



Singer Peggy Lee was known as an immense talent, a temperamental diva, fierce litigant and "a pain in the ass."

With so little going on and seeing this very interesting article in my home town newspaper... I thought I would share it with you. **Peggy Lee** was always one of my favorites as I am sure she was to a whole lot of you.

The Rise & Fall of Peggy Lee!

Peggy Lee was one of Truman Capote's favorite singers, but the novelist got more than he bargained for when he dined with her in Los Angeles in 1979. Lee recalled for him all the times she had been reincarnated, as a princess, an Abyssinian queen and, most startlingly, she said: "I remember being a prostitute in Jerusalem when Jesus was alive."

"Oh really," Capote replied. "How do you remember?"

"I'll never forget picking up The Jerusalem Times and seeing the headline 'Jesus Christ Crucified,'" Lee answered, with a straight face.

When the singer stepped out to use the lavatory, Capote turned to their fellow diner, Dotson Rader, and hissed: "She's totally bonkers."

Lee's circus of a life began in a strange, sad way. Born Norma Deloris Egstrom 100 years ago in small-town North Dakota, she was just four when her mother died. After her alcoholic father remarried, Lee found herself with a cruel, fairy tale-like stepmother called Min, who told her she was fat, and that her hands were too big.

Lee confided to Capote that Min had stabbed her in the stomach with a kitchen knife. In TV interviews, Lee compared her childhood to "boot camp," adding "brutal beatings became a way of life."

Lee's biographer James Gavin casts doubt on these stories of violence. "Peggy painted Min as a Dickensian ogre who had beaten and tortured her," Gavin told Jazztimes in 2014. "Peggy had her head in the clouds. She whipped up a Cinderella-like fantasy world in which she hid from reality."

Whatever the truth, Lee's miserable upbringing ignited a determination to escape North Dakota. At age 14, she began singing for WDAY Radio in Fargo, earning a dollar per program, and took the stage name Peggy Lee.

In 1937, she left for L.A., where she found work as a "carnival barker," luring punters to a "hit the wino with the baseball" stall. Eventually, she landed some singing jobs in clubs around North America, which led to her big break.

In 1941, bandleader Benny Goodman heard Lee singing in the cocktail lounge of the Ambassador West Hotel in Chicago and asked her to join his band. A string of hits followed.

Goodman was notoriously stingy — he paid Lee only \$10 for singing Why Don't You Do Right? — but she always credited him for her success, often

telling visitors to her chandelier-filled, marble-floored mansion: “In a way, Benny gave me all this.”

Even as a multimillionaire, she fretted about money, and stewed over lost revenue she believed to be rightfully hers. Lee had a point. She made so much money for Capitol Records in the 1950s that their lavish circular headquarters in L.A. was jokingly known as “the house that Peggy built.” In 1989, she was still angry over missing out on royalties for her 1958 hit *Fever*.

“I advise all young songwriters, copyright your song,” she said.

In 1991, Lee sued Disney for unpaid royalties when she got nothing from the video release of *The Lady and the Tramp*, for which, three decades earlier, she had been paid a mere \$3,500 for its hit songs and for voicing several characters: Darling, the Siamese cats Si and Am, and a stray Pekingese called Peg. In court, she cited a clause in her contract about transcription royalties for radio productions.

“I’ve almost got a law degree out of reading all the legal papers,” she joked. Lee won \$2.3 million.

Her reputation as fearsome litigant played a part in the history of *The Muppets*. Throughout her career, Lee insisted on the full title Miss Peggy Lee at concerts, and once upbraided a British jazz musician for introducing her as plain Peggy Lee. When designer Bonnie Erickson built Miss Piggy in 1974 for an early *Muppets* TV special, she called her Miss Piggy Lee — “as both a joke and an homage.” Erickson has confirmed the rumors that Lee threatened to sue.

