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## Weekend Arts I

14 MUSIC REVIEW

A yearning Jersey Boy at the  
Carlyle. BY STEPHEN HOLDEN

### Stepping Out With Oldies Beyond Four Seasons'

It wasn't until I watched the singer John Lloyd Young pour his heart out on Wednesday evening at Café Carlyle that I realized how much I have missed hearing the once-ubiquitous wail of a brokenhearted Romeo on the radio.

**STEPHEN  
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Male expressions of romantic yearning used to be so simple and direct. "My prayer is to linger with you/At the end of the day in a dream that's divine," go the words of the Platters' 1956 hit, which Mr. Young imbued with the same fervor of the group's lead tenor, Tony Williams, while incorporating many of the same melodic embellishments.

Mr. Young will forever be known as the original Frankie Valli in the Broadway show "Jersey Boys," a role that won him a Tony Award. In his new show, "Yours Truly" — his fourth engagement at Café Carlyle — he is tip-toeing away from the sound of the Four Seasons, which he resurrected with an uncanny accuracy. He has assiduously broadened his musical horizons; his set included only one pure falsetto solo, the Four Seasons' hit "Sherry." Mr. Young departed from the traditional look of a pop balladeer by incorporating such Goth touches as painted fingernails and reddish eye shadow.

He opened the show with a rendition of "Stardust," arranged and sung in the



LOREN WOHL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

John Lloyd Young, a Tony winner for "Jersey Boys," in his new show, "Yours Truly," at Café Carlyle.

**John Lloyd Young**  
Café Carlyle

R&B-pop style of Billy Ward and the Dominoes' 1958 rendition. Other golden oldies included heartfelt, beautifully sung simulations of the Righteous Brothers' versions of "Ebb Tide" and "Unchained Melody" and Al Wilson's 1973 hit "Show and Tell." "Say No More" paid tribute to Roy Orbison, another vocal cousin. "Ming Ri Tian Ya (If Tomorrow Comes)," a traditional Chinese song sung in Mandarin, demonstrated the universality of a certain kind of ballad.

Mr. Young has begun songwriting with his musical director, Tommy Faragher, and their collaborations, especially their ominous "Slow Dawn Calling," show considerable promise. For all the security that "Jersey Boys" gave Mr. Young — presumably he could have a career singing Four Seasons hits ad infinitum — that keening vocal style loomed as a musical straitjacket. He has successfully freed himself.

John Lloyd Young continues through Feb. 20 at Café Carlyle, Manhattan; 212-744-1600, thecafe Carlyle.com.