

= Laugh , Laugh =

" Laugh , Laugh " is a song by American rock group The Beau Brummels , written by guitarist Ron Elliott and produced by Sylvester Stewart , later known as Sly Stone . Released in December 1964 as the band 's debut single , the song reached number 15 on the U.S. Billboard Hot 100 chart the following February . " Laugh , Laugh " was the first hit single to come out of the emerging San Francisco music scene in response to the British Invasion . The song was later included on the band 's first full @-@ length album , Introducing the Beau Brummels , released in April 1965 .

The Beau Brummels promoted the single by appearing on several television shows , including a 1965 episode of The Flintstones in which the band gave an animated performance as the Beau Brummelstones . In 1994 , " Laugh , Laugh " was selected to The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame 's 500 Songs that Shaped Rock and Roll exhibit . Lead singer Sal Valentino reworked the song for his 2008 solo album , Every Now and Then .

= = Background and composition = =

In 1964 , San Francisco disc jockeys Tom Donahue and Bobby Mitchell were looking for new acts to bring to their Autumn Records label . They discovered the Beau Brummels performing at the Morocco Room , a club in nearby San Mateo , and signed the band shortly thereafter . Donahue and Mitchell were eager to capitalize on Beatlemania , a phenomenon surrounding The Beatles that originated several years before in Germany and was spreading across the U.S. by this time . The Beau Brummels had taken their name from a term for an excessively well @-@ dressed person . The group liked that the name sounded British , and knew that following the Beatles so closely in the alphabet would likely result in the bands ' records being placed next to each other on record store shelves . Even the harmonies of " Laugh , Laugh " were reminiscent of popular British acts of the time , such as the Beatles and The Zombies . However , songwriter @-@ guitarist Ron Elliott said the song was directly influenced not by UK bands , but by U.S. pop group The Four Seasons .

Elliott grew up writing music inspired by theatrical composers such as George Gershwin and Jerome Kern , as well as country music artist Lefty Frizzell . After forming the Beau Brummels with lead vocalist Sal Valentino , Elliott wanted to create simplified music that had mainstream appeal . He noted that " Laugh , Laugh " had a " very complex chord structure , but instead of using the major seventh chords and the passing chords that I prefer , I wrote the song in flat major and minor keys using a simplified tonal structure . " Elliott said he liked using minor keys as he believed they added an element of mystery to the music , similar to that of James Bond films . Lyrically , " Laugh , Laugh " describes a rejected lover who takes pleasure in revenge when someone rejects the one who had rejected him .

The song features a harmonica , played by Declan Mulligan , throughout the tune .

The single version of " Laugh Laugh , " universally heard in 1965 when it was a hit , fades out during the second iteration of the line " Lonely / Oh so lonely . " The full version does not fade out , but rather ends " cold " on an E chord . As most oldies radio stations today play songs provided by a music service rather than actual records , the version with the cold ending is heard almost universally now . This version also features a " yeah " uttered by Sal Valentino between the two iterations of " lonely " that was edited out of the single release

The song was produced by Autumn house producer Sylvester Stewart , who later gained fame as Sly Stone of Sly & the Family Stone . Valentino recalled the band 's recording sessions with Stone : " He was only about nineteen or twenty when we worked with him . It was before all of his reputation came to be , that everybody knows him for now . " Valentino added , " He was a cheerleader . He could play everything if we needed him to . He was great . He was the guy in San Francisco who knew how to make a record in the studio . There was nobody before him . " Elliott agreed , saying Stone was a positive influence on the band because of his talent , intelligence and experience .

= = Release and reception = =

" Laugh , Laugh " was released in December 1964 , seven months after the band 's formation . In January 1965 , the song entered the Billboard Hot 100 at number 96 . The song remained in the top 40 portion of the chart for eight weeks , peaking at number 15 in February . Donahue believed the single would have peaked at number one if the band was on a label with stronger distribution . In Canada , the song reached number two on RPM magazine 's singles chart . As the song climbed the charts , many listeners assumed the Beau Brummels were British , due to the band 's name and musical style . For their part , Donahue and Mitchell spread rumors that the band was indeed from the UK , and had the band dress in Beatlesque suits .

