

LOST TREASURES



TIME
LIFE
MUSIC

The
ROCK'N'ROLL
•ERA•

Digital Remaster

LOST TREASURES

- 1 **Don't Let Go** Roy Hamilton (1958)
- 2 **Real Wild Child** Ivan (1958)
- 3 **Peanuts** Little Joe and the Thrillers (1957)
- 4 **Peek-a-Boo** The Cadillacs (1958)
- 5 **The Joker (That's What They Call Me)**
Billy Myles (1957)
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- 20 **Soul Twist**
King Curtis and the Noble Knights (1962)
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- 22 **A Million to One**
Jimmy Charles and the Revellettes (1960)

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The
ROCK'N'ROLL
•ERA•
LOST TREASURES

COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

2RNR-44
OPCD-2629

TIME
LIFE
MUSIC

- ☐ Don't Let Go ☐ Real Wild Child ☐ Peanuts ☐ Peek-a-Boo ☐ The
Joker ☐ Sometimes ☐ Swinging on a Star ☐ Do-Re-Mi ☐ The
Madison Time (Part 1) ☐ A Quiet Place ☐ Please Love Me Forever
☐ La La La La La ☐ Bumble Bee ☐ What a Guy ☐ Bongo
Stomp ☐ Saturday Night at the Movies ☐ Bluebirds over the
Mountain ☐ Rockin' Little Angel ☐ T Ain't Nothin' to
Me ☐ Soul Twist ☐ Seven Letters ☐ A Million
to One



Cathy Jean

LOST TREASURES

Part of the joy of living in the rock 'n' roll era was that the music was as important as the stars. For every Elvis or Little Richard, there was a Jimmy Charles or a Ray Smith, artists remembered mainly for one record that competed for jukebox play with the greats of rock—and helped keep listeners coming back for more. This collection contains a number of these "one-hit wonders," as well as a few regional smashes and lower-charting efforts by well-known artists. In short, this is a collection of "lost" treasures, hits and semihits that may have slipped between the cracks of history but still hold a special place in the hearts (and record collections) of rock 'n' roll fans.

The exotically named Ersel Hickey may be the only rock 'n' roller ever whose picture is better known than his music. That oft-used promotional photo portraying a defiantly pompadoured Hickey clutching a full-bodied, custom gold-finished Gibson guitar (see *cover*) still captures the rebellious, hepcat spirit of the times. As for his music, Hickey charted just once, with the lightly rocking **Bluebirds over the Mountain**, though he later penned *Don't Let the Rain Come Down*, a major hit for the Serendipity Singers in 1964.

Undoubtedly, Crickets drummer Jerry Allison is better known for the kinetic beats he created for Buddy Holly than for the song **Real Wild Child**, which he released in 1958 under his middle name, Ivan. Holly and the Crickets were touring Australia in 1957 when they heard Johnny O'Keefe's Australian hit *Wild One* (subtitled *Real Wild Child*). Back in the States, they cut the song with Allison on lead vocals. Despite the fact that Allison considered the record "atrocious" and refused to put his name on it, *Real Wild Child* became a modest hit. In 1990, a version by punk-rock pioneer Iggy Pop was featured in the movie *Pretty Woman*.

Though Sam Phillips' Sun Records was the home of the finest rockabilly artists of the '50s, few of them scored na-

tional hits. Ray Smith was no exception, releasing three Sun singles that went nowhere before switching to Judd Records (a label owned by Phillips' brother, Judd). Smith's first and most successful Judd single was the infectious "popabilly" tune **Rockin' Little Angel**.

Led by Joe Cook, Little Joe and the Thrillers waxed one of the more memorable one-shots of the '50s, the falsetto-laden **Peanuts**. The group's first record, *Do the Slop*, inspired a brief dance fad in their hometown of Philadelphia. A few years later Cook organized his two daughters and a friend into the Sherrys, who created another short-lived dance craze with *Pop Pop Pop-Pie*. Coincidentally, Philadelphia produced another one-hit wonder named Joe in 1962 when Little Joey and the Flips charted with **Bongo Stomp**.

