

## PRESS RELEASE: THE BILLY VERA STORY

*"Other than Frank, this kid is the best phraser in the business."*

Jilly Rizzo, 1968

*"'Hopeless Romantic' is one of the five finest records I ever made."*

Jerry Wexler, 2008

*"Play that again. That is one of the most brilliant performances I've ever heard...or seen. Simply brilliant. What ever happened to this guy?"*

Frank Sinatra, 1988

Indeed. Whatever happened to Billy Vera will have to be explored one day, in an article or, perhaps, a book. Assuming there is an explanation for why one so respected by some of the greatest singers, songwriters and jazzmen of our time has never risen to the top of the commercial heap, it will have to remain a mystery for now.

The evidence is here, on this career overview of the singer/songwriter. For the first time, we have collected every chart hit and other fan favorites, starting with his two hits with the late Judy Clay, "Storybook Children" and "Country Girl-City Man," that made the duo great favorites at Harlem's Apollo Theater. "With Pen In Hand, his first solo hit, was supervised by Atlantic Records chief, Jerry Wexler, who became a mentor and friend for the next 40 years.

Recorded in 1976, during Vera's lost decade, "She Ain't Johnnie," recorded in Nashville, made the country charts a decade later.

From 1981's *Billy & the Beaters*, praised by many as the second greatest live album ever, come the chart hit, "I Can Take Care Of Myself" and the song for which Vera will be remembered, "At This Moment." After being heard on the TV sitcom *Family Ties*, five years after its initial release, the tune reached #1 and charted on the Pop, R&B and Country listings, becoming a standard, appearing this past year on Michael Buble's #1 album.

"Between Like And Love" was a top ten easy listening hit from his Capitol album, which produced "If I Were A Magician," covered by Lou Rawls, who also recorded "Room With A View" and "You Can't Go Home." Bonnie Raitt recorded "Papa Come Quick (Jody & Chico)" on her biggest album.

But it's Billy Vera's versions of these songs that reveal what the *cognocenti* have known for years: This is a singer you should know.