

## JEANETTE

By: Gus Dick Andros

This afternoon, by accident, I turned on the TV and PBS was doing a retrospect called Nelson and Jeanette. Seeing Jeanette MacDonald on the screen brought back memories of the musical Bittersweet I was in with her. Although it was a long time ago looking at her and Nelson Eddy singing the songs I grew up with was very cathartic.

I was the oldest dancer in the cast and had seen most of her films. "Who is this Jeanette MacDonald anyway?" was being murmured among the dancers and singers. Miss Macdonald had not made a movie in many years, and television had not yet brought back all of her films, but remembering her from my youth, it was hard for me to believe that anyone would not know of her. "She was the biggest star in Hollywood in her day," I said. "I never thought that I would meet her, let alone be in a show with her."

"Sorry, Dick, you're showing your age." one dancer said, and I replied "And you're showing your ignorance."

The first day of rehearsals Jeanette arrived with a maid and entourage of fans that watched all of the proceeding. We had never seen anything like that before. It didn't take long for Jeannette's professionalism to had the cast of dancers and singers worshiping at her feet. She was very beautiful with red hair, blue eyes and a complexion that was flawless.

From afar I watched every move she made, and I fell in love with her. The maid who was devoted to her and kept all of the cast at arm's length.

Jeanette knew more about theater than the director, choreographer,

and conductor combined. I am sure that the management thought that she was difficult, but if she was it was because she sold out the house every night. I could see it was not her temperament that bothered them, but her knowledge of the stage. For instance in one scene Jeanette and a member of the female chorus were on stage in costumes that looked alike. She stopped the dress rehearsal and insisted that the girl's costume be changed. "You pay me \$10,000 a performance and you dress a girl of the chorus just like me," she said and her face turned the color her of hair. We sat there until a new costume could be found for the young girl. There were many comments about the prima donna, but I knew she was correct.

The experience I had with Jeanette was different from what the other dancers had. One day after the rehearsal I went to take a shower, but to get to the shower room I had to go through the costume room.

Without knocking I walked in with just a towel wrapped around my waist and a bar of soap in my hand. There before me stood Jeanette MacDonald, her maid and the costumer. My eyes popped she had on less than I did.

I felt the heat rise through my body; from my toes to the top of my head. I thought for sure that steam was coming out of my ears. I began to stammer, "Excuse me, oh, I'm sorry I didn't think anyone would still be here." That is what I meant to say, but I'm not sure it came out that way.

As I turned to leave Jeanette said, "It's too late now, we have both seen more than we might wish. Go ahead and take your shower." I am sure I was pink all over and had to walk within a foot of her to get to the shower. After that Miss MacDonald always smiled when we crossed each others path. The other dancers were always kidding me about how friendly she was to me. "You're about her age. I think she

has the hots for you."

"I only wish that was true." I quickly answered. I never told them about my encounter with her and the shower.

Because of my inquisitive nature, I always watched every rehearsal whether I was in the scene or not. Once I heard the director tell Miss MacDonald that she should grab her cape and run upstage out the center door. I watched this scene many times and I was there at dress rehearsal when she grabbed her cape and ran upstage, but there was no center door. You could hear a pin drop. We sat there glued to our seats, as she dropped her cape and walked slowly down stage to the director. I couldn't imagine what was going to happen, but with a calm demeanor she said, "Do you mean to sit there and tell me," her blue eyes blazing but her voice remaining soft, "that you directed this scene without knowing what the set looked like?" The conversation that followed was a blur to me because, like Jeanette, I couldn't believe that he would not have known what the set looked like. Is that temperament or intelligence?

Jeanette had a small pure voice, not made for a large theatre; but when she sang, I became aware that every movement in the theatre stopped. I knew then what a real star was: someone who can command hundreds of people to listen. I got chills and remembered that the only other time I felt that way on stage was when I danced on a program with Ruth St. Dennis

At the end of the run I wanted Jeanette's autograph, so I got the nerve to knock on her dressing room door. It was answered by her maid, "Yes, what do you want?" She asked.

"I wonder if Miss MacDonald would autograph a picture for me?"

"I'm afraid that Miss MacDonald doesn't--"

"Who is it, Mary?" I could recognize her voice.

Mary replied, "It's the boy without clothes."

"Have him come in. We have nothing to hide from each other." I entered and there she sat like a technicolor movie, wearing a blue robe that matched her eyes, and her beautiful red hair. She was eating yogurt long before it was fashionable.

"I'm sorry about what happened in the costume room," I apologized.

"Don't worry. It isn't the first time that something like that has happened to me and I am sure you have seen it all before." Her smile melted me right then and there.

I couldn't believe that this beautiful woman was talking to me like this. I may have blushed, but she didn't. After she autographed her picture and I left, feeling I was floating on air. Watching PBS today and seeing Jeanette on the screen made me feel as if time had stood still and I was 25 again.

To Dick  
with best wishes  
for your success  
Jeanette  
MacDonald



JEANETTE MacDONALD has captivated audiences and scored with highest favor in all of the world's entertainment media—stage, screen, opera, concert, radio, on recordings and in television.

Miss MacDonald's star commenced its astronomical ascent one June morn in Philadelphia. At the age of three, she sang her first song at a benefit performance. At nine, she memorized operatic arias from recordings. At 13, in middy-dress and cotton stockings, she was signed for her first professional stage appearance.