Dance crazes opened the door for a number of unlikely hit-makers, including jazz pianist Ray Bryant, whose small combo made it to the charts with his own version of Al Brown's line dance, **The Madison Time**. Bryant's version was featured in John Waters' cinematic celebration of the dance era, *Hairspray*. Another dance, *The Loco-Motion*, ushered Little Eva into national prominence. In addition to her solo work, she cut a series of duets with Big Dee Irwin, former lead singer of the Pastels (*Been So Long*). Their only hit was **Swinging on a Star**, a playful update of Bing Crosby's 1944 original.

In 1960, two New York City entrepreneurs, Gene and Judy Malis, discovered Cathy Jean Giordano, a 15-year-old Brooklyn girl who wanted to sing opera. The Malises felt, however, that Giordano's voice more closely matched the off-key vocal charms of teen balladeers like Rosie Hamlin (*Angel Baby*) and Kathy Young (*A Thousand Stars*). The Malises had the right material, **Please Love Me Forever**, an obscure release by a black vocal group called the Sedates. Alter Cathy Jean recorded the song, backing

vocals were overdubbed by a Queens group, the Roommates. Though the Roommates were horrified by the sound of the recording, it became a hit.

No group better captured the serendipitous nature of many of these recording achievements than the Raindrops, a creation of the song-writing team of Jeff Barry and Ellie Greenwich. In 1963, Barry and Greenwich made a demo of **What a Guy**, which they had written for the Sensations (*Let Me In*). That same day they played the song for their bosses, Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, who then promptly sold the demo to Jubilee Records for release. Cut at a cost of \$140 with little more than drums for backup, *What a Guy* did reasonably well, launching the brief and wholly unintended career of the Raindrops (they named themselves after the Dee Clark song).

Many hits were primarily regional successes, reflecting the ability of radio stations to boost local artists and cater to local tastes. Barely known in much of America, Gene Thomas' **Sometimes** is still considered a classic ballad in the Gulf Coast region and has been covered by numerous artists, including Doug Sahn, Joe Stampley, the Gentrys and the Flamin' Groovies. During the '60s, East Los Angeles was home to a vibrant Chicano rock scene that turned Cannibal and the Headhunters, the Premiers, Thee Midniters and the Blendells into local stars. The last group created a party favorite with a version of an unsuccessful Stevie Wonder recording called **La La La La La**.

Many R & B stars failed to sustain their careers partly because of changes in popular taste and partly because most record companies did not bother to invest in career development for their black artists. In the mid-'50s, the vocally gifted Roy Hamilton seemed destined for superstardom when his chart-topping R & B hits, operatic renditions of *You'll Never Walk Alone* and *Unchained Melody*, began to cross over to the pop side. But Hamilton's career quickly waned despite two energetic gospel-style hits, **Don't Let Go** (1958) and *You Can Have Her* (1961). LaVern Baker





