

A close-up photograph of four men in dark suits and purple ties, each holding a microphone and singing. They are positioned in front of a red, shimmering curtain with small lights.

Who Loves You

Musical Tribute to **FRANKIE VALLI** and Beyond



LIVING EACH MOMENT

"Who Loves You?"

Apparently, lots of people!

Sold-out shows at the Florida Studio Theatre to hear Frankie Valli tribute

Booking nostalgic music in an area that skews older just makes good business sense. Well done, Florida Studio Theatre: The run of "Who Loves You"--featuring the music of the Four Seasons--was extended to keep up with demand.

I love the concept: Have a nice meal, dab your chin and swivel toward the stage while you sip your coffee. Perfect. Or show up in time to just enjoy the show, your call.

I've heard comedians joke about early start-times in Sarasota ("Bartender, bring me a coffee!"), and when I heard the curtain goes up at 6pm, I had to smirk. (Granted it was the first of two shows of the evening and both were sold out.)

Erin and I were seated at a four-top directly in front of the stage, about 15 feet back where we met two nice women in their seventies.

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The Broadway musical, "Jersey Boys," brought Frankie Valley and the Four Seasons back into the mainstream. I already like them, in fact I saw Frankie himself at the Van Wezel a couple times even before the success of the Broadway show. I was looking forward to this performance at FST.

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The show started strong with songs that gave me the chills: "Let's Hang On," "Sherry," "Big Girls Don't Cry," "Walk Like A Man," "My Eyes Adored You," and "Rag Doll" began the first set until they veered off into songs by Bobby Darin, Dion and a few others.

It was especially interesting when the performers explained the song beforehand, either what it was about--or what was going in with the band at that time of the release. They certainly had a lot from which to choose.

The Four Seasons, and later Frankie Valli as a solo act had dozens of Top 40 songs.

After an intermission that gave us time to say hello to a few groups of friends we saw downstairs—and on the balcony level—the 2nd act included "Working My Way Back to You," "Grease," "Oh What a Night" and the title-song of the show "Who Loves You."

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In the end, the singing was spot-on. Each performer had their own niche. However, I must admit, I would have liked if the singers tried to look the part--maybe shave their beards and pull up their ties for this period role. ("Jersey Boys" looks straight from the era and they move in unison with military precision.)
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The four singers formed a receiving line outside the theatre and graciously thanked the audience as they filed out into the night.

Everyone seemed to have had a fun night, reliving toe-tapping songs from the 60's and 70's.

It's a shame it took me 15 years to make it to Florida Studio Theatre, but rest assured it won't take me another 15 years to make it back. Good fun.

RAY COLLINS

