In her later recordings Dusty's voice was noticeably different, (although it's difficult to pinpoint exactly when this started-early 80s?) She perhaps didn't have such power and range. Dusty was such a critic of her own recordings I wonder how she came to terms with this.

Perhaps because of this she employed 'vocal decoration' as she described it. A kind of unusual way of phrasing and pronunciation and a slight nasal tone.

That's not to say I don't enjoy the later recordings. The 'lived in' quality of her voice lent something to the later songs, the voice of experience if you will. I thought she sounded great on one of her last performances Where is A Woman To Go on Joolz Hollands show in 1995.

I know peoples voices change as they get older but do you think this was why Dusty's voice changed or were other factors more important (ill health etc.)?

Schmokin? Surely that would have affected those lovely pipes..?

I agree though, its not like they changed for better or worse, some of Dusty's later recordings are DIVIIIIIINE!

Love,
Mads xxx

I remember Dusty commenting that she didn't want to keep singing songs where people thought she was going to explode on the next key change! I think she just tried to stop belting so much, and try a more relaxed approach, later on. Singing flat out so much of the time is bound to take a toll.

Love
Jonathan

Right you are, Jonathan! 😊

In Dusty's early 80's records you can heard a decided "Tina Turneresque" sound in her voice. If I'm not mistaken (and lord knows I very well could be), Tina and Dusty were sharing the same vocal coach back then. Do you remember any of this?

Love,
Sometimes Like Butterflies - Most Times Like Caterpillars!

I don't remember that, Ro, but she was very into Tina Turner at that point and kept talking about her in interviews. She certainly did sound very much like her in many recordings at that time.

To put the record straight, in DWD it says that she only had vocal coaching when she was doing Basin Street East. Not true! She had lessons way back in the '60's and used a tape of exercises her teacher had given her. I also remember that later on she went to the same coach "who put Stevie Wonder's voice back together". (Her words).

Love Jonathan

---

Yes, Jonathan

I don't know a single singer who works regularly who doesn't have a vocal coach... civilians don't know the behind-the-scenes work a singer has to do just to be able to use his/her 'instrument' on a regular basis.

Many of my friends are Musical Theatre performers; and, as you know, 8 shows a week can work havoc on a singer's voice. Every single one of them has a vocal coach; and, they're all trained what to do if they find themselves centre-stage without their best voice.

So, whoever Dusty's coaches were, they were there; or, she never would have been able to survive without them.

Love,

Ro

---

Good post Clive

Another DWD inaccuracy exposed, Ro. No surprise there.

In addition to her early singing years, I often thought that Dusty would have sought professional help with her voice during later times. Her technique is noticeably different on 'It Begins Again' to 'Cameo'. Maybe it was all of her own doing.

The fact that she adapted her technique so cleverly to suit her changing range just shows to me what a skilful singer she was.

T

---

Also she was a great mimic, though that doesn't make a great singer. Dusty was able to use so many influences but turn them into something uniquely her own. Plus she had great ears and intonation.

Love Jonathan

---

Hi, Tim

That's for damn sure - that book should win the Nobel Prize for inaccuracy (that's being kind).
And, yes, as singers age, they are forced to adapt their 'style' to the natural changes the human voice go thru from cradle to grave. All women's voices deepen as the hit mid-life - oh, those damn male hormones... haha. Hell, I used to have a pretty nice contralto working - now - basso profundo and can't seem to carry a tune in a Louis Vuitton hatbox. :)

Love,
Ro

----------------
Sometimes Like Butterflies - Most Times Like Caterpillars!

Hi, Jonathan

Speaking of Dusty's mimic abilities - and they were legendary, - is it just me, or did she OD on June Christy, Anita O'Day and Chris Conner at an early age. I know she claims Peggy Lee as a big influence; however, the more I listen to Dusty's 'jazzier' songs, I hear the "Stan Kenton Girls" in there - big time.

Also, I hear Jo Stafford sneaking in there on occasion.

Does this make any sense to you?

Love,
Ro

Jonathan
Little by little
United Kingdom
458 Posts

Oh yes, around the mid '70's she had a lot of her hit songs transposed down a semi-tone, sometimes a tone. Don't blame her really! Shirly Bassey does the same, eg. Goldfinger is way lower in live performances than when she recorded the track for the film.