Ray Bryant

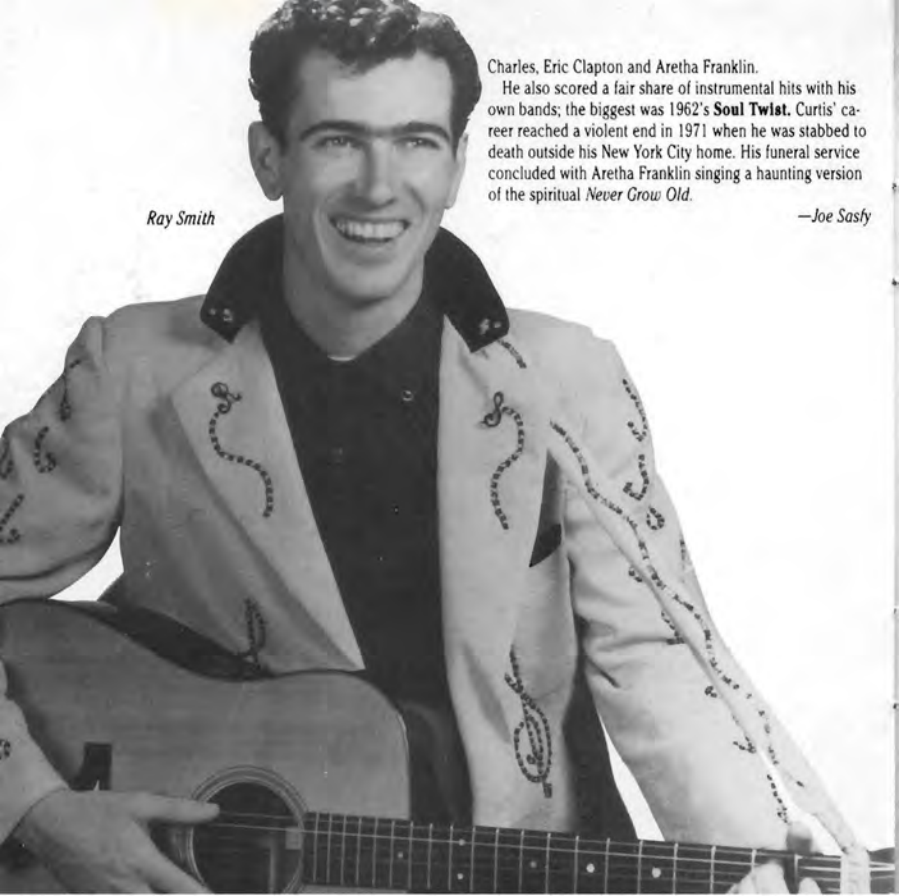
was also unable to match the success of her early novelties *Tweedle Dee* and *Jim Dandy*, though her minor 1960 hit, **Bumble Bee**, was revived by the Searchers in 1965.

The British Invasion and the pop revolution it triggered also squelched many careers, including those of a number of Atlantic's major acts. Ben E. King's **Seven Letters** (1964) was one of his finest performances but could garner little air play in a year dominated by the Beatles.

The Drifters too were reaching the end of their hit streak in 1964. When their longtime producers, Leiber and Stoller, left to start Red Bird Records, Bert Berns took over and helped them to their last important hit, **Saturday Night at the Movies**. The sophisticated, Latin-tinged style Leiber and Stoller and Berns used with the Drifters was clearly the inspiration for Jerry Ragovoy's production of the Garnet Mimms and the Enchanters song **A Quiet Place**. In fact, Berns and Ragovoy were friends and had co-authored Mimms's one smash, *Cry Baby*.

In late 1963, the Coasters played the Apollo Theater, recording a live version of **T' Ain't Nothin' to Me**, a comic playlet involving insult and murder. While the Apollo audience found the group's antics hilarious, the song proved to be the last chart appearance by rock 'n' roll's greatest clowns, a title that would mean little in the dawning age of rock-culture seriousness. One member of the 1964 Coasters was Earl "Speedoo" Carroll, a founding member of the Cadillacs, considered the flashiest of New York City's many vocal groups. Carroll was still a Cadillac in 1958 when the group came up with **Peek-a-Boo**, a novelty number obviously in the style of the Coasters.

Backing the Coasters at the Apollo was a band led by King Curtis, the brilliant R & B saxophonist who enlivened many Coasters records with his perfectly detailed solos. Born and raised in Fort Worth, Texas, Curtis came to New York City in 1952, eventually rising to prominence as the ultimate sax session man. Over the years, he backed Bobby Darin, the Shirelles, Sam Cooke, Wilson Pickett, Ray



Ray Smith

Charles, Eric Clapton and Aretha Franklin.

He also scored a fair share of instrumental hits with his own bands; the biggest was 1962's **Soul Twist**. Curtis' career reached a violent end in 1971 when he was stabbed to death outside his New York City home. His funeral service concluded with Aretha Franklin singing a haunting version of the spiritual *Never Grow Old*.

