

THE (YOUNG) RASCALS

Felix Cavaliere (vocals, keyboards);
Eddie Brigati (vocals, percussion);
Gene Cornish (guitar); **Dino Danelli** (drums)

1964

Feb The group forms as a trio, comprising ex-Joeey Dee & the Starliners' Cavaliere (b. Nov. 29, 1944, Pelham, New York, NY), Brigati (b. Oct. 22, 1946, Garfield, NJ) and Cornish (b. May 14, 1946, Ottawa, ON, Canada) (an ex-member of the Unbeatables who released one album on the Fawn label in 1964, and the single *I Wanna Be A Beatie*), in Garfield, and their first gigs as a rock/R&B trio are at the local Choo Choo club. Having begun in the high-school singing group the Stereos, Cavaliere went on to form Felix & the Escorts with Mike Esposito (later called the Blues Magoos), while they attended Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY, releasing one single, *The Syracuse*, on the Jag label, before being asked to tour Europe with Joeey Dee & the Starliners. He first met Brigati when the latter came backstage to see his brother, David Brigati, also a member of the Starliners. (David will later sing backing vocals in the studio with the Rascals.) Shortly after, Danelli (b. July 23, 1945, New York), an old friend of Cavaliere's (they have been in Sandu Scott & Her Scotties together), who has played jazz with Lionel Hampton and in various New York and Las Vegas club house bands, joins on drums as the quartet becomes the Rascals.

July The Rascals become the resident band at the Barge, a floating, fashionable nightclub off Southampton, Long Island, NY. A 45-minute set of familiar and self-penned R&B, interspersed with rock oldies, is honed, with the group wearing choirboy shirts and knickerbockers.

Aug New York promoter Sid Bernstein becomes interested in the group, and takes over as manager. He turns down offers from Red Bird and Phil Spector's Phillies Records, and signs them (now as the Young Rascals and minus the uniforms) to Atlantic Records for a \$10,000 advance, and an agreement that they could use the studio whenever it was available, free of charge.

1965

Aug [15] They perform on the Beatles bill at Shea Stadium, New York, before playing a four-week engagement at New York's Harlow club. They have become regulars on the New York club scene, also playing at Tom Jones, the Phone Booth and Steve Paul's The Scene.

Nov [2] The group cuts its first single, *I Ain't Gonna Eat Out My Heart Anymore*.

1966

Jan *I Ain't Gonna Eat Out My Heart Anymore*, written by Pam Sawyer and Lori Burton, and heavily supported (due to the group's overtly black sound) by R&B radio stations, makes US #52.

Apr [30] *Good Lovin'*, a Rudy Clark/Artie Resnick song, originally an R&B hit for the Olympics in 1965, tops the US chart for a week, boosted by four appearances on CBS-TV's "The Ed Sullivan Show" and an April 14th slot on NBC-TV's "Hullabaloo", and is the group's first million seller.

July *You Better Run*, the first self-penned A-side (by Cavaliere and Brigati), reaches US #20, while their debut album, *The Young Rascals*, heavy on R&B cover versions from the group's stage act, reaches US #15 during an 84-week chart stay.

Oct Cavaliere's composition, *Come On Up*, makes US #43.

Nov [29] The group arrives in Britain for a brief visit which will include appearances on "Ready, Steady, Go!" and "Saturday Club", and a live appearance on

December 1st at Blaises, London, before flying to Paris, France, on their way home to the US.

1967

Mar *I've Been Lonely Too Long*, another Cavaliere/Brigati collaboration, with a Motown dance feel (aiding its progress on the US R&B chart), makes US #16. *Collections* reaches US #14.