" Laugh , Laugh " was the first hit single from a burgeoning San Francisco music scene ? including such bands as Jefferson Airplane , the Grateful Dead , We Five , Moby Grape , Quicksilver Messenger Service and Country Joe and the Fish ? to respond to the British Invasion . The song is credited as one of the earliest tracks to blend beat music with folk rock , even before The Byrds recorded " Mr. Tambourine Man . " Chris Hillman , who played bass guitar with the Byrds , saw the Beau Brummels at a Los Angeles concert , and later remarked : " I remember them doing the hit they had , ' Laugh , Laugh . ' They really sort of answered the Beatles before we did , in that sense . " However , Byrds singer @-@ guitarist Roger McGuinn claimed " they had a little trouble singing in tune . " The song was one of 10 pop singles named in a January 1966 issue of Billboard which credited the use of harmonica in folk , pop , and rhythm and blues (R & B) music for sparking a harmonica sales boom at record retailers in 1964 and 1965 .

Music critic Dave Marsh selected the song for his 1989 book , The Heart of Rock & Soul : The 1001 Greatest Singles Ever Made . William Ruhlmann of Allmusic called it a " pivotal " song with " cleverly arranged harmonies . " On the other hand , Chris Smith of Stylus Magazine described it as a " mostly colorless , indistinct Beatles rip @-@ off " and " pretty unmemorable . " In 1994 , the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame 's curatorial staff , along with rock critics and historians , selected " Laugh , Laugh " for a Hall of Fame exhibit featuring The 500 Songs that Shaped Rock and Roll . "

= = In popular culture = =

The Beau Brummels performed " Laugh , Laugh " on several television music variety shows of the mid @-@ 1960s , including NBC 's Hullabaloo on February 23 , 1965 , ABC 's Shindig ! on March 10 , 1965 and American Bandstand on April 9 , 1966 . In September 1965 , the Beatles ' self @-@ titled animated television series debuted and became an immediate ratings success . As a result , animation studios moved quickly to incorporate cartoon rock bands into other programs . An early effort by Hanna @-@ Barbera showcased the Beau Brummels as animated guests on The Flintstones sitcom in the season six episode " Shinrock A Go @-@ Go , " which originally aired on December 3 , 1965 . Appearing as The Beau Brummelstones , the band performed " Laugh , Laugh " on Bedrock 's TV teen dance show , Shinrock ? a takeoff of the Shindig ! program .

" Laugh , Laugh " was included on the 1998 four @-@ CD expanded edition of Nuggets : Original Artyfacts from the First Psychedelic Era , 1965 ? 1968 , a collection of American garage rock singles that helped influence the development of 1970s punk rock . The song was also featured in the 1989 John Candy comedy @-@ drama film Uncle Buck .

= = Other versions = =

An alternate take appears on the Beau Brummels ' 1996 three @-@ disc box set San Fran Sessions , a collection of rarities , demos and outtakes . The band 's Live ! album , released in 2000 , contains a 1974 performance of " Laugh , Laugh " recorded during a concert in Fair Oaks Village near Sacramento , California . Sal Valentino revisited the song on his 2008 solo album , Every Now and Then , on which he offers a darker interpretation of the track . Surf rock group The Astronauts performed a cover version of " Laugh , Laugh " on their 1967 album , Travelin ' Man . The song was also covered by California garage rock band The E @-@ Types , whose live rendition is part of the Live at the Rainbow Ballroom 1966 album , released in 1998 . Experimental musician R. Stevie Moore recorded a version of the song on his 1983 album , Crises .

= = Track listing = =

7 " Vinyl

= = Credits and personnel = =

Sal Valentino ? lead vocals , tambourine

Ron Elliott ? lead guitar , vocals

Ron Meagher ? bass guitar , vocals

Declan Mulligan ? rhythm guitar , harmonica , vocals

John Petersen ? drums

Sylvester Stewart ? producer

Leo de Gar Kulka ? engineer

= = Chart performance = =