—Joe Sasfy

DISCOGRAPHY

*Indicates highest Billboard chart position

- 1. Don't Let Go** Roy Hamilton • *Music and lyrics by Jesse Stone. Epic 9257 (1958). Produced under license from CBS Special Products, a Service of CBS Records, a Division of CBS Records, Inc. No. 13**
- 2. Real Wild Child** Ivan • *Music and lyrics by John O'Keefe, John Greenan and David Owens. Coral 62017 (1958). Courtesy of MCA Records, Inc. No. 68**
- 3. Peanut** Little Joe and the Thrillers • *Music and lyrics by Joe Cook. OKeh 7088 (1957). Produced under license from CBS Special Products, a Service of CBS Records, a Division of CBS Records, Inc. No. 23**
- 4. Peek-a-Boo** The Cadillacs • *Music and lyrics by Jack Hammer. Josie 846 (1958). Under license from Rhino Records, Inc., by arrangement with Butterfly Entertainment Corp. No. 28**
- 5. The Joker (That's What They Call Me)** Billy Myles • *Music and lyrics by Billy Myles. Ember 1026 (1957). Courtesy of Arista Records, Inc. No. 30**
- 6. Sometimes** Gene Thomas • *Music and lyrics by Gene Thomas. United Artists 338 (1961). Courtesy of EMI, a Division of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 53**
- 7. Swinging on a Star** Big Dee Irwin • *Music by Jimmy Van Heusen, lyrics by Johnny Burke. With Little Eva. Dimension 1010 (1963). Under license from Rhino Records, Inc., by arrangement with Butterfly Entertainment Corp. No. 38**
- 8. Do-Re-Mi** Lee Dorsey • *Music and lyrics by Earl King. Fury 1056 (1961). Courtesy of Arista Records, Inc. No. 27**
- 9. The Madison Time (Part 1)** The Ray Bryant Combo • *Music by Ray Bryant, lyrics by Eddie Morrison. Columbia 41628 (1960). Produced under license from CBS Special Products, a Service of CBS Records, a Division of CBS Records, Inc. No. 30**
- 10. A Quiet Place** Garnet Mimms and the Enchanters • *Music and lyrics by Norman Meade and Samuel Bell. United Artists 715 (1964). Courtesy of EMI, a Division of Capitol Records, Inc., under license from CEMA Special Markets. No. 78**
- 11. Please Love Me Forever** Cathy Jean and the Roommates • *Music and lyrics by Johnny Malone and Ollie Blanchard. Valmor 007 (1961). Courtesy of Original Sound Entertainment. No. 12**
- 12. La La La La La** The Blendells • *Music and lyrics by Clarence Paul. Reprise 0291 (1964). Courtesy of Dominion Entertainment, Inc. No. 62**
- 13. Bumble Bee** LaVern Baker • *Music and lyrics by Leroy Fullilove. Atlantic 2077 (1960). Produced under license from Atlantic Recording Corp. No. 46**
- 14. What a Guy** The Raindrops • *Music and lyrics by Elsie Greenwich and Jeff Barry. Jubilee 5444 (1963). Under license from Rhino Records, Inc., by arrangement with Butterfly Entertainment Corp. No. 41**
- 15. Bongo Stomp** Little Joey and the Flips • *Music and lyrics by Sy Kaplan, Barry Rich and Marc Levin. Joy 262 (1962). Courtesy of MC Productions. No. 33**
- 16. Saturday Night at the Movies** The Drifters • *Music and lyrics by Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil. Atlantic 2260 (1964). Produced under license from Atlantic Recording Corp. No. 18**
- 17. Bluebirds over the Mountain** Ersel Hickey • *Music and lyrics by Ersel Hickey. Epic 9263 (1958). Produced under license from CBS Special Products, a Service of CBS Records, a Division of CBS Records, Inc. No. 75**
- 18. Rockin' Little Angel** Ray Smith • *Music and lyrics by Jimmie Rogers. Judd 1016 (1960). Courtesy of Dominion Entertainment, Inc. No. 22**
- 19. T'Ain't Nothin' to Me** The Coasters • *Music and lyrics by Pat Patterson. Atco 6287 (1964). Produced under license from Atlantic Recording Corp. No. 64**
- 20. Soul Twist** King Curtis and the Noble Knights • *Music by Curtis Ousley. Enjoy 1000 (1962). Courtesy of Janus Records, Inc. No. 17**
- 21. Seven Letters** Ben E. King • *Music and lyrics by Ben E. King. Atco 6328 (1964). Produced under license from Atlantic Recording Corp. No. 45**
- 22. A Million to One** Jimmy Charles and the Revellettes • *Music and lyrics by Phil Medley. Promo 1002 (1960). Under license from Rhino Records, Inc., by arrangement with Butterfly Entertainment Corp. No. 5**

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