May [4] *Groovin'*, the first self-produced effort by the band, with assistance from Atlantic's Tom Dowd and Arif Mardin, signals a move towards a more uniquely Young Rascals sound than their R&B style, fusing Latin influences and a cool jazz sensitivity. Written by Cavaliere and Brigati about a woman Cavaliere loves by the name of Adrian, and a euphemism for Sunday afternoon sex, it tops the US chart for the first of four weeks. (DJ Murray The K had been at the session when the group recorded the cut, and went to the Atlantic brass, demanding that they release it.)

June [13] *Groovin'* is certified gold by the RIAA.

July *Groovin'* is the band's UK chart debut, hitting #8. **Aug** *A Girl Like You* hits US #10 and makes UK #37, the group's UK chart swan song.

Sept *Groovin'*, featuring the previous two singles and the forthcoming release, hits US #4.

Oct *How Can I Be Sure* is another change of pace, inspired by romance in Cavaliere's life (he will marry shortly). Wrapped in a loping arrangement, with French accordion and strings, it hits US #4.

[4] The band embarks on a UK tour, with Traffic, at Finsbury Park Astoria, London.

1968

Jan The psychedelia-inflected *It's Wonderful* reaches US #20. The group has become absorbed in the "Summer Of Love" philosophy, and Cavaliere adopts Indian philosopher Swami Sachidananda as his guru, with the whole band becoming involved in the latter's Integral Yoga Institute.

Mar On tour in Florida, the group's trailer breaks down outside Fort Pierce, and the Young Rascals encounter heavy anti-rock and racist harassment from rednecks. In response to this, they announce they will play no further live bills which do not include at least one black act.

Apr *Once Upon A Dream*, an effects-laden concept album in *It's Wonderful*-style, hits US #9. While on tour, Cavaliere is admitted to San Diego Hospital, San Diego, CA, with an internal complaint keeping him hospitalized for two weeks. Remaining West Coast dates are cancelled.

May The group persuades Atlantic to drop the "Young" from its name, and *A Beautiful Morning* appears as by the Rascals. Their third million selling single, it hits US #3.

June The Rascals participate in a "Soul Together" concert at New York's Madison Square Garden with Aretha Franklin, Sonny & Cher, Joe Tex, King Curtis and Sam & Dave.

[28] *Beautiful Morning* is certified gold by the single. **July** [22] *Groovin'* is confirmed gold by the RIAA, as well be *Collections* a week later.

Aug [17] *People Got To Be Free* tops the US chart for the first of five weeks, set to become their fourth and last million-selling single. Written by Cavaliere and Brigati, the song is the former's reaction to the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, whose campaign the band had worked for, earlier in the year.

[23] *People Got To Be Free* is certified gold by the RIAA.

Sept [4] *The Young Rascals* and the still-rising *Time Peace/The Rascals Greatest Hits* are both certified gold by the RIAA.

[28] Compilation album, *Time Peace/The Rascals' Greatest Hits*, heads the US chart for a week during a 58-week chart stay.

Dec *A Ray Of Hope*, the last Rascals A-side co-written by Brigati and Cavaliere, and a deliberate sequel to *People Got To Be Free* (dedicated to Senator Edward Kennedy who responds with an appreciative letter to the group), reaches US #24.

1969

Feb The Rascals perform at London's Royal Albert Hall. **Mar** *Heaven*, penned by Cavaliere (as are the remainder of the group's chart hits) in waltz-time, makes US #39.

Apr [21] Still-climbing *Freedom Suite* is certified gold by the RIAA.

May Double album, *Freedom Suite*, reaches US #17 and includes the wholly-instrumental *Musica Musica*, a new departure for the group.

June See climbs to US #27.

[20] The Rascals play at the "Newport '69 Rock Festival" at Devonshire Downs, Northridge, CA, alongside Jimi Hendrix, Jethro Tull and Creedence Clearwater Revival, among others.

Oct *Carry Me Back* reaches US #26.

Dec [15] The group plays a rare UK gig, supporting John Lennon's Plastic Ono Supergroup at London's Lyceum Ballroom, at a benefit for UNICEF.

