

Supplementary Notes About *Norma Deloris Egstrom*

by Iván Santiago



I. Introduction

Originally released by Capitol Records in 1972, the Peggy Lee album *Norma Deloris Egstrom from Jamestown, North Dakota* celebrated its 50th anniversary with its reissue as an expanded deluxe edition, made available on November 18, 2022. Courtesy of Universal Music Enterprises, this deluxe **golden** reissue boasts brand new remastering and a seven-track bonus program. It is being offered in two formats, one virtual (i.e., downloadable file), the other physical (i.e., compact disc). The CD comes with a 24-page booklet whose pages are dedicated to session photography and annotation.

I happen to be the author of those liner notes, for which the present page serves as an addendum. The choice to split my writing into two texts was made in the interest of maintaining the booklet's pre-determined page total. I should also point out that there is no significant amount of duplication between liner notes and addendum. The minutia saved for this webpage is just of a more supplementary nature—though by no means shallow or superfluous.

To sum up: a rich, extensive array of album information is ready at hand, and I am pleased to count with two spaces for the sharing of it. My ultimate goal is to highlight the merits of *Norma Deloris Egstrom*—an alluringly, exquisitely interpreted album, widely admired and favored among Peggy Lee fans, yet barely known to the music listening public at large.

Photography

Above: Two close-up shots of Peggy Lee—one sepia-colored, the other in full-color. Both were taken during the same photo shoot that generated the front cover of the album *Norma Deloris Egstrom from Jamestown, North Dakota*. (Look further down, toward the end of this page, for a third shot, also in color.)

II. Session Photography & Primary Sources



Photography

Above: Producer Tom Catalano (right) and arranger-conductor Artie Butler (left), in consultation during the album sessions. More dimly in view are a few of the session musicians. Only his head visible, and wearing sunglasses, a man believed to be guitarist Larry Carlton is sitting in the background, in the space between Butler and Catalano.

The chief architects behind *Norma Deloris Egstrom from Jamestown, North Dakota* (1972) were the album's coordinator (Brian Panella), producer (Tom Catalano), arranger-conductor (Artie Butler), and recording artist (Peggy Lee). All of them were interviewed for the album's semi-centennial reissue edition (2022), and are quoted at length on that edition's CD booklet.

All of them, that is, but one. Having passed away twenty years ago (2002), the recording artist could not be interviewed. Fortunately, Peggy Lee met often with the press during her lifetime, and such archival material can compensate for her present unavailability. On the matter of this particular project—her 40th original album—she made glowing remarks which we have indeed tracked down, and quoted liberally in some of the sections below.

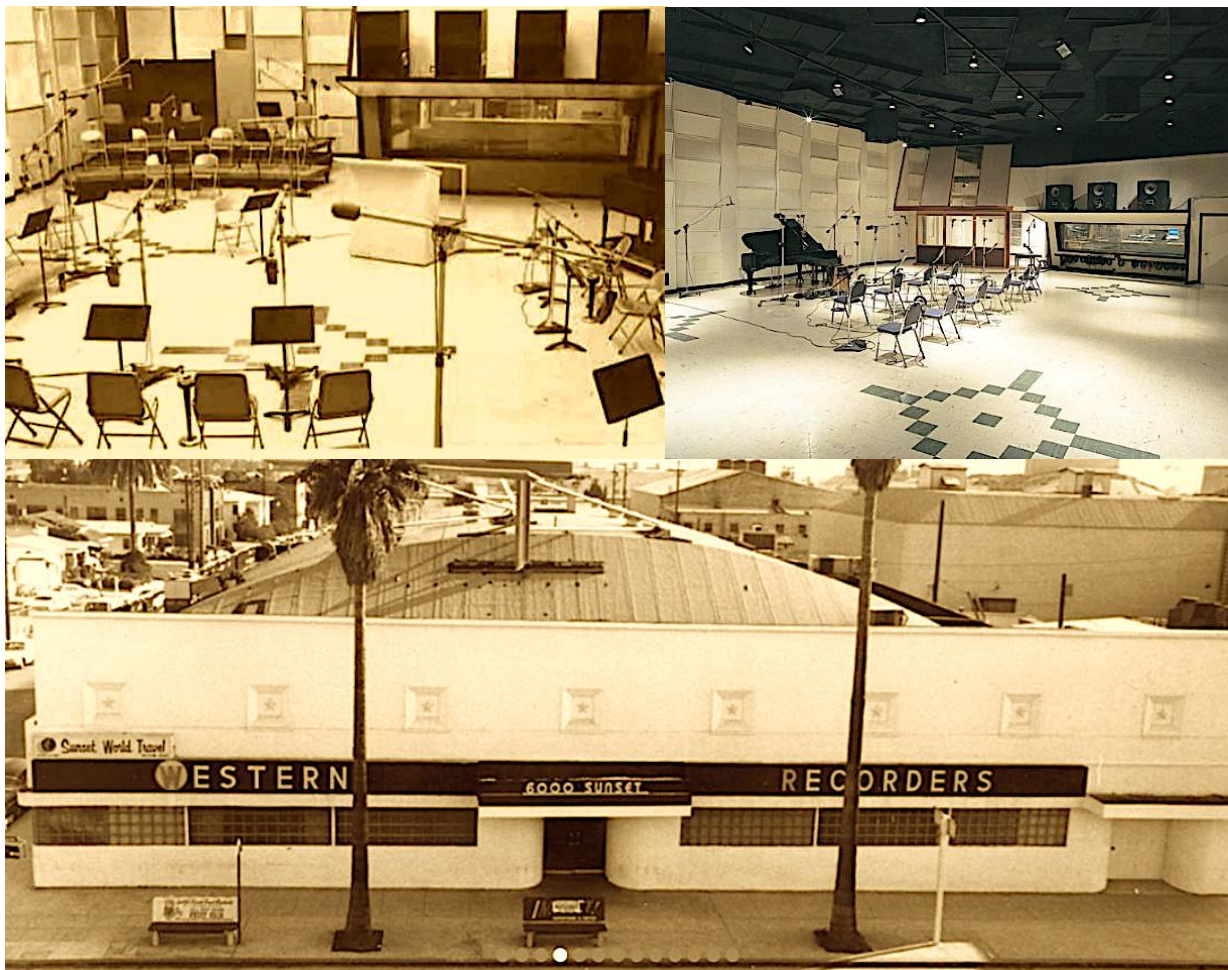


Photography

Above: Artie Butler is caught twice in the act of conducting the orchestra at the album sessions. Yet to be identified, several members of the orchestra—mostly strings players—are also visible in the background.

As for the album's musicians, efforts to contact them were also made. Two of them—Michael Omartian, Louie Shelton—kindly offered their personal perspective. While they had no specific memories to share, both musicians corroborated their involvement in the making of *Norma Deloris*. They also conveyed the sense of accomplishment generated by working for someone of Peggy Lee's stature at a very early stage of their respective, distinguished careers in music.

Supplementing the commentary quoted on the booklet of the CD, additional and appreciative remarks from some of the aforementioned personnel will be found in this webpage's next section, along with some pertinent observations from this liner annotator.



Photography

Above: The site where the *Norma Deloris Egstrom* dates were held. The location is Studio One at United Western Recorders. The top images capture the studio in two different time periods: first, as it looked in 1966—less than a year since its opening in 1965—and then as it is looking nowadays—well past its 50th year of existence.

United Western Recorders was actually a studio complex. Extending over two block-long buildings, it occupied both 6000 and 6050 addresses at Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood. The 6000 Sunset building was known as Western, the 6050 Sunset building as United. Seen in the last photo above, Western was the half which housed Studio One. Today, the complex itself is no longer in existence, but the two buildings still operate, functioning as separate recording facilities (2022). In fact, United happens to still be known as United. Western has been known as EastWest since its latest incarnation, dating back to 2009.

A. The Consummate Star

Brian Panella: I was privileged to be a part of her pre-recording process for the album. Though she had not yet heard Artie's charts, Peggy met with her brilliant rhythm section several times at her home, going over each of the songs to lock in on her vocal nuances that were her trademark over the years. She was a consummate performer.

Peggy Lee: I'm serious about my work. I've been singing for a great many years, and something in me—pride or ego or simply a debt to the audience—keeps me on a busy search for improvement. If I don't improve with each passing day and with each new song, I'll be standing still. But if I stand still, I'll actually go backward. I'd rather retire before then. (To Marshall Berges, as published by the *Los Angeles Times* on October 19, 1975.)