Love Jonathan

Hi Ro! All our posts are crossing at the moment, so thanks Clive for starting this interesting thread. I think she loved Stan Kenton and Chris Conner and this certainly is reflected in her 'jazzier' songs. Dusty could swing with the best of them, couldn't she? It's great that she could cover so many different musical styles but must have made choices interesting for her!

Love Jonathan

Hi, Jonathan

I always told Dusty she should make a jazz-only album.... but, that feel on deaf ears - so to speak. :)

Love,
Ro

----------------
Sometimes Like Butterflies - Most Times Like Caterpillars!

I can imagine! She probably felt it wouldn't be commercial enough.
By the way, Jack Parnell (band leader) rated her highly as a jazz singer.

Love Jonathan

Had things turned out differently a jazz flavoured album would have worked well as a VFL follow up.

T x (got a cold - affecting fluency)

Amen, Guys - it would have been great to have a jazz album after VFL - guess that nice jazzy little version of "Someone To Watch Over Me" will have to do. :("

Love,
Ro

I was thinking that too! Hope you are dosing yourself up with Vitamin C etc; get better soon.

Love Jonathan

I can't remember for the life of me where I read it (I'm sure it wasn't in THE book though) but I recall somebody saying that Dusty started to smoke quite a lot in the 80's having never really smoked before. Anybody know if this is true or not?

Janie xx

Hi, Jane

She smoked and slugged down the coffee - hey, it's an AA Tradition!!! :D

Love,
Ro

(Thanks Jonathan, I'm getting over it quite quickly I think)
Thread: Great thread; just the kind of discussion that fascinates me and I learn a lot from, so keep it going.

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."
~Roll Away

Better do as 'hoofergirl' says...

Slightly different angle - In some ways Dusty (the singer) seemed like a totally different person at the start of her career to the end. Do you think this is down to her voice changing timbre, her life experiences, image making or ....?

I can't quite put my finger on what I'm trying to say.. but d'you know what I mean?

Awh hell - some of the best singers of all time smoked. Whilst it doesn't work for Coloratura Sopranos, it does give a nice 'smoky/raspy' tone to Blues singers voices.

Great thread This! Dusty also said that one of her coaches had talked about the "onslaught" she was giving to her voice, and this was bound to bring problems! She was always very honest in interviews regarding her singing.

I remember her having a glass of that concentrated lemon stuff (can't remember the name...PJ or something) with her on stage, though it changed to port and lemon later on.

Hi, Tim

I'd choose "D" - All Of The Above

All singers voices change from youth to the older years - even Ella's!!! Natural physical changes - smoking and drinking - coke snorting - general wear and tear on the vocal chords.... it all adds up during the years. Good singers adapt to these changes and go with a slightly different sound every few years or so. It's just natural - kinda like dancers' knees... you use it too much, it wears out.
Hi, Jonathan

And a little nip of Grand Marnier snuck in there after the Port & Lemon Era...

Love,
Ro

Moving tactfully on from the Grand Marnier period.....

Yeah...how clever of you Ro - I never put the D option but should have.

T x

Edited by - Tim on 21/11/2006 15:37:45

Again, don't blame her! Though I find it very difficult to perform (on stage!) with any alcohol inside me at all! You think you are doing well, but you're SO not!!

Love Jonathan

Awh, Tim

One doesn't have to be a total lush to clear the old chords with a little nip of something or another. Every singer I know has their own 'concoction' - be it with or without the benefit of distilled fruit, grain or potato juice.

So, I don't think it's tasteless to mention Dusty's voice-cleaning fluid.

Love,
Ro

Oh yeah......moving swiftly on!

Love Jonathan

Oh, no - just teasin'

this cold is wreckin' my judgement - maybe I need a little nip of something myself!

T
We crossed again, Ro!

Love Jonathan

daydreamer
Moderator

I remember Dusty saying onion juice was great for the voice, tasted awful but it worked. I hope she sucked a mint afterwards 😊

Carole x

Jonathan
Little by little

I also remember her saying, and it made me laugh, "I don't have any vocal expertise; I just suck throat sweets and hope for the best!"