1970

Jan [28] The Rascals take part in a seven-hour benefit concert at Madison Square Garden, along with Judy Collins, Peter, Paul & Mary, and others, for the Vietnam Moratorium Committee.

Feb See makes US #45, while the extracted *Hold On* peaks at US #51.

[5] Eddie quits the band on the day they sign a five-year, \$1 million deal with CBS/Columbia.

Aug The gospel-flavored *Glory Glory*, with vocal backing from the Sweet Inspirations, peaks at US #58.

1971

Mar *Search And Nearness* charts for a week at US #198. It is their final album for Atlantic and the last to feature Cornish, who leaves after its completion. He and Brigati are replaced by Buzzy Feiten (b. New York City, NY) (guitar) and Robert Powell (Daytona, FL) (bass), while vocalists Ann Sutton and Molly Holt also join, expanding the line-up to a sextet.

July *Love Me* peaks at US #95, the group's only singles chart entry on Columbia, and its final US Hot 100 single. It is taken from their debut Columbia album, *Peaceful World*, which makes US #122.

1972

May *The Island Of Real* peaks at US #180. Soon after, the group disbands.

Dec Cornish and Danelli have formed Bulldog, with John Turk (vocals/keyboards), Eric Thorngren (guitar) and Billy Hoche (bass). Signed to Decca Records, they chart in the US with *No* (#44) and *Bulldog* (#176), but this initial impetus is not followed up, and the group will split. (Brigati is engaged mostly on session work, while Cavaliere concentrates on production, notably with Laura Nyro.)

1974

Cavaliere signs to Bearsville Records as a solo artist, releasing the Todd Rundgren-produced *Felix Cavaliere*, followed by *Destiny* in September the following year. Brigati will record *Brigati* for Elektra in 1976 with his brother David, including a disco-style version of *Groovin'*.

1978

May Cornish and Danelli are reunited in the band Fotomaker and with Atlantic Records. *Where Have You Been All My Life* peaks at US #81, while *Fotomaker* climbs to US #88.

Dec Fotomaker's *Miles Away* makes US #63, but is the group's last chart success. (Two further albums, *Vis A Vis* and *Transfer Station*, will follow in 1979 before the band splits.)

1980

Apr Four years since the release of his last outing *Treasure* (also the name of his mid-'70s band), Cavaliere has his only solo hit with *Only A Lonely Heart Sees*, on Epic, which makes US #36, and is taken from *Castles In The Air*. (Danelli will join

Steve Van Zandt's Little Steven & the Disciples of Soul in 1982.)

1988

May [14] Without Brigati, the group has re-formed for a "Good Lovin' 88" US tour earlier in the year, with Tommy James & the Shondells, and now performs at Atlantic Records' 40-year anniversary concert at New York's Madison Square Garden. (*Good Lovin'* has recently been featured in a highly-rated episode of ABC-TV series, "Moonlighting".)

1989

Danelli and Cornish sue Cavaliere to prevent him from calling his band the Young Rascals. A New York judge rules that Danelli and Cornish can call themselves the New Rascals and Cavaliere "formerly of the Young Rascals." (The New Rascals are Danelli, Cornish, Benny Harrison (vocals/keyboards), Kevin Osborne (vocals/trombone) and Tony Mercadante (vocals/bass).)

1992

Feb [8] *The New York Rock And Soul Revue - Live At The Beacon*, to which Eddie and David Brigati have contributed *Groovin'*, peaks at US #170. (During the year, Rhino Records issues a two-CD career retrospective, *The Rascals Anthology 1965-1972*, matched by a similar UK collection *In Retrospective*.)

1994

Jan Having contributed to the Peace Choir's *Give Peace A Chance*, a US #54 benefit single in March 1991, Cavaliere releases *Dreams In Motion*, his first album in more than a decade on Don Was' new Karambalage label. (Was had originally contacted Cavaliere in 1990 by calling their mutual friend John Sebastian.)