Tom Catalano: A star's career is the main part of their life. That's how it is, when you work with big stars. They have to be all in, hook, line and sinker ... The career always has to come first ... It's incredible that Peggy Lee was just this girl from North Dakota, and ended up with this sultry voice. I couldn't believe it. After we worked together on this album, she called me, and asked me to do another album. I couldn't ... But I would have loved to do more albums with her, and I am sad that we never got to have a drink or dinner. My professional journey would have not been complete without having this work experience. I am so happy that this album is coming out on CD now. I want it to get the attention that it didn't get initially, and that I felt it deserved. It is a monument to us all.



Photography

Above: Peggy Lee with her musicians at what is believed to be a rehearsal for her 1972 Schaefer Festival concert. It was Lee's third year appearing at the summer concert series. See Artie Butler's quote, right below.

Artie Butler: I had just done the album for her in April and May and [that summer] she asked me if I'd come to New York to conduct for her. I said, of course! That's my home turf. So we were standing on the stage at Central Park on an August night when she introduced me to the big audience, and she said, "this is my new best friend, and I think he's from your part of this world. This is Artie Butler!" And a good bunch of people—I don't know, 50, spread-out over in the audience—yelled, yo hey yo! ... Somebody even shouted out, "I went to school with him!" There I am in my hometown in front of I-don't-know-how-many people. It was a powerful moment for me. That night on that stage, I became spot-welded to Peggy. And when this woman—this magnificent singer who is one of my all-time favorites—started to sing one of my all-time favorite songs, "I'll Be Seeing You," something electric went through me. I'm crying now; it was magical.



Photography

Above: mementoes tied to the 1972 Schaefer Music Festival (a brochure, a schedule or flyer), which featured Peggy Lee in its schedule of stars performing over that summer in New York's Central Park.

Annotator: From 1967 to 1990, a major summer concert series was run in the Big Apple at bargain pricing—no higher than \$3.00 per seat. Of the series' various sponsors over the years, the longest-lasting one was the New York-based beer company F. M. Schaefer (1968-1976). Featuring between 50 and 75 artists from many a different arena (America, The Bee Gees, Three Dog Night, The Four Seasons, The Byrds, Led Zeppelin, Patti Smith, Santana, José Feliciano, Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzgerald, Billy Joel, Judy Collins, Jane Olivor, Ray Charles, Nancy Wilson, Miles Davis, Poco, Cheech & Chong, Gladys Knight & The Pips, and many more), each Schae-

fer festival season typically began in mid- or late June and ended in late August or early September. Held at the Wollman Rink in Central Park, this crowd-pleasing, beer-sponsored summer event counted with Peggy Lee's participation for three consecutive years. The last of these three concerts (scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on the evening of Wednesday, August the 9th, 1972) is the one recalled by Artie Butler in the reminiscence quoted above.

Photography

Below: A panoramic view of an audience attending a Schaefer Festival concert—artist and year unknown to me. Details about the Peggy Lee picture are also sketchy, but I believe it to have been taken at the 1971 iteration of the festival.



B. The Mystery Singer

Artie Butler: Tommy called me up before one of these [April 1972] sessions to tell me that another singer wanted to attend a date. "She's a big fan of Peggy's," he explained, "and wants to meet her." In come this lady, dressed very informally, hair barely combed. Tommy introduced her to us. Peggy was very gracious to her, and talked a little bit with her after the session. The next couple of days she came in maybe once more, as she wanted to meet and talk some more with Peggy. She was a huge fan of Peggy, and her mother was also a huge fan. This was all a nice ice-breaker because I was gonna record with her shortly. Later on she confessed to me, "I was scared sh*t meeting with Peggy." I asked her why. "Well, that's everything I wanna be," she blurted out. "I was talking to the top tier." "How did she treat you?," I inquired. "Very nicely," she told me.

Annotator: Career-wise, the singer in question had little of which to be afraid. What's more, the 30-year-old lady—who happened to be in her first trimester of pregnancy at the time of this meeting with the 51-year-old Lee—would soon be taking on the mantle of her role model ... Would the reader care to guess the name of this seventies act, who is still well remembered today? Additional sets of clues will be supplied in the next two paragraphs, along with more information on *Norma Deloris* and Peggy Lee.

For the remainder of 1972, the mystery singer enjoyed a highly successful year during which she variously spawned a big hit, a baby boy, and the first album of hers to reach the top twenty. The top 20 album was, incidentally, a collaborative effort from the dream team of Tom Catalano, Artie Butler and Armin Steiner. Jointly undertaken by them during the second half of 1972, this project was essentially the team's follow-up to *Norma Deloris Egstrom*. "She sings well, with a voice startlingly reminiscent of the cool sound of that notorious glamour symbol Peggy Lee," *The New York Times*' John J. O'Connor would muse one year later, while in the process of reviewing the summertime TV show that the then-popular mystery singer had further landed.

The *Norma Deloris Egstrom* dates attended by the mystery singer began on April 24 and lasted until April 28, 1972. She was also doing Capitol work on the very day before the first of these dates. To be more specific, the young vocalist was re-recording a self-penned song that would be commercially issued later that year. It was the song which skyrocketed her career, and made her the next female singer to give a #1 hit single to Capitol Records ... Here is one final clue about this mystery singer—a clue connecting her chartbuster hit to a Peggy Lee staple: "I Am a Woman," a 1962 pop hit for Lee, happens to bear a thematic similarity to the mystery artist's popular 1972 hit. The former was Peggy Lee's anthem of feminine self-affirmation for the 1960s, the latter an anthem of feminist affirmation for the 1970s—and for the ages.



Photography

Above: A visual display of this section's mystery singer. First is a screenshot from her 1975 TV special, named after her famous hit. Next is the front cover of her 1974 album *Love Song For Jeffrey*, whose title pays loving homage to the aforementioned baby boy, born in late 1972. Last is the artwork of an album of hers that also happened to be released in late 1972, and which bears the same title as the bestselling hit. Both albums were produced by Tom Catalano, arranged by Artie Butler, and engineered by Armin Steiner.

The career-making 1972 hit to which I have been referring is, of course, "I Am Woman" and the mystery hitmaker is its original interpreter, Helen Reddy. (Lest my comparisons and parallels mislead the reader, it should be clarified that, though a staple of her repertoire, "I'm a Woman" was only a mid-sized *Hot 100* hit for Lee, and therefore far from the chart topper that "I Am Woman" became for Reddy. However, the parallels between the two sets of lyrics and their singers are notable.

There are also parallels in their respective career trajectories at Capitol. Back in the forties, Peggy Lee had gifted Capitol with a huge #1 single of her own making, just like Helen Reddy would do in the seventies. Lee's self-penned chart topper, a novelty tune titled "Mañana," ranked high among Capitol's top sellers for not only the year of 1948 but also the entire 1940s—a decade during which the singing star, then in her twenties, scored roughly 20 top twenty hits. (While Lee reached her all-time peak in national popularity at that time, she did enjoy additional peaks in the 1950s and 1960s, as well as continuous critical acclaim into the 1990s.)

C. The Great Collaborators

Louie Shelton (album's guitarist): I remember the sessions very well. The few times we got to record with such great and legendary artists such as Peggy Lee was such an honour and memorable experience. And to share it with top LA session musicians such as Earl Palmer and Larry Carlton was, as they say, the icing on the cake.

Artie Butler: My favorite cuts from Peggy's album are, in no particular order, "Love Song," "A Song for You," and the medley of "I'll Be Seeing You" and "The More I See You." The secret behind my work for this album—and behind much of my work—is knowing when to leave out and then pick the plums. The first thing I bring into a project is an eraser. I throw out all the nonsense and get to the lyric and the melody and the basic chords. But the greatest of the album's secrets was not Artie Butler, but Peggy Lee.

Tom Catalano: A word about Armin Steiner. He is the most wonderful engineer that God put on this earth. He used to be a violinist. He performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and has engineered a lot of orchestral recordings, and film and television scores ... We're still really good friends. He did an incredible job on the album.

Photography

Below: In his above-quoted commentary, Tom Catalano justly heaps praise on record engineer Armin Steiner. It is only fitting for us to return the favor (on both Steiner's behalf and our own) by conversely praising the top-notch quality of Catalano's work as a producer. Having already highlighted his Capitol collaborations with Peggy Lee and Helen Reddy, we will now turn to two of his other notable collaborations. Herein, Catalano is first seen with Anne Murray, the female singer for whom he produced the 1976 Capitol LP *Keeping In Touch* (a top 30 country album chart maker). Next, we see Catalano with Neil Diamond, the male singer for whom he did his most celebrated and extensive work (at Capitol as well as other labels). The gold certification of the 1972 album *Moods* is the happy occasion for these pictures, in which they are joined by MCA marketing executive Rick Frio. *Moods* was Catalano's fifth consecutive original production to score a platinum or gold disc for Diamond; still in the wings was a sixth release (1974).