From bit parts to star of New York musicals, Miss MacDonald soared to such popularity that Ernst Lubitsch signed her for her screen debut in "The Love Parade" with Maurice Chevalier. She quickly became the first singing star of the screen and scored in "Vagabond King", "Monte Carlo", "Love Me Tonight", "The Merry Widow", "Naughty Marietta", "Rose Marie", "Maytime", "Sweethearts", "San Francisco", "The Girl of the Golden West", "New Moon", "Bitter-

sweet", "Smilin' Through" and many others.

She made her concert debut in Europe just before she signed with MGM for "The Merry Widow", and subsequently conquered the American concert field through a series of annual tours. She smashed all existing box-office records, returned to break even her own records and established astronomical box-office figures for concert appearances which have yet to be matched.

To the accompaniment of "best-selling" record albums and the accolades of music critics, she made her grand opera debut in "Romeo and Juliet" in Montreal, with Ezio Pinza, then toured Canada. Her American operatic debut followed with the Chicago Civic Opera Company where, again with Pinza, she sang Marguerite in "Faust." In 1946 she toured the British Isles and was received with glorified adjectives even by the traditionally reserved members of the press in England, Scotland and Ireland.

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LORD SORREL ..... KARL KRAFT  
 MR. VALE ..... WILLIAM PHILLIPS  
 MR. BETHEL ..... WALTER HOLMES  
 MR. PROUTIE ..... JAMES BOERINGER

LADIES OF THE ENSEMBLE

Jeanne Allen  
 Janet Baxter  
 Sally Brenner  
 Mary Ann Cushman  
 Jarvis Esenwein  
 Marcella Fox  
 Mary Hofssos  
 Helen McClaskey  
 Joy Lynne Sica  
 Adrienne Strathearn  
 Sophie Wolski  
 Carlene Zinsmeister

ACT II

Scenes 1 and 2: Herr Schlick's Cafe in Vienna, 1885

SARI LINDEN ..... JEANETTE MacDONALD  
 CARL LINDEN ..... GLENN BURRIS  
 MANON (La Grevette) ..... SHANNON BOLIN  
 LOTTIE ..... JOYCE DAVIS  
 FRIEDA ..... JEANNE ALLEN  
 GUSSI ..... GERALDINE HANNING  
 CAPTAIN AUGUST LUTTE ..... VICTOR CLARKE  
 HERR SCHLICK ..... LeROI OPERTI

ACT III

Scene 1: Lord Shayne's House in London, 1898

MADAME SARI LINDEN ..... JEANETTE MacDONALD  
 MARQUIS OF SHAYNE ..... ARTHUR NEWMAN  
 LADY JAMES (Harriet) ..... SOPHIE WOLSKI  
 MRS. PROUTIE (Gloria) ..... HELEN McCLASKEY  
 MRS. BETHEL (Effie) ..... JARVIS ESENWEIN  
 LADY SORRELL (Honor) ..... JEANNE ALLEN  
 MRS. VALE (Jane) ..... JOY LYNN SICA  
 THE DUCHESS OF TENTERDEN (Victoria) ..... SALLY BRENNER  
 LORD JAMES ..... R. G. WEBB  
 MR. PROUTI ..... JAMES BOERINGER  
 MR. BETHEL ..... WALTER HOLMES  
 LORD SORRELL ..... KARL KRAFT  
 MR. VALE ..... WILLIAM PHILLIPS  
 THE DUKE OF TENTERDEN ..... JAMES LOGAN  
 THE HON. HUGH DEVON ..... ROBERT WATTS  
 LADY DEVON ..... MARY ANN CUSHMAN

GENTLEMEN OF THE ENSEMBLE

James Boeringer  
 Norman Frederick  
 Walter Holmes  
 Karl Kraft  
 James Logan  
 Melvin J. Loughner  
 William S. Phillips  
 John L. Riley  
 Edmund Rose  
 Harry Spence  
 R. G. Webb



Scene 2: Lady Shayne's House in Grosvenor Square, the Present

MARCHIONESS OF SHAYNE ..... JEANETTE MacDONALD  
 DOLLY CHAMBERLAIN ..... BARBARA LOUIS  
 VINCENT HOWARD ..... EUGENE KAUFMAN

CORPS DE BALLET  
 LADIES

Rita Alecknewith  
 Rebecca Barksdale  
 Barbara Geary  
 Patti Karkalits  
 Linda Merrill  
 Dawn Mitchell  
 Sherry McCutcheon  
 Janet Pushnik

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

Scene 1

1. Opening: "That Wonderful Melody" ..... Singing Ensemble
2. "Call of Life" ..... Jeanette MacDonald and Singing Ensemble
- Ballet Interlude ..... Dancing Girls Dick Andros and Juan Anduze

Scene 2

1. "If You Could Come With Me" ..... Glenn Burris
2. "I'll See You Again" ..... Jeanette MacDonald and Glenn Burris

Scene 3

1. "Polka" ..... Dancing Ensemble
2. "What is Love" ..... Jeanette MacDonald and Singing Ensemble
3. "The Last Dance" ..... Singing Ensemble
4. "Finale."
  - a. "Eeny Meeny" ..... Jeanette MacDonald and Bridesmaids
  - b. "Should Happiness Forsake Me" ..... Jeanette MacDonald and Glenn Burris
  - c. Reprise: "I'll See You Again" ..... Jeanette MacDonald and Glenn Burris
  - d. "They've All Gone Now" ..... Jeanette MacDonald, Glenn Burris, Bridesmaids
  - e. "The Call of Life" ..... Jeanette MacDonald and Glenn Burris

GENTLEMEN

Dick Andros  
 Juan Anduze  
 Curtis Hood  
 Grover Dale  
 Jose Falcon  
 Edwin Holleman  
 Lou Johnson  
 Gene Nettles

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