Love Jonathan

Gypsy Rose Lee
I'll try anything

Hey,

Dusty wasn’t the only Grand Marnier girl I knew - Queen Esther Marrow who played Auntie Em in the B’way version of ‘The Wiz” kept the Grand Marnier flowing through the entire show... she’d sneak out to the lobby - get a bartender to bestow a comp or two upon her and go back and sing like a lark. 😊 - 8 shows per week!

Love,
Ro

Gypsy Rose Lee
I'll try anything

We must stop meeting like this, Jonathan! 😊

Jonathan
Little by little

I also remember her saying, and it made me laugh, "I don't have any vocal expertise; I just suck throat sweets and hope for the best!"

Love Jonathan

allherfaces
Administrator

I do recall Dusty saying in an radio (?) interview that she could never do a Broadway musical cause she could just sing LOUD and didn't have the kind of voice or technique that would allow her to do those 8 shows a week.

*scurries off in case this isn't a worthy contribution to the discussion

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."

~Roll Away

Jonathan
Little by little

I know, we've just done it again! 😊

Gypsy Rose Lee
I'll try anything

ONION JUICE!!! 😊

Oh, Carole... yuk. However, that's one sure way to cool down the 'ardour' of the Stage Door Johnnies and Joanies. 😊

Love,
Yes, I like that quote about throats sweets. Did she have a weak throat? She often referred to having problems with laryngitis etc.

Edited by - Tim on 21/11/2006 15:50:31

Nancy, she said she didn’t have a loud enough voice to do a musical, and that she just shouted!! She said "I’ve got a loud voice for a British pop singer.....but that's not saying a lot!" She was hilarious.

Mind you, with body/personal mikes she would probably have been fine these days.

Love Jonathan

Yes, Nancy - it’s tres gruelling to do those 8 freakin’ shows per week. One of the most outrageous 'innovations' in Musical Theatre was when Patti Lupone was doing "Evita" and they hired a "Matinee Evita" for those 2 afternoon shows every week.... does the name Terry Krassner ring any bells? Of course not - she was the "Matinee Evita"!

Love,
Ro

Tim, she always said she had no stamina. Though I think a lot of her problems were in her head. Too busy analyzing herself before she had even sung a note!

Love Jonathan

Yes, that's the one I was thinking of Jonathan.

Could she have done a movie musical do you think? Or would the camera have eaten her alive? Or have I veered too far off the topic?

If you only knew what I *should* be doing, you would indulge me here.

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."
~Roll Away
Hey, Nancy

My bestest buddie finished up a 3-year run in "Mamma Mia" (as the Mamma) a few months back - she doesn't want to do another musical anytime soon. She and her voice are both too damn tired - so it's back to straight plays and "Law & Order" episodes! for a while.

Love,
Ro😊

P.S. just singing "The Winner Takes It All" 8 times per week would wear me out! Lauren had to stay on "vocal rest" on those off days when they didn't have to rehearse any new cast members... ugh!

Ro, that all started when Elaine Page wouldn't do 8 Evita shows a week. Everyone's doing that now and it's pathetic. People like Chita, Julie Andrews and Ethel Merman were seldom off!

Love Jonathan

And the old school gals weren't miked either, were they.

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."
~Roll Away

Spot on, Nancy! She could have done a film musical, I'm sure. The songs would have been pre-recorded, and camera wise she would have been fine. The cameraman would shoot her in the most flattering way. That's what they try to do in musicals, particularly.

Love Jonathan

Hey, Nancy

You wouldn't want The Merm 'miked' - the human ear can only take but so much assault upon it.😊

Love,
Ro😊

Well they were miked, but with foot mikes and hanging ones, nowhere near as powerful as body ones, and don't forget that orchestras/bands are also amplified to the hilt these days.