III. Sounds of the Seventies

The 1972 album *Norma Deloris Egstrom* is primarily composed of contemporary material. Only three of the ten tracks are vintage numbers dating back to the 1930s and 1940s. All the other numbers were written between 1969 and 1972. To casual listeners who may perceive Lee solely as a devotee of the Great American Songbook, this album's large amount of 1970s material may seem askew, even questionable: could she have been forced into singing such latter-day tunes? Not at all. Lee welcomed new material—often with open arms. Below is the artist's basic take on the matter, and on the music of the seventies. (All quotes, unless otherwise indicated, directly uttered by Peggy Lee.)

I like variety; sameness bores me. (As published by the *Chicago Daily News* on May 1, 1970.)



Photography

Featured throughout this particular section is an array of *Norma Deloris Egstrom From Jamestown, North Dakota* memorabilia. We begin with several copies of the LP. Above: The original US vinyl (ST-11077) can be found in two pressings, one red and the other green. The color difference is probably an indication of production work carried out in at least two different plants. At that point in time (1972), Capitol was using three pressing plants (Los Angeles, California; Jacksonville, Illinois; Winchester, Virginia), and had just closed a fourth one (Scranton, Pennsylvania). Of the two pictured variants, the red-labeled vinyl is the most widely found in the US nation, although my own individual experience as a New Englander has paradoxically resulted in more green-label sightings. Other than the different coloring, the look and sound of the two pressings is just about identical.

There was a period of several months [in the sixties] when ... I couldn't find anything I could relate to because those numbers were built around the groups ... Then not only did the music change and get refined, but the lyrics too became more poetic than they had ever been. I think there is some very beautiful music being written now—and it is written with everything built in: you cannot change much and you just have to work your way into the song. (To Peter Fiddick, as published by *The Guardian* on June 20, 1970.)

[T]here's so much I like about the new music. I'm amazed at how fresh and colorful, and also how prolific, some of the writers are today. (To Leonard Feather, as published by the *Los Angeles Times* on March 3, 1971.)

In addition to loving people like Sinatra and Tony Bennett and Carmen McRae, I love to hear Carole King and Carly Simon and Leon Russell. I like variety. I listen to Feliciano, Creedence Clearwater, Sergio Mendes, Bread, the Carpenters, Chicago, Cannonball Adderley. A lot of different people. (To an unidentified "Talk of the Town" columnist, as published by *The New Yorker* on March 18, 1972.)



Photography

In addition to the previously discussed US pressings of the LP, there was also one LP reissue (year unknown to me, and not pictured here), distinguishable from the original pressings because of its slight differences in both catalogue number (SW-11077) and color label (a shade greener than the original). The green color was additionally favored for the foreign editions of the LP, including the Japanese one (ECP-80634), whose front cover is pictured right above.

Rock music tore everything apart, but it also opened the path for new freedom in writing. Songs then became a very human way of talking, rather than rhyming, rather than the old eight-bar, eight-bar sameness. Today there are so many gifted writers—Carly Simon, James Taylor, Elton John, David Gates, Leon Russell, Kris Kristofferson—so many. (To Shaun Considine, as published by *After Dark* in June 1974.)

Good things always stay. There will be clothing fads ... but the classic lines remain the same. I think it's the same with music [Rodgers and Hammerstein, Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Jerome Kern, even the more contemporary Michel Legrand] ... [Quite a few years ago,] I began to be very interested in a lot of the contemporary writers, and did some of their things so early that they're just now becoming standards. I found that their writing was becoming freer and more colorful ... [O]ften with progress we have an upheaval. If you are going to repair a highway, you have to have some of those big machines to tear it all up and start over again ... I've talked to people like [rock superstars] Elton John and Alice Cooper. They're the nicest people, and intelligent, and have great respect for jazz and classical musicians. And there seems to be a trend toward studying. Several of the young men in my orchestra are Julliard graduates, or come from other fine music schools. (To David Sterritt, as published by *The Christian Science Monitor* on December 2, 1975.)

HAVE YOU SEEN ...

**Norma Deloris Egstrom
from Jamestown, No. Dakota**

Norma Deloris Egstrom
from Jamestown, No. Dakota
PEGGY LEE



ST-11077 - Also Available on Tape

Love Song; Razor (Love Me As I Am);
When I Found You; A Song For You; It
Takes Too Long To Learn To Live Alone;
Superstar; Just For A Thrill; Someone Who
Cares; The More I See You; I'll Be Seeing
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From Jamestown, North Dakota**

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WORLD'S LARGEST SELECTION OF RECORDS & TAPES

Photography

Above: two pieces of commercial advertisement on the album's behalf, both published in July of 1972 (*Norma Deloris Egstrom*'s actual street release month). The second advertisement—put together by the Manhattan-based King Carol record store chain, now defunct of course)—reveals that the LP was retailing at \$3.77, the 8-track and cassette tapes at \$4.99 each.

Well, I think these, these are the days ... I think that any period—any kind of music during a period of time—that is good, that's the good old days. I mean, we certainly can't put aside Porter, Gershwin, Rodgers & Hart, and so forth ... [When rock music and The Beatles arrived,] The Beatles didn't bother me. They were rather inspirational. I loved them ... But the first acid hard rock—uuh, I thought we had been attacked. Ha! I thought there was no place for me in the world. But gradually, as [rock] has refined, and the musicians in that persuasion have started to study music and take more interest ... I think they are doing some very interesting things. (In answer to a query about "the gold old days," posed by interviewer Allan Hargreaves, of the Thames Channel's *Today* show. Telecast in early March 1977.)

Right now there is a resurgence of good songwriting. It's different, but it's awfully good. We have not come up with another Rodgers and Hart, Cole Porter, Jerome Kern or Gershwin. But some of the new writers are so good. I'm thinking of people like David Gates, Peter Allen, Randy Newman and Paul Williams. They are excellent. (To Reginald Brace, as published by *The Yorkshire Post* on March 19, 1977.)

(The following is an excerpt from a *New York Post* article and review of a Waldorf-Astoria Hotel concert appearance on March 20, 1972, just one month before the *Norma Deloris Egstrom* album sessions.) All in all, she was onstage an hour and ten minutes. She sang 17 songs and an encore, not bad for a lady of 52 who has to travel around with an oxygen tank ... She sang James Taylor's "Fire and Rain," George Harrison's "My Sweet Lord," Carole King's "I Feel the Earth Move" and a medley of her own hits, including "Why Don't You Do Right?," "Is That All There Is?" and "Fever." She recited poetry of Carl Sandburg and Lois Wyse and she asked for requests ... She sang "Sing a Rainbow" and she sang "I Love Being Here with You." She sang like a bitch.

Photography

Besides vinyl disc, the two other configurations on which Capitol originally released *Norma Deloris Egstrom From Jamestown, North Dakota* were 8-track cartridge (8XT 11077) and cassette tape (TC ST-11077). Both of those configurations are pictured below.



IV. Assessing the Album's Reception & Promotion

A. Reception (Dashed Hopes)

Peggy Lee: Dear Tom, you are a super producer and if the public likes what you did as well as I do, we should have a big hit. (Telegram sent to album producer Tom Catalano on July 3, 1972. Readers already acquainted with my liner notes for the *Norma Deloris Egstrom* CD should pay heed to Lee's complimentary use of the designation *super producer*—possibly a playful callback to Catalano's originally intended title for her album.)

Peggy Lee: Everyone worked very diligently [on this album], with hearts full, you know, and it was a big disappointment that ... it just happened to get ... sort of lost [in the middle of a Capitol management shuffle], and as many as two or three years later people would say, "I just heard a brand new album of yours," and I would say, "That isn't brand new." (To Fred Hall, as published in his *Dialogues in Swing*, 1989)

David DiCarlo (music fan, and himself a vocalist, in a message posted online in 2012): I had the unforgettable experience of being able to tell Miss Lee that the LP "Just for a Thrill" is from was a 'pop masterpiece'...I shall never forget her smiling eyes, and how they lit up that NYC street...This incredible track is but one of several killers on it, including my favorite rendition of "I'll Be Seeing You."

Photography

Below: A Capitol advertisement, for which the record company's PR team re-purposed a Peggy Lee telegram. Sent to Tom Catalano, the telegram's text has already been quoted above. For this ad, which was published in contemporaneous trade magazines, Capitol featured the telegram along with a LP copy and the label's own simple but enthusiastic approval coda: "P.S. Dear Tom, We think so too!"