Miss Piggy, as she was renamed, is a controlling prima donna, and Lee’s detractors said the same of her. Jerry Leiber, who co-wrote *Is That’s All There Is?* — Which sparked Lee’s comeback in 1970 — loved her voice but described her as “a pain in the ass.” Her biographer’s verdict was that she was “an utter narcissist.”

Problems with excessive drinking and pill-popping — especially Valium — took their toll in the 1970s. She became a devotee of a quasi-new Age organization called the Divine Science church. On television, she extolled the theory that “we are a collective one ... I think there is only one intelligence and we are part of it and we use that mind.”

Viewers could sense that Lee was damaged, something Goodman spotted, back in the 1940s, when, according to Lee, he “gave orders that none of the musicians were to come near me.” That didn’t deter the amorous attentions of Goodman’s guitarist Dave Barbour, who was 30 when he married the 22-year-old Lee in 1943. Eight months later, they had a daughter, Nicki.

Lee described Barbour as “the greatest love of my life.” He was, however, an alcoholic, who would sit in their home feeding bourbon to her goldfish. They divorced in 1951, and Lee went on to divorce three more times, after brief marriages to actors Brad Dexter and Dewey Martin, and Jack Del Rio, a bongo player from Las Vegas.

Lee also had flings with Frank Sinatra, Punch’s jazz columnist Patrick Skene Catling, actor Robert Preston and her musical director Quincy Jones.

By 1991, she was spending most of her time on her king-sized bed in California, spaced out on tranquillizers. She ventured out only for lucrative lounge bar gigs in New York and Las Vegas. In 1998, she suffered a stroke, and was never able to speak again.

When Lee died, at age 81, in January 2002, she left behind more than 50 albums, and some of the most bewitching singing of the 20th century.

This was written by **Martin Churchill** of **The London Daily Telegraph**.

“Try to Always Have Fun!”

For the week of June 15th to June 21st, 2020

AROUND THE RESTAURANTS AND BARS

MONDAY



Jonathan Guzman is back at Adelita Bar & Grill in San Antonio Tlayacapan starting at **6 PM.** and you can reserve at **766-0097.**

WEDNESDAY

Don't ya dare miss out on a great couple of hours with the very talented **Jonathan Guzman** starting at **4:15 PM**. You can phone **(387) 761-0405** for reservations. And as I have said before... don't forget your camera... what a setting! The restaurant is located just at the west end of "restaurant row"... you will see the big palapa up on the cliff on the mountain side of the Carretera. Just as you round the last bend make a right!

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[Peter Pan](#)

2 hours 13 minutes duration

Available until June 21 at 1:00 CT

The musical adaptation of J.M. Barrie's classic tale stars Allison Williams as the Boy Who Wouldn't Grow Up; Academy Award winner Christopher Walken as the dastardly Captain Hook; and Taylor Louderman as the adventurous heroine Wendy Darling.



[Small Island](#)

2 hours 55 minutes

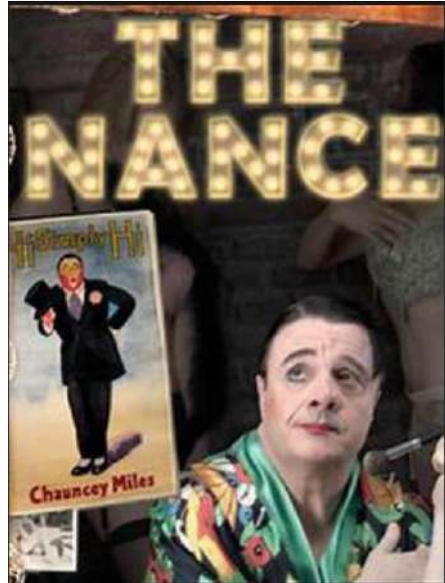
Available on demand until Thursday, June 25 at 1:00 pm CST

This epic and much-loved stage production of Andrea Levy's Orange Prize-winning was filmed live on stage during its sold-out run in 2019.

Small Island embarks on a journey from Jamaica to Britain, through the Second World War to 1948 – the year the HMT Empire Windrush docked at Tilbury.