Love Jonathan

Jonathan
Little by little
United Kingdom
458 Posts

Gypsy Rose Lee
I'll try anything
USA
1535 Posts

allherfaces
Administrator
USA
14235 Posts

Jonathan
Little by little
United Kingdom
458 Posts

Jonathan
Little by little
United Kingdom
458 Posts

Jonathan
Little by little
United Kingdom
458 Posts

Jonathan
Little by little
United Kingdom
458 Posts

Gypsy Rose Lee
I'll try anything
USA
1535 Posts
LOL Ro!!

J x

I've been reading a book on American musicals, and was shocked to learn that Ethel Merman wasn't Jewish. I think she actually let people assume that.

There's naaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaawwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwww business like shaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaw business !!

Oh, what musical might Dusty have been suited for?
Or what role?

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."
~Roll Away

Oy... those 'pack-mikes' are treacherous!!! I can't tell you the number of lazy union soundmen who've let some poor performer's mke on whilst he/she availed themselves of the 'facilities'.

Ms Merman was a bit of an anti-Semite - made sure everyone KNEW she was a German Zimmerman... unlike my ex-girlfriend Judy.

Not at all sure, Nancy!
I've got some unrepeatable stories of personal mikes, Ro!
Love Jonathan

Personal Opinion Time: I don't think Dusty could have done a musical. They want you to dance - and Twinkle Toes O'Brien was kinda limited to that pseudo-Mick Jagger deal she did.

Oh, Jonathan
We must talk offline sometime... I've got a slew of them as well. It could be great fun... perhaps we can get together and swap yarns when I'm in London next July.

Love,
Ro

There's also a singing technique called "The Twang" which is a very forward nasally sort of sound. Most musical performers use it these days. Completely different to the open throated operatic style of yester year,
and it's easier to sing higher. You Americans are good at this, because your speech patterns tend to be placed further forward than ours in Britain. Sorry, this sounds a bit teacherish!!

Love Jonathan

He he he - I'd like to be there as a little sparkly fly on the wall...

T

Edited by - Tim on 21/11/2006 16:21:42

Ro, Dusty could have danced; at the Talk of the Town she tap danced, albeit not too demanding a routine, but she carried it off really well. Irving Davies, her choreographer, told me that she was a natural. She did pick things up quickly.

Love Jonathan

PS And it was more than a time step!

PPS See you in July then!

I'll dig out my source on Merman a bit later, kids.

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."

~Roll Away

Blimey Clive! What have you started!

Love Jonathan

I don't know Jonathan-but I'm loving it so far!

Yes, Thanks Clive - great thread!!!

Love,
Ro
Gypsy Rose Lee  
I'll try anything  
USA  
1535 Posts


Well, I suppose a non-dancer could do a movie musical - it's been done. However, movie musicals were pretty dead until "Chicago" came along... fortunately Ms. Zeta-Jones was a dancer before she stepped into that Oscar-winning role.

Sophie  
Where am I going?  
2302 Posts


bloody hell! you three have certainly been very chatty today! interesting read, tho - thanks for all your information, and thanks Clive for starting the thread.

daydreamer  
Moderator  
United Kingdom  
5404 Posts


I think Dusty was a pretty OK dancer, she did some nifty footwork with those two guys during 'Bring Him Back' on one of her shows and she also did quite a bit of dancing around in sketches during those glossy Englebert and Andy Williams type shows in the 70's. She did contemplate a musical once.....can somebody remind me, I've forgotten which.

Carole x

Gypsy Rose Lee  
I'll try anything  
USA  
1535 Posts


Hey, I did my homework... ran through Dusty's repertoire and I've gotta say(IMHO), her best vocal work was from about '67-'72. Dusty's voice had matured - she developed more "texture" and took some vocal 'leaps of faith' which she hadn't done before.

Also(IMHO), while DIM gets all the attention, Dusty did some of her best work on "Brand New Me"(U.S. title) and "Cameo".

Any thoughts, Jonathan?

Jonathan  
Little by little  
United Kingdom  
458 Posts


Hi Ro, I also think she had more vocal control in that period and more confidence. Only speculation, mind you. She does some amazing things on CAMEO, especially on "I Just Want To Be There". She sounds so comfortable with all the wailing etc.

Love Jonathan

Jane  
Little by little  
United Kingdom  
239 Posts


I think I must be sickening for something here, I don't know what you think Ro? - but the last couple of days I've done nothing but agree with you!