B. Corporate Promotion (Capitol)

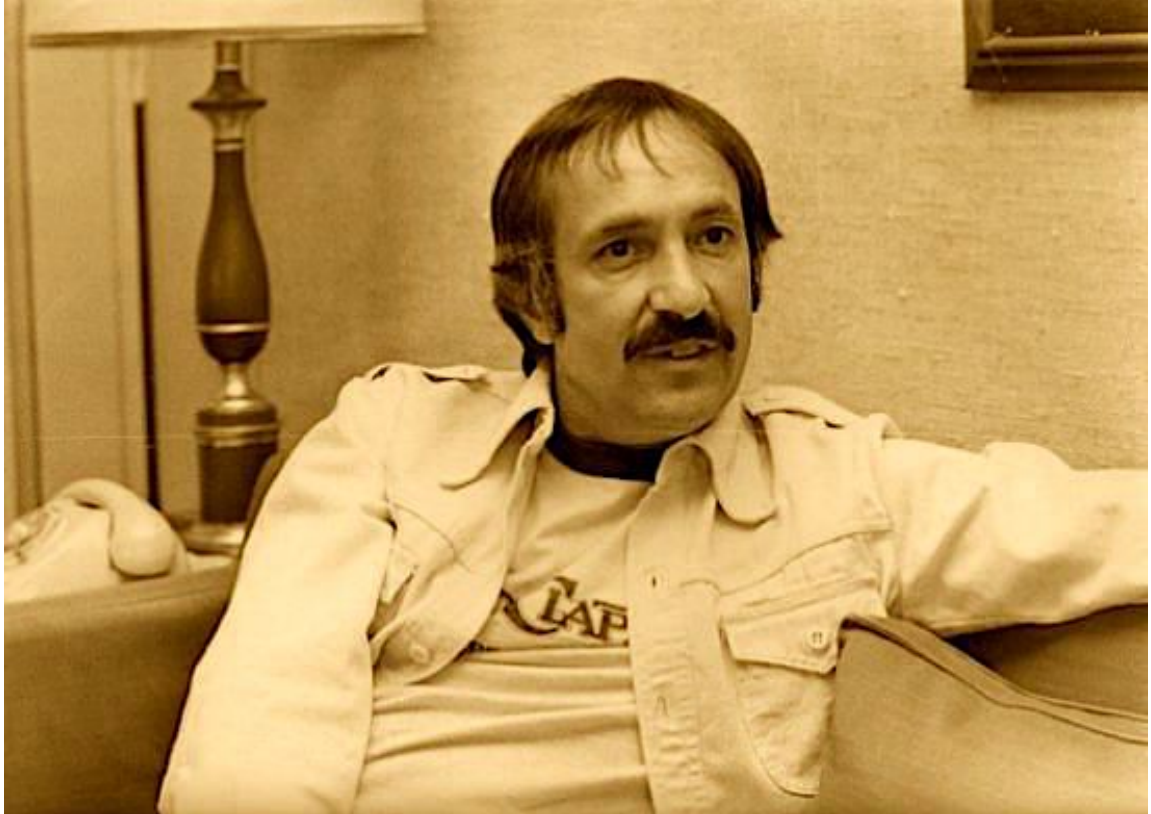
Brian Panella: At Capitol, the #1 one format guy for radio and the charts was a guy named Al Coury. He had worked with me back in Boston, during my younger years. So we knew each other like peas in a pod. He was the guy you wanted in your corner when you were releasing an album or a single because his job was to go to the radio stations and get the record played.

Annotator: Coury and Capitol definitely did promotion for *Norma Deloris Egstrom*. Ads featuring the album were published on the music trade publications of the day. What's more, *Norma Deloris Egstrom* was very favorably reviewed in all of them: "Neil Diamond producer Tommy Catalano teams with the exceptional Peggy Lee in one of her most 'today' commercial packages of all time" (*Billboard*); "once again Peggy Lee serves notice that when it comes to lady singers, she is among the finest" (*Cashbox*); in her "finest album in many years ... Ms. Lee offers wonderful interpretations of some of the tastiest pieces of contemporary pop music" (*Record World*).

Annotator (continued): Additionally, Capitol released a lead-off single, which Coury successfully landed at adult contemporary radio stations across the nation. Both the album and the single charted, making it evident that *Norma Deloris* was enjoying some degree of radio airplay around the time of its release. However, the amount of airplay does not seem to have translated into significant sales. At *Billboard*, the album spent five weeks in the *Bubbling Under the Top LP's* chart, holding on to its #203 peak for three issues (September 2 to 16, 1972). The album's showing was comparatively better at *Cashbox*, though still too distant from any remarkable position: a #147 peak on the September 2, 1972 issue, and a total of two weeks on that trade periodical's *Top 100 Albums, 101 to 150* chart.

Photography

Below: A group shot captures Peggy Lee and company in the act of listening to playback from one of the *Norma Deloris Egstrom* sessions. The gentlemen with her are, from left to right, Capitol president Bhaskar Menon, EMI's pop repertoire development manager Frank C. Chalmers, Lee manager Brian Panella (standing next to Chalmers), Capitol in-house engineer Carson Taylor (in the back), and (in front of Taylor) Al Coury. The solo image is also a shot of Coury, who was a vice-president of marketing, sales and promotion for Capitol Records during the 1970s. This solo shot probably dates from the late 1970s or the early 1980s. As for the date of the group photo, it is of course from late April of 1972, but details such as the location in view remain uncertain. (A caption is absent, and there is no written information attached.) The likeliest possibility is a control room at United Western—where the *Norma Deloris* sessions were held. However, the company kept by Lee allows for the alternate, lesser possibility of a Capitol control room. (My thanks to my friend Jordan Taylor for kindly pointing out that the bespectacled man is likely to be Carson Taylor, typically busy in the background of several extant control room photos.)



C. Artistic Promotion (Peggy Lee)

Annotator: Along with Capitol and Courty, Lee actively contributed to the promotional effort, too. She pointedly sang several of the album's cuts during guest appearances in nationally watched TV programs of the seventies, such as *The Carol Burnett Show* and *The Bobby Darin Show*. (Further specifics on those appearances will be found below, under the *Songs* sections.) And that was not all.

Annotator (continued): For her mass-attended 1972 summer concerts at Central Park, Lee sang almost the entire album onstage—a procedure which she is not known to have followed for any previous album. The artist's own words, extant from one of those concerts at the park, offer further evidence of her firm belief in the LP's merits, and her intent on promoting it to mass audiences. After singing four album numbers in a row ("Love Song" / "A Song for You" / "Razor" / "When I Found You"), Lee makes the following announcement from the stage: "All of the songs you just heard are from my grand new album called *Norma Deloris Egstrom from Jamestown, North Dakota*. And we are going to get back to Norma. But [first], I had the great pleasure—it makes me happy, that the arranger who made all these marvelous arrangements in that album is here tonight and I can't see him [from here] but his name is Artie Butler. And [he] should take a bow. Artie, wherever you are!" Later, during the second portion of this concert, she indeed sings more songs from the album—among them, "It Takes Too Long to Learn to Live Alone" and, of course, the closer, "I'll Be Seeing You."

Annotator (continued): As late as two summers later (1974), Lee was still giving heavy promotion to the album. At that particular time, the promotion manifested itself in the form of a high-profile concert appearance with Arthur Fiedler and his Boston Pops, for which she sang four of the songs found on the LP ("Love Song," "When I Found You," "The More I See You," "I'll Be Seeing You"). Audiences responded enthusiastically and the reviews were glowing. By then, the album was a forgotten thing of the past, though. (Watching fans kept fond, vivid concert memories for decades to come, too.)