The play follows three intricately connected stories: Hortense yearns for a new life away from rural Jamaica, Gilbert dreams of becoming a lawyer, and Queenie longs to escape her Lincolnshire roots. Hope and humanity meet stubborn reality as the play traces the tangled history between Jamaica and the UK.

A company of 40 actors were filmed live on the Olivier Theatre stage in this timely and moving story.



[The Nance](#)

Lincoln Center

2 hours 17 minutes duration

Available June 12-26

Nathan Lane gives the performance of a lifetime as Chauncey Miles, who faces a changing world and his own self-loathing in 1930s New York. The play tells the story of a headline nance (a parody of a gay man) in the twilight of New York burlesque's era, who is homosexual. Integrating burlesque sketches into his drama, Douglas Carter Beane paints the portrait of a homosexual man, living and working in the secretive and dangerous gay world of 1930s New York, whose outrageous antics on the burlesque stage stand in marked contrast to his offstage life. With a touching love story at its core, the Tony Award-nominated play is also a fond and funny tribute to the golden age of burlesque. The play received five Tony Award nominations, including a Best Actor nod for Lane. In addition, the cast boasts Tony Award-winner Cady Huffman, Lewis J. Stadlen, Jenni Barber, and Jonny Orsini.



Reasons to be Cheerful

A Raucous Musical

2 hours 3 minutes duration

Available until August 3

To date, the company's most successful show has been the **musical Reasons to be Cheerful**, a raucous raunch inspired by punk rocker Ian Dury, who died in 2000, and his band The Blockheads. It first toured in 2010, then in 2012, when it was a one-off gig at the London paralympics opening ceremony, and the show was revived again in 2017, when this performance at London's Theatre Royal Stratford East was videoed.



[The Grinning Man](#)

A Musical (from Bristol Old Vic)

Approximately 2 hours in duration

Trailer [here](#)

Available from June 26 to July 1

The critically acclaimed new musical **The Grinning Man** had a hugely successful premiere at **Bristol Old Vic** where it received nightly standing ovations in 2015 and transferred to the West End for a limited season in 2017. From Tony Award-winning director Tom Morris (*War Horse*), Kneehigh writer Carl Grose and featuring “an outstanding score” by Tim Phillips and Marc Teitler.

The musical is based on Victor Hugo's *The Man Who Laughs*. A review from The Times: "This stunning new British musical demands to be seen. I simply loved it."

A strange new act has arrived at the fairground. Who is Grinpayne and how did he get his hideous smile? Helped by an old man, a lone wolf and a blind girl, his story must be told.

The epic tale of an abandoned child with a terrible secret. A disfigured youth who is desperate to hide and a sightless girl who longs to be discovered. Let the darkness seduce you.

The hit musical *The Grinning Man* will be streamed for a week.



The Magic Flute

2 hours 34 minutes duration

Royal Opera

Available until July 3

As well as being a comedy, The Magic Flute is an expression of Mozart's profound spiritual beliefs: Enlightenment concerns with the search for wisdom and virtue are at the heart of this enchanting tale. The Magic Flute was an instant success with audiences and Mozart's supposed rival Salieri described it as an 'operone' – a great opera.

There are so many things available, many that we have written about before. Please explore the link by clicking [here](#).

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I hoped for things to pick up more over the last week but alas... no way it did.

I got out to a few places this week including Father's Day at La Cima where Jonathan Guzman was entertaining. All we can do is keep hoping for this "thing" to take a hike.

I hope you enjoyed the article about Peggy Lee... I sure did and will try and do it more and with some of the great local entertainers we have here.

I look forward to seeing you somewhere... SOON!

Regards,

Francis Dryden

PS – If you run onto any events I've missed or know of something coming up that has **LIVE ENTERTAINMENT**, please have someone from the group or the venue send me a message. Thanks for subscribing and if you wish to **unsubscribe** my e-mail address is: **francis.dryden@gmail.com**.

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