Janie xx

Gypsy Rose Lee  
I'll try anything  
USA  
1535 Posts


Yes, Jane... slow down, girl.. you don't want to be in that 'guilt by association' cult I seem to have gathered along the way.

Love,  
Ro😊😊
Sometimes Like Butterflies - Most Times Like Caterpillars!

[Quote]

Originally posted by Gypsy Rose Lee

Yes, Jane... slow down, girl... you don't want to be in that 'guilt by association' cult I seem to have gathered along the way 😊😊😊

Love,
Ro 😊😊😊

[Quote]

Sometimes Like Butterflies - Most Times Like Caterpillars!

We won't worry about that one Ro, always been my own girl...there's bound to be something that comes up in the not too distant future whereby we can have a good old ding-dong! Looking forward to it, in fact! 😊😊

Janie xx

[Quote]

Originally posted by Clive

Hey, I did my homework 😏.. ran through Dusty's repertoire and I've gotta say(IMHO), her best vocal work was from about '67-'72. Dusty's voice had matured - she developed more "texture" and took some vocal 'leaps of faith' which she hadn't done before.

Definitely agree Ro, this my favourite Dusty era.

[Quote]

Originally posted by Clive

Hey, I did my homework 😏.. ran through Dusty's repertoire and I've gotta say(IMHO), her best vocal work was from about '67-'72. Dusty's voice had matured - she developed more "texture" and took some vocal 'leaps of faith' which she hadn't done before.

Definitely agree Ro, this my favourite Dusty era.

Me three (or is it four? five?). Cameo was the first Dusty album I ever bought, btw.

Dustily yours, David


[Quote]

I agree with you too Ro! I bought all her albums and Cameo is the most
underated one. Her voice reached its peak around 67-72 as you say.

Trek

I adored Dusty's voice the most from the mid 60's to mid 70's. That was my favorite era for her...

Love, Laura xx

*Everything in moderation including moderation*

daydreamer

I've talked to quite a few Dusty fans over the years about when her voice was at it's peak and without an exception, they've all said, late sixties early seventies. She seemed to relax into what she was more easily capable of then.

Carole x

well, as Dusty said herself in 1977:

"...that was never my real voice. It was a strain for that effect, all the time a strain. I shouted and screamed because I believed with all my naivete that that was the way to sing with soul."

"And then, one day, I realised that I was crazy, putting myself and the audience through this madness and risking my voice, so I took it down a key and I guess that the Memphis album showed me that there was no need to sing in a style other than my natural one."

so she did indeed sound more relaxed in the late 60s/early 70s; because she was more comfortable with her natural voice. and surprise surprise, i too think she sounded the best in that era 😊

Oh, I'm supposed to have gone to bed - this wretched site's keeping me up!!!

great quote - never heard before - where did you get that from, Sophie?

T

Edited by - Tim on 23/11/2006 00:04:14

Yet again! Goodnight (possibly)

Love Jonathan
i was just quoting from an article in the most recent DSB; i read it earlier & thought of this thread. 😊

quote:

Originally posted by muuz
great quote - never heard before - where did you get that from, Sophie?

T

dusty_freak

Australia
5805 Posts

quote:

Originally posted by scissorsophie
i was just quoting from an article in the most recent DSB; i read it earlier & thought of this thread. 😊

Yeah, i read that too.. i was shocked to read it actually... how it seemed to be a strain 😊

Clare xoxo

"I'm not Mama's little baby no more..."

Gypsy Rose Lee

I'll try anything
USA
1535 Posts

Time to pop the cork!!! 🎉

Jane

Little by little
United Kingdom
239 Posts

quote:

Originally posted by Corinna
Trek and Jane agree with Ro about something Dusty? Time to put the champagne in the fridge!! 😊

Trek and Jane agree with Ro about something Dusty? Time to put the champagne in the fridge!! 😊

Cor xx

At the risk of labouring the point (although I accept I probably already have!) this is what healthy debate/discussion is all about. Sometimes we agree, sometimes we disagree - what a boring old life it would be if we always shared the same opinions. Pop that cork, Ro! 😊 (I'd prefer a scotch and ginger to be honest but hey...if you're buying? 😊).