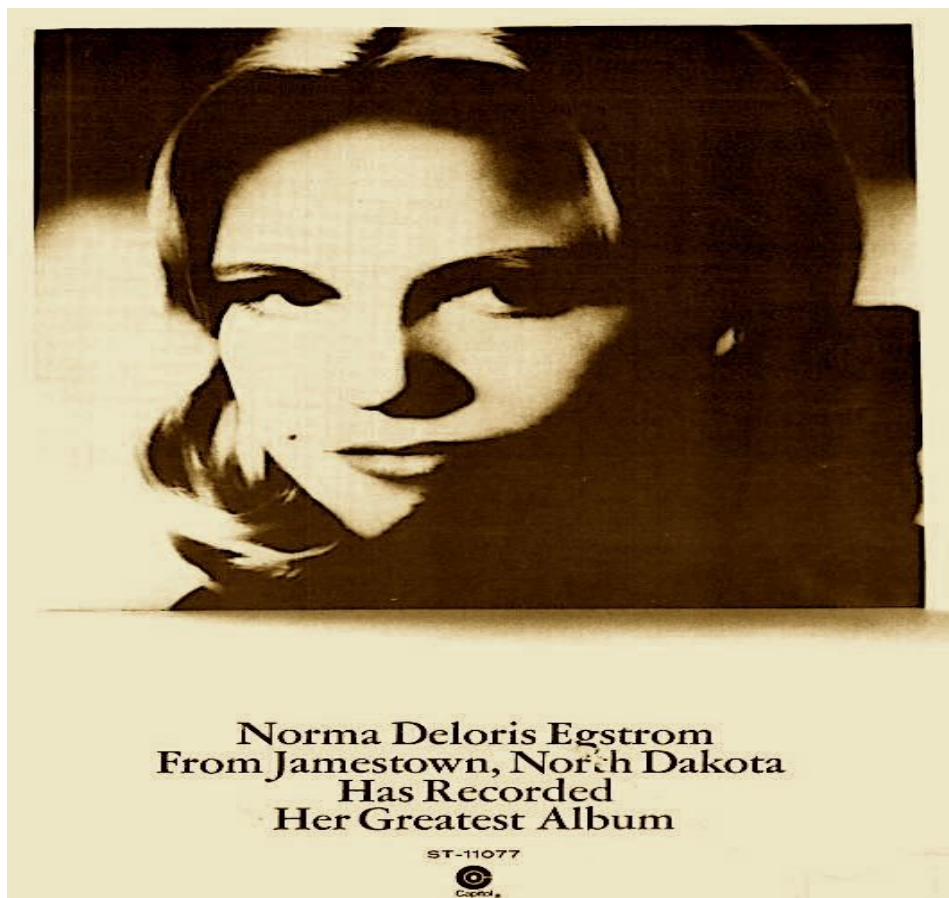
Photography

Below: More April 1972 shots at what might be a United Western control room. The first photo finds the participants in the act of meeting and greeting. The identity of the bearded gentleman being saluted by Lee remains unknown to me. Concurrently, Chalmers is seen greeting producer Tom Catalano, while Bhaskar Menon stands in-between. In the absence of captions, we can speculate about the scenario being caught in this photo: one party (Chalmers, Menon, bearded gentleman) could have just arrived while the other party (Catalano, Lee, individuals unseen) had been waiting in in the room. In the second photo, the group is once again caught as they listen to *Norma Deloris* tape playback. Catalano, previously obscured from view by Lee's position in the foreground, is fully visible on this second time around.



D. Assessment (Shuffle And Chaffing)

Annotator: In theory, the caliber of Lee's, Coury's and Capitol's promotional efforts should have sufficed to bring widespread attention to the album. In practice, chance and circumstance might have combined to require a heavier amount of promotion. Notwithstanding Lee's own affinity and ease with the material, a generational gap must have weighed heavily on the album's potential for wide dissemination—or lack thereof. Having reached her fifties, she was no longer equipped to attract the fickle attention of the teenagers and young adults who made the bulk of the buying public. Middle-age female artists were not part of the mainstream poll posed to garner massive sales and national attention—not without the trigger of an attention-grabbing hit (e.g., "Is That All There Is," from a couple of years earlier) or an attention-grabbing headline (such as, say, the selection of *Super Bitch*, or some other shocking misnomer, for the album's title).



Photography

Above: Trade advertisement, released by Capitol Records on the album's behalf.

Annotator (continued): Over the years, fans of the singer have also voiced misgivings about Capitol's strategy to leave the name *Peggy Lee* out of the album's front and back jacket. (The name was featured, however, on the spine of the album's jacket, and on the logo of the vinyl disc.) Mention of the singer's professional name was similarly skipped from some of the aforementioned promotional ads. Capitol was presumably banking on the dubious assumption that Lee would be instantly recognizable to the public as they looked at the album jacket and publicity ads. Instead, the omission probably prevented some potential customers from realizing that this was new product from the established singer. Casual adult buyers probably needed a clearer cue than the singer's birth name.

Annotator (continued): Capitol's own waning interest in artists of Lee's vintage is a circumstantial issue to factor into consideration. By 1972, Peggy Lee was a *rara avis* in the company's nest. The label had long-ago let go of all the other female singers who had been signed back in the 1940s. Even the few male counterparts still around could be counted with the fingers of one hand.

Brian Panella: By then Capitol was more interested than ever in hard rock, punk rock, all of that stuff. The money was in rock 'n' roll, and the standards-singing artists were being shuffled aside ... Also, in many situations, whom do you know means a lot more than what you know. And Peggy no longer had someone like me, who had been constantly in there, at Capitol, on the lookout for her.

Annotator (continued): Panella and Lee would unfortunately part ways within a year of the making of the album. The end of this relationship had a detrimental effect on Lee's tenure because, during this late period of her Capitol career, Panella was her strongest liaison to the label. Eager and gregarious, he was clearly liked within the premises. Panella was also closer in age to the movers and shakers who were ascending to the upper echelons of the company, being two decades younger than Lee. Last but not least, he had the benefit of ample internal experience. (Before accepting Lee's offer to work exclusively for her, Panella had been serving as East Coast A&R Manager for Capitol, and earlier than that, as a Capitol Divisional Promotional Manager and a New England Promotion Manager.)

Photography

Below: album reviews from entertainment trade magazines (*Billboard*, *Cashbox*, *Record World*).



POP

PEGGY LEE—

Norma Delores Egstrom From
Jamestown, North Dakota.
Capitol ST 11077

Producer Tommy Catalano (Neil Diamond) teams with the exceptional Peggy Lee in one of her most "today" commercial packages of all time! Top cuts include "Love Me," "A Song for You," "Superstar" and "It Takes Too Long to Learn to Live Alone." Her segue from "The More I See You," to "I'll Be Seeing You," is brilliant as is her performance of "Someone Who Cares."



NORMA DELORIS EGSTROM FROM JAMESTOWN, NORTH DAKOTA—Peggy Lee—Capitol ST-11077

Norma Deloris has come a long way from Jamestown, N. D. And records like this one are the reason why. Once again Peggy Lee serves notice that when it comes to lady singers, she is among the finest. Dipping into the song catalogs of Leon Russell, Alex Harvey and Lesley Duncan, she comes up shining. Her treatment of "Just For A Thrill" is pure magic. Ten selections in all—each with something to distinguish it—namely the extraordinary talent of Peggy Lee. Should be one of her biggest albums.

NORMA DELORIS EGSTROM FROM JAMESTOWN, NORTH DAKOTA

PEGGY LEE—Capitol ST-11077

Easily, this is Peggy Lee's finest album in many years. Impeccably choosing her material, Ms. Lee offers wonderful interpretations of some of the tastiest pieces of contemporary pop music. Obvious choices for a single include "Razor," "Someone Who Cares" and "A Song For You." Real fine.



V. Songs

Universal's expanded edition of *Norma Deloris Egstrom from Jamestown, North Dakota* (2022) features a total of 17 tracks and, in its CD format, a 24-page booklet. Although the tracks receive ample coverage in the booklet, I believe that there is still more to be said about all of them. Accordingly, the remainder of this page gathers additional track minutia of potential interest to album lovers and music fans in general.



Photography

Above: The back cover of the 2022 CD *Norma Deloris Egstrom From Jamestown, North Dakota (Expanded Edition)* lists all the tracks included in this commemorative 50th anniversary release.

1. Love Song

The album's opener also served as its lead-off single. Lee's "Love Song" received a fair amount of airplay in the adult-oriented radio stations of the day, thereby entering the specialized lists which tabulated those stations' activity. In *Billboard's Top 40 Easy Listening*, her "Love Song" made its debut during the week of October 7, 1972. It stayed in the lower rungs of that chart for the whole month, reaching a #34 peak. Lee's interpretation also reached the airwaves of Canada, where it actually had a better chart showing. According to the November 18, 1972 issue of *RPM Weekly*, it spent five weeks on the Canadian *Contemporary Adult* chart, scoring a #21 peak.



Photography

Above: Two incarnations of the same Peggy Lee single. The first image shows the original US edition (#3449), released by Capitol in September 1972. The second image belongs to the Australian incarnation (CP-10044), released in November 1972.

Below: More "Love Song" memorabilia. Two pieces of sheet music, both released in the United Kingdom and both bearing 1971 copyright dates. That copyright date probably applies to the sheet's content (i.e., the musical notation), rather than being indicative of the publication year. The sheet with Peggy Lee on the cover must be from no earlier than 1972.



