

Younger Dayz

Doo Wop Group



(Clockwise from left: Eadie Fuentes, Mike Esperto, Gordon Pekusic, Tommy Siconolfi, Joe Mirrione)

One of the finest doo wop groups of the 1990's was a group called Younger Dayz. Younger Dayz was formed on September 23, 1992 when Joe Mirrione was introduced to Tommy Siconolfi through their mutual friend Les Levine. Tommy had been singing with two friends, Eadie Fuentes and Gordon Pekusic, and had a dream of rounding out the group with two more singers their age. Shortly after the foursome met and began rehearsing in Joe's home in New Hyde Park, Long Island, they added bass Mike Esperto. The songs they sang in that first meeting were simple ones but the blend and musical chemistry they experienced were transcendent of the material with which they were experimenting. They were taking songs that had been performed literally thousands of times by hundreds of artists and making them sound as fresh as the day they were

recorded. One of the major factors in their unique sound was their youth - Joe was only 16 years of age at the time and the average age of the group members was 24.

Joe had the idea to lift the title of one of the first songs the group learned together, "In My Younger Days" (originally by The Monarchs and later by The Admirations, who Mirrione had recently reunited for a WCBS-FM radio show in NY) and turn it into **Younger Dayz**, a name that would soon spread throughout the vintage rock and roll circuit as one of the finest up-and-coming acappella acts. Other young groups seemed to self-destruct as quickly as they burst onto the scene, but **Younger Dayz** went on to gain the respect and friendship of innumerable artists and producers.



(Left to right: Gordon Pekusic, Tommy Siconolfi, Joe Mirrione, Eadie Fuentes, Mike Esperto)

Shortly after their formation, Joe took the group to Starlight Discs, with whom he had recorded as the lead singer of The Clusters. On Starlight, **Younger Dayz** recorded "Made for Lovers" and "Beginning to Love You" which were released on "Starlight Serenade Vol. 7" in early 1993. "Beginning to Love You" became something of a signature song for the

group but was originally written by Tommy & Lola Foy of The Saints and released on one of their earlier albums.



On November 27, 1993 they released "Christmas in New York" b/w "Heaven Sent", an Eddie Brian production on which they were backed by a 21-piece orchestra. Brian wrote both songs especially for the group and with Eadie leading both sides, many took notice of the catchy originals - among them, WCBS-FM in the Big Apple who often played "Christmas in New York" at midnight Christmas Eve to herald the break of Christmas Day and Al Roker who used it in a Christmas public interest segment on NBC-TV. Originally released only on green wax and cassette single, both songs were eventually picked up for over a dozen different compilations including "Doo Wop Renaissance" on Relic as well as "Holiday Harmony" and "Rhythm & Blues Christmas Vol. 4", both on Collectables. One veteran New York DJ with literally hundreds of thousands of songs to his knowledge and at his disposal chose "Heaven Sent" as his wedding song and openly encouraged his

audiences to do the same. Both Vito Picone's "Island Hop" and Tommy Petillo's "Jersey Spotlight" featured the group on their televised holiday shows.



(Younger Dayz on Westbury Music Fair: Left to right: Eadie Fuentes
Joe Mirrione, Tommy Siconolfi, Gordon Pekusic, Mike Esperto)

In 1994, **Younger Dayz** was presented with the Gus Gossert Memorial Award as voted by the membership of the United in Group Harmony Association and began a 3-year run of performing alongside the top groups in the industry at countless major concerts in the tri-state area. Joe Mirrione recalls, "We worked for every major producer and promoter including Richard Nader, Dick Fox and John Vogeles - sometimes within days of each other - at a time when many of these producers had a 'if you work for them, you can't work for me' policy. We were loved and we were proud of what we accomplished. It was a heck of a run." Mirrione also produced several events for the group, including tributes to some of the unsung heroes in the industry like Prez Tyus, who wrote "I'm So Young" and "Every Day of the Week."

In 1995, the group released the album "Sounds of Innocence" which featured **Younger Dayz** favorites such as The Students' "My Vow To You", The Schoolboys' "Please Say You Want Me" and Mirrione's original arrangement of "Zing! Went the Strings of My Heart", a recording that really showcased the group's harmonic expertise. Self-produced and released on their own label, Chapter Eleven Records, "Sounds of Innocence" featured liner notes written by luminaries such as Raoul Cita of The Harptones who called their work "expertly done", Johnny Maestro who heralded a "good choice of songs and a very clean



(Last photo of Younger Dayz, Clockwise from top: Tommy Siconolfi, Joe Mirrione, Eadie Fuentes, Mike Esperto, Gordon Peksusic)

blend of voices", Emil Stucchio who called the leads and harmonies "excellent" and Larry Chance who said, "It's terrific - I love it."

By 1997, the group had split up. Tommy left to run a recording studio in Staten Island. He later sang with Cool Change in the film "A Bronx Tale". He now sings with Sky's The Limit. Gordon left the music scene but still resides in the tri-state area. Eadie sings with a show band. Mike Esperto moved to Florida to start a family. Joe Mirrione went on to sing with New York Nites for several years and in 2005, joined Terry Johnson's Flamingos. He was with Terry Johnson for several years. Joe now produces major concerts as Praia Entertainment Group. Visit <http://poprockdoowopp.com/> Joe is now on the Board of Directors of The East Coast Music Hall Of Fame. Visit www.ECMHOF.org. Younger Dayz now has a FaceBook. Page.



(Terry Johnson's Flamingos at the Black Swan Concert, 2008:
Joe Mirrione on far right)



(Right to left: Joe Mirrione, Jeff Calloway, Charlie & Pam)

**Younger Dayz biographical information supplied by Joe Mirrione.
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