Janie xx
Hey, Janie

Shall we argue about which brand of champagne to have? If we don't, people will start talking soon... if they haven't already 😄

Cheers!!!

Love,
Ro

Anyone else thinking this is too Stepford to be true?...

You've changed your avatar Ro! Was it something I said??

Love Jonathan

Hi, Tim & Jonathan

hahaha... you 'boys' make me laugh so much 😄

I've gotta say one thing - whether we all agree or not, this(LTD) is one of most intelligent and witty groups in which I've found myself in many a moon! 😊

Now, don't go thinkin' I'm gettin' "soft" on y'all... Janie 😊😊

Love you kids,
Ro

Great, isn't it?

Love Jonathan

Meanwhile.. back to somewhere on the outskirts of the Topic...

Speaking of Dusty's early 70's voice.. (close enough to topic)

IMHO, two songs in particular illustrate that 'texture and vocal leaps of faith' deal I mentioned a few pages back. Whilst these 2 songs are far from the best-written songs Dusty ever recorded, they do illustrate the above point.

One is "Joe" from 'Brand New Me'/ the second is "Who Could Be Loving
You..." from "Cameo".

For those few who do not sleep with their entire Dusty album collection - here they are:

http://www.yousendit.com/download/lYGjOwucp3k%3D
"JOE" & "WHO COULD BE LOVING YOU"

Your thoughts?

Love,
Ro

---

Wonderful vocals on these. I just love Who Could Be Loving You probably one of my favourites of Dusty. When she sings the part that starts "I Can Give Up Material Things..." just love it.

Clive
1455 Posts

---

Does anyone know how I can see this??? Haha Dusty + tap dancing = something I must see!!!

Love,
Mads xxx

---

Originally posted by Gypsy Rose Lee

Hi, Tim & Jonathan
hahaha... you 'boys' make me laugh so much.

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Love you kids,
Ro

---

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."
~Roll Away
Ro, Dusty could have danced; at the Talk of the Town she tap danced, albeit not too demanding a routine, but she carried it off really well. Irving Davies, her choreographer, told me that she was a natural. She did pick things up quickly.

Does anyone know how I can see this??? Haha Dusty + tap dancing = something I must see!!!

Love,
Mads xxx

This must be the Shirley Temple dance routine, and to my knowledge, this performance was either never filmed or no one knows where the film is, if it were.

Fraser has provided us with the recording, however. Do you not have it?

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."
~Roll Away

What song was this...I'm sure I have it somewhere haha

Love,
Mads xxx

OK you musical types, answer me this. Somewhere in the early to mid 60s (I think) it sounded like Dusty started including that breathy style in her singing. Do you think this was a defensive move on her part for some physical reason or just a style that she liked? It is particularly evident in The Look Of Love.

I'm also struck, when trying to sing along with Dusty, at how much breath control she seems to have had. Was she exceptional in this way for her time?

mary

Hi, Tim & Jonathan
hahaha... you 'boys' make me laugh so much.😊

I've gotta say one thing - whether we all agree or not, this(LTD) is one of most intelligent and witty groups in which I've found myself in many a moon.😊

Now, don't go thinkin' I'm gettin' "soft" on y'all... Janie😊
Love you kids,
Ro

ONE OF? 😊

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."
~Roll Away

Haven't you heard Nancy? There's at least one other that I know about. 😊

Janie xx

Not that Ro is a part of, Jane, so let's not go there.

Mads, it's the I Want to be a Mooovie star, thread.

"Yesterday's gone. Love lead me on."
~Roll Away

Mads, the song was "On the Good Ship Lollipop". Dusty was doing a spoof of Shirley Temple, the American child star.

Mary, Dusty used that breathy sound on "Anyone Who Had a Heart" from her first album, so she had used it long before "The Look of Love". That breathy sound always reminds me of Astrud Gilberto, and I think she always admired the way she sounded.

Her breath control was pretty good, but I don't think it was exceptional. Her phrasing was though!

Anyway, just my thoughts. Dusty always said that singing in that way was murder on the vocal chords!

Love Jonathan