Below: Before singers such as Peggy Lee recorded "Love Song" in the United States, the tune made its record debut in the United Kingdom. The two key artists behind those debut versions were Elton John and Lesley Duncan. John originally recorded "Love Song" for his 1970 album *Tumbleweed Connection*. On that version, the background vocals behind John are sung by the tune's composer, Lesley Duncan. After that 1970 appearance on LP, this same version went on to be issued by John's label on the single pictured herein (1971).

A few more years later, Elton John taped a concert version (1974), too. Duncan was present on this second round as well, for which she was more properly billed as his duet partner. That live duet remained in the can for two years. It finally came out as part of the 1976 John album *Here And There*, as well as on a concurrent single. Neither of John's singles (1971, 1976) release charted. Peggy Lee's 1972 single of "Love Song" was the one to enjoy radio airplay and chart action, at least in American Adult Contemporary markets. Ultimately, though, the number became known to the public at large due to its inclusion in *Here And There*--a top ten album entry on both sides of the pond.



Above (continued): In addition to the duets with Elton John, Lesley Duncan recorded two versions of "Love song on her own. Both were released on 45 rpm as well. One of those releases is pictured in the second image.

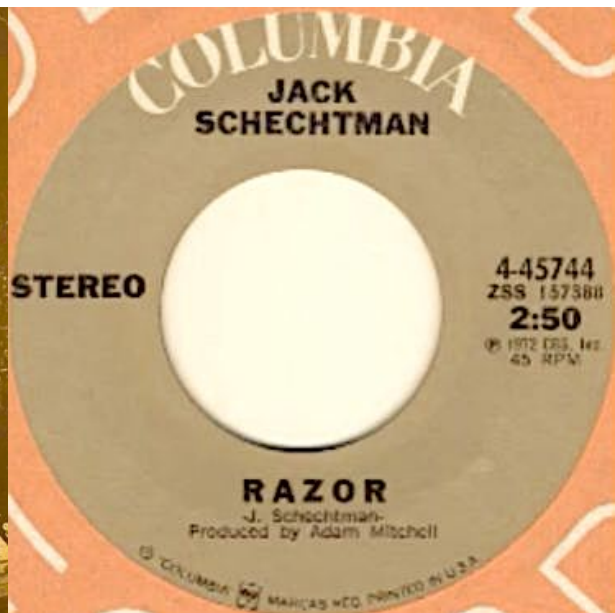
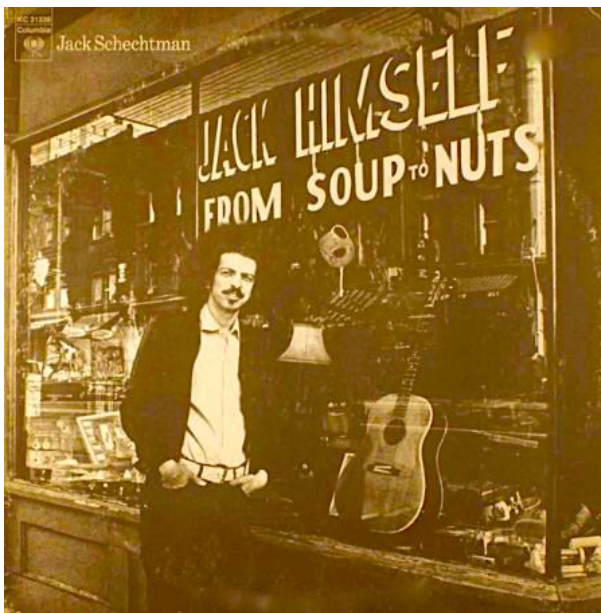
Duncan's composition of "Love Song" actually dates back to 1969. Her earliest recording (1969) was issued as a B side by British RCA, the label to which she was signed at the time. Then, following her signing of a new contract with CBS (1970), she re-recorded the number for issue as the A side of the above-shown single, which was pressed in not only Europe but also America (on the CBS subsidiary Date, and featuring a different flip side). Previously known only as a singles artist (and, more widely, as a background vocalist), Duncan then went on to release her debut album, *Sing Children Sing* (1971). Her CBS re-recording of "Love Song" was incorporated to that album, too.

For the benefit of collectors, I should clarify that the two images just discussed feature the French pressings of John's and Duncan's respective singles. (Both singles were first issued in these artists' country of birth.)

2. Razor

Word of mouth among fans—both today and in previous decades—points to a general perception of "Razor" as a remarkably suitable song for Lee. Some listeners hear echoes of "Fever." (This listener does not, but understands how other minds might register the interpretation as being cut from the same cloth. The singer certainly gives the lyric that languid yet lavish treatment that is all hers.)

Capitol released only one 45-rpm single in support of the *Norma Deloris Egstrom* LP ("Love Song/Someone Who Cares"). If the album (or its lead-off single) had managed to garner mainstream attention, "Razor" would have been one of the next two numbers to receive strongest consideration for a single. The other strong candidate would have been "When I Found You." (Lee reprised the latter on several opportune occasions, including a pair of early 1973 television guest



spots, on the Carol Burnett and Bobby Darin variety shows.) Those two tunes would have probably made for an attractive second single.

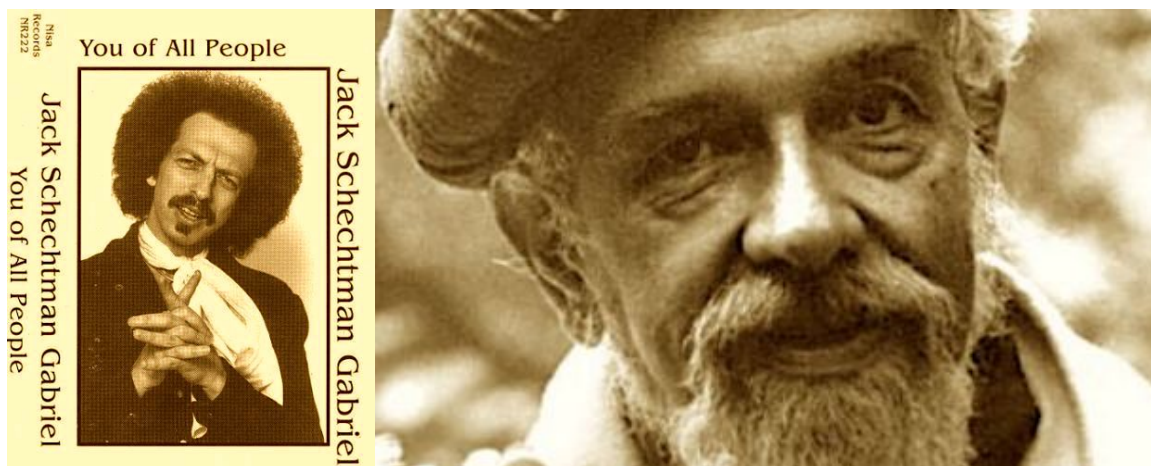
Photography

Above: American singer-songwriter Jack Schechtman released his earliest records in Canada, where he was living in the 1960s and 1970s. Containing his composition "Razor," Schechtman's debut album (first image) was accordingly issued by Columbia in not only the United States but also Canada. This happened at some point in 1972—possibly during the first half of the year. Incidentally, the front cover of this LP would seem to suggest that the album is called *Jack Himself* (or even *From Soups To Nuts*), but the vinyl identifies itself as simply *Jack Schechtman*. Elsewhere the album is similarly listed as an eponymous release, too.

Columbia also turned "Razor" into the B side of a single released in November of 1972 (second image). It was in-between those two Columbia/Schechtman turns that the song enjoyed a Capitol showing as part of the album *Norma Deloris Egstrom*, which was an early July, 1972 release.

Below: In 1991, Jack Schechtman reissued his debut album on his own label, in cassette configuration (first image). He retitled it *You Of All People*, after the album's opening song.

Last image: Since the late 1980s, this singer-songwriter has been more commonly known as rabbi Jack Gabriel. Well past his secular days in the music industry, he has continued to record in a more religious vein.



3. When I Found You

As already stated in the notes for the CD *Norma Deloris Egstrom*, "When I Found You" was a brand-new song when Peggy Lee recorded it for these April 1972 sessions. Then, shortly afterwards, the tune was adopted by female impersonator Jim Bailey. Lee's album came in June, Bailey's in November. Issued by United Artists, it was Bailey's debut LP (arranged, in part, by Artie Butler). United Artists additionally picked "When I Found You" for issue on a 45-rpm single.

Back then, Bailey had only recently added Lee to his repertoire of what he called gender illusions. He had gone as far as impersonating her in a 1971 episode of Ed Sullivan's TV show, during which he sang a medley of her hits that would also be reprised in his debut album. The sight of that televised impersonation had left Lee chagrined and unhappy at the impersonator. Her outlook changed once she met Bailey, around 1974. Shortly thereafter, she would describe him to the press as "a very sincere person" and "brilliant performer."

Photography

Screenshots of Peggy Lee performing "When I Found You" during an episode of *The Carol Burnett Show* that aired on March 17, 1973.



4. A Song for You

As also pointed out in the CD's notes, it was once proclaimed by a *Newsday* reviewer that no other number expressed the secret of Lee's singing success as splendidly as "A Song for You." The secret, as revealed by that reviewer: "Even if there are 10,000 people watching, once she starts to sing, the other 9,999 vanish somewhere."



This vanishing effect is at its most intense in one of Lee's televised interpretations of the song, for which she sings portions of the number amidst total darkness (*The Carol Burnett Show*, 1972). At the outset of the performance, we hear the inexorable tick tock of Time while everything onscreen is rendered invisible—everything but a barely visible Lee and a constellation of tiny lights, looking like distant, dimly shining stars on a night sky. And then, from deep within this rarified atmosphere, in comes the sound waves of a flowing voice, lost in the stars.

Photography

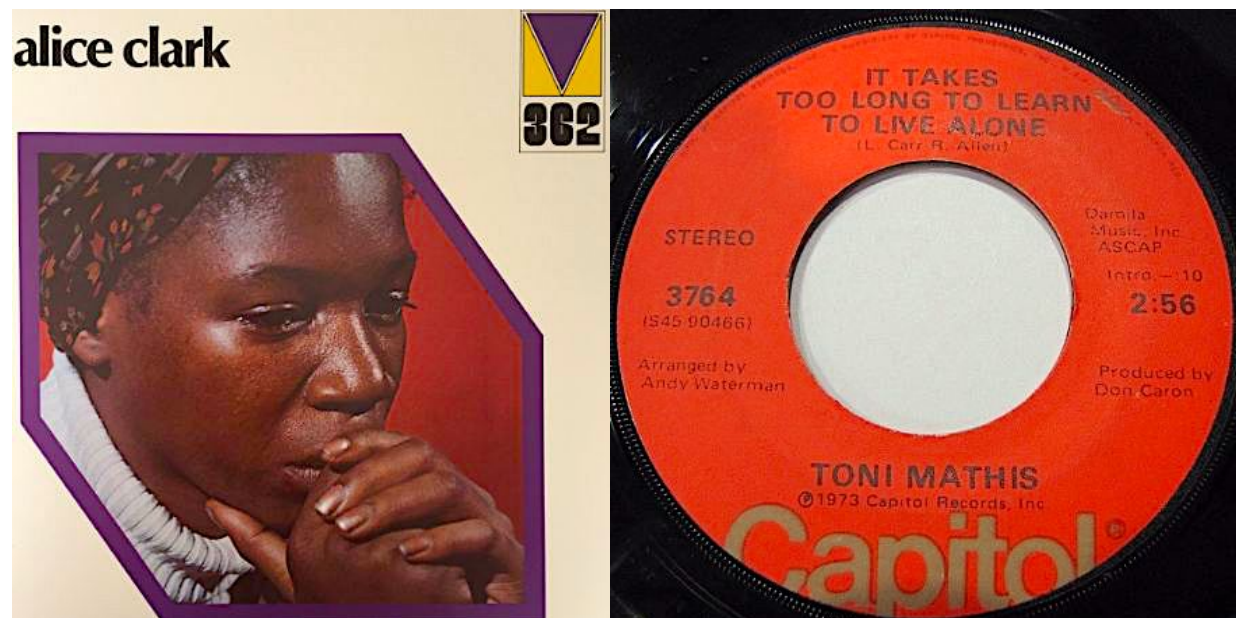
Above and below: Screenshots of Peggy Lee performing "A Song For You" during an episode of *The Carol Burnett Show* that aired on November 1, 1972.



5. It Takes Too Long to Learn to Live Alone

Peggy Lee was one of two vocalists to introduce this number in 1972. The other vocalist was Alice Clark, a worthwhile soul singer who remains obscure to this day. Like Lee's, Clark's album (her one and only, made for Mainstream Records) happened to be released over the summer months of 1972.

In ensuing years, "It Takes Too Long to Live Alone" was also adopted by two worthy artists who were friendly acquaintances of Lee, and who closely followed her career's steps: Eydie Gormé (1973) and Mel Tormé (1975). However, Peggy Lee arguably upstaged all four studio versions (her own included) during her summer-of-1972 live performance in New York City's Central Park. For that version only, she added an otherwise unheard, poignant verse, sung parlando.



Photography

Above: A fine soul singer who was unfortunately unable to garner popular attention, Alice Clark left the record scene after having recorded just a debut LP on the Mainstream label (pictured) and a couple of earlier singles. The song under discussion is part of that 1972 long play—no single.

Following Peggy Lee's and Alice Clark's album versions for, respectively, Capitol and Mainstream, 45-rpm single versions of "It Takes Too Long To Learn To Live Alone" started to make appearance in 1973. Toni Mathis is yet another singer who had little commercial success, and whose recorded output is minimal. Under her name, I have found evidence of only two singles,

one from 1972 and the other, pictured here, from 1973. Both masters on the 1973 single were actually purchased by Capitol, rather than recorded at/for the label itself.

Below: The other 1973 single in view belongs to the female half of the long-lasting singing duo Steve & Eydie. (This and several other Gormé solo outings were recorded and released during the couple's three-or-so years under contract with MGM.)

Preceding Mel Tormé's aforementioned 1975 version on his Atlantic LP *Live At The Maisonette* (pictured last), "It Takes Too Long To Learn To Live Alone" also saw release in 1974, as part of an album by Peggy Lee's fellow ex-Benny-Goodmanite, Jane Harvey. Harvey recorded this entire album in New York but RCA originally released it in London.

This tune's track record goes cold after 1975. I have not yet located any additional vocal versions from artists—not, at least, from those under contract with established record labels.



6. Superstar

In the seventies, songwriter Leon Russell was repeatedly named by Peggy Lee as one of various contemporary composers whose work she enjoyed. He co-wrote two of the numbers on *Norma Deloris Egstrom*, "A Song for You" and the song currently under discussion, "Superstar." Credited with him as the other co-songwriter of "Superstar" is rock 'n' blues singer Bonnie Bramlett, better known to mainstream audiences for an acting gig on the early seasons of the *Roseanne* TV show, where Bramlett sang a show-stopping rendition of "You Really Got a Hold on Me" (1991).

Massively popular ever since its early incarnation as a 1971 top two hit for The Carpenters, the Russell-Bramlett composition actually began its life on record under the more explicit title of "(Groupie) Superstar." The most commonly alleged source of inspiration for the lyric is a dream, featuring Eric Clapton playing guitar in front of adoring female fans. (This is but one of several versions of the song's gestation period, which has been disparately remembered by those who were part of the songwriters' music scene.)

The dreamer was vocalist Rita Coolidge, who back then could be counted among the members of Leon Russell's musical entourage; they were all touring with Eric Clapton as well. Joint touring had given Coolidge by-standing exposure to Clapton's most obsessed fans. Those young groupies, whose rabid obsessiveness Coolidge witnessed, served as the initial inspiration for the lyric.

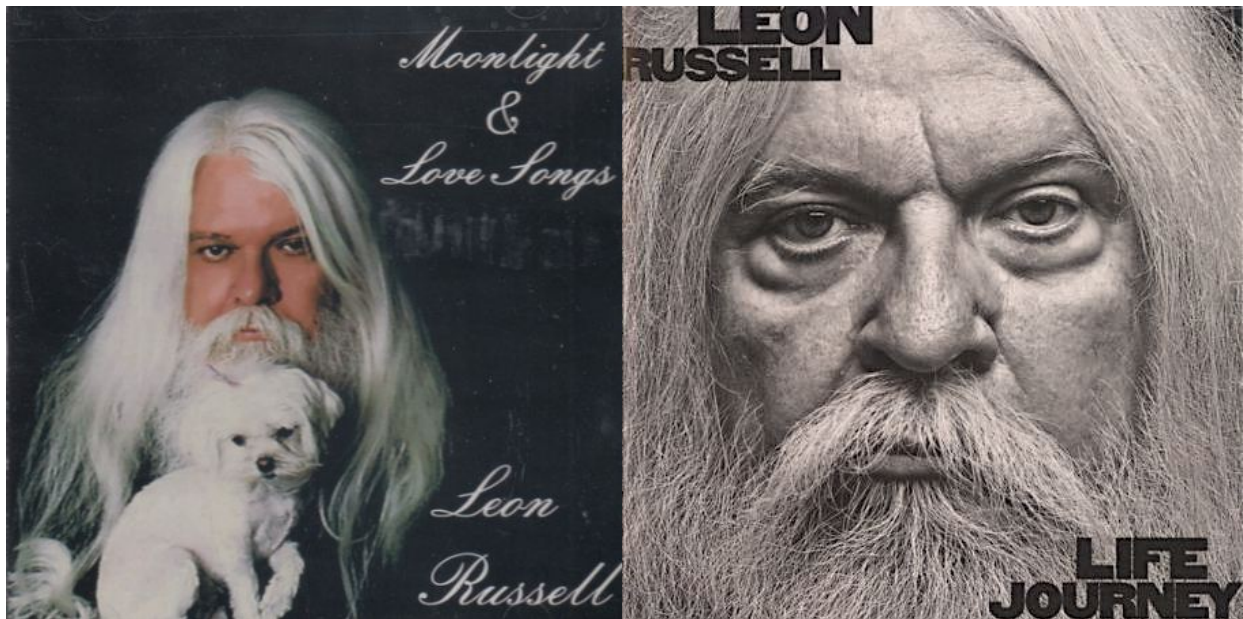
Rita Coolidge is, incidentally, one of several successful 1970s female singers who have claimed Peggy Lee (and/or particular albums of hers) among their foremost influences. Others have been Helen Reddy, Linda Ronstadt, and Joni Mitchell. Singer-composer Bonnie Bramlett has also expressed deep fondness for Peggy Lee's singing.

Given its background, this so-called groupie number could reasonably be deemed unsuitable for a doyenne of popular music such as Lee. She was, after all, past her 50th birthdate when these album sessions took place. But, as already discussed in—once again—the liner notes, it is to the great credit of the album's stellar team that the song is re-interpreted to perfectly suit her.



Photography

A "Superstar" mosaic. Above: First up is the 1969 single on which the song under discussion was originally released, seen here in an edition for the Portuguese market. (The US original came out inside a generic Atlantic sleeve, with no photograph.) Note that the song's actual, original title was "Groupie," with the word "Superstar" as its parenthetical sub-title. In this original incarnation, the number was serving as the B side of a 45 by the duo of Delaney and Bonnie Bramlett—both singer-songwriters in a rock & blues vein, and married to one another at that time. Also credited as playing guitar in this Atlantic 45-rpm issue is superstar Eric Clapton, with whom Delaney & Bonnie were traveling back then. The second image presents solo and more recent CD work (2006) by Bonnie Bramlett, who is generally credited with the lyrics of "Superstar." (Initially named among the song's creators was Delaney Bramlett as well. Divorced from Bonnie many years ago, he has separately offered his recollections about the creation of the tune.)



Above: Leon Russell, another distinguished member of the same music circle hounded by Clapton, Delaney & Bonnie, is credited with the music of "Superstar." On display are the covers of more recent CD work by the composer (2000, 2014), whose intentionally arresting physique has been often used to eye-catching effect.

Below: Recollections on the song's genesis differ from one participant to another. However, the earliest kernel of inspiration definitely appears to have been drawn from the psyche of singer Rita Coolidge, who at the time was yet another ember of the aforementioned, touring rock-music ensemble. We are seeing here the front cover of her 2005 CD *And So Is Love*, which includes among its tracks one number originally recorded by Peggy Lee ("Don't Smoke In Bed") and another number penned by Lee herself ("I Don't Know Enough About You"). Coolidge's long-lasting admiration is also evident from quotes such as the one on display.



7. Just for a Thrill

The song "Just for a Thrill" actually dates back to 1936, when it was composed and recorded by the multi-talented musician (bandleader, pianist, vocalist) Lil Hardin, who at the time was still married to Louis Armstrong. With barely a handful of recorded versions to its credit, the number remained obscure until Ray Charles revived it in 1959. Like most of the country, Peggy Lee became thoroughly acquainted with "Just for a Thrill" after she listened to it from Charles, whom she continuously credited—throughout her lifetime—as one of the giants of American music.

A bluesy lament filled with anguish and heartbreak, "Just for a Thrill" was performed by Peggy Lee often, typically to spellbinding effect. We are fortunate to count with not only three audio versions recorded for Capitol Records (two from 1961, this one from 1972) but also three extant televised performances. The earliest (also from 1961) has been preserved in the form of a video

clip that can be tracked down online. It is a torchy rendition that features a sexily gowned Lee in a dimly lighted room, accompanied onscreen only by a pianist and his ivories. Her two other TV versions were performed on the Dinah Shore and Johnny Carson shows within the two years that followed the release of *Norma Deloris Egstrom*. However, the interpretation on the album ranks as the greatest among all the Lee versions still in existence.

Photography

Screenshots of Peggy Lee performing "Just For A Thrill" on a special episode of *The Chevy Show* that aired on the very first day of 1961.



8. Someone Who Cares

This number originally served as the love theme for the film *Fools*, which had its official US debut late in December of 1970. Merely a couple of months later, and with ten more months still to go, *Fools* was being brazenly and confidently called the "worst movie of 1971" by film critic Roger Ebert. While the flick did not survive the test of time and was already hardly remembered by 1972, its Shorty Rogers music score received the respectful acknowledgment of contemporary film critics.

One of two numbers sung by Kenny Rogers on the soundtrack, "Someone Who Cares" managed to remain current through the rest of the decade. In the United States, the movie tune was promptly picked up by fine mainstream pop balladeers such as Andy Williams and Eydie Gorme, who seem to have been tasked by their respective labels with covering just about any number in currency. The gossamer love theme also found favor abroad, enjoying recordings in Australia (The Don Burrows Orchestra), New Zealand (Craig Scott), and the United Kingdom (Dusty Springfield, Shirley Bassey, Des O'Connor).

On American television, this love song was sung by Peggy Lee during her guest performance on the final episode of *The Bobby Darin Show*. Hers is a soft, shimmering rendition of "Someone Who Cares," featuring her blonde self sitting in a white sofa, comfortably dressed in a loosely fitted white gown, spotlighted by overhead white lighting, and surrounded by white columns. A creamy, gauzy vision in white satin.

Photography

Screenshots of Peggy Lee performing "Someone Who Cares" at *The Bobby Darin Show* (April 27, 1973). The whole ambience was wrapped up in not only white shades (as already mentioned) but also yellow lighting—yellow being the color of hope, and arguably the color of choice for those wishing to meet "somebody who cares."



9-10. The More I See You / I'll Be Seeing You

At recording time, the 51-year-old Peggy Lee was very well acquainted with both of these warhorse standards, to which she had probably been listening since her twenties. "The More I See You" dated back to the 1945 musical flick *Diamond Horseshoe*, on which it had been introduced by Dick Haymes. Lee had actually incorporated the beautiful ballad to her repertoire in 1967, following its chart hit revival by pop-rock singing guitarist Chris Montez. On that year and the next, she memorably performed "The More I See You" on the TV shows of Dean Martin, Ed Sullivan and, most especially, Jonathan Winters.

"I'll Be Seeing You" originated in the 1938 Broadway flop *Right This Way*, but it was not until wartime that it ascended to timeless, transcendental status. Faced with the separation of insurmountable oceans and the threats of lethal artillery, soldiers who pined for their loved ones played the song over and over, while the loved ones who pined for them turned the tender tune into a top request over our nation's radio airwaves. Peggy Lee and most wartime Americans are likely to have become aware of "I'll Be Seeing You" through Bing Crosby's 1944 chart-topper. She might have sung the number in concert during the 1940s, but the first definitive evidence of a Lee interpretation comes from a 1951 episode of her own TV show.

Photography

Screenshots of one of Peggy Lee's televised performances of "The More I See You" (*The Ed Sullivan Show*, October 1, 1967).



11. It Changes (The Scenery Changes)

As explained at more length in the CD's liner notes, "The Scenery Changes" originates in the 1972 animated movie *Snoopy, Come Home*. Unknown today, the reasoning behind the exclusion of this Lee-loved number from her 1972 album can only be speculated. Among various conceivable scenarios, the song's ties to a children's cartoon series could have worked to its detriment. Next to the more adult-sounding lyrics of the other session numbers, "It Changes" might have struck Lee and company as too overtly sentimental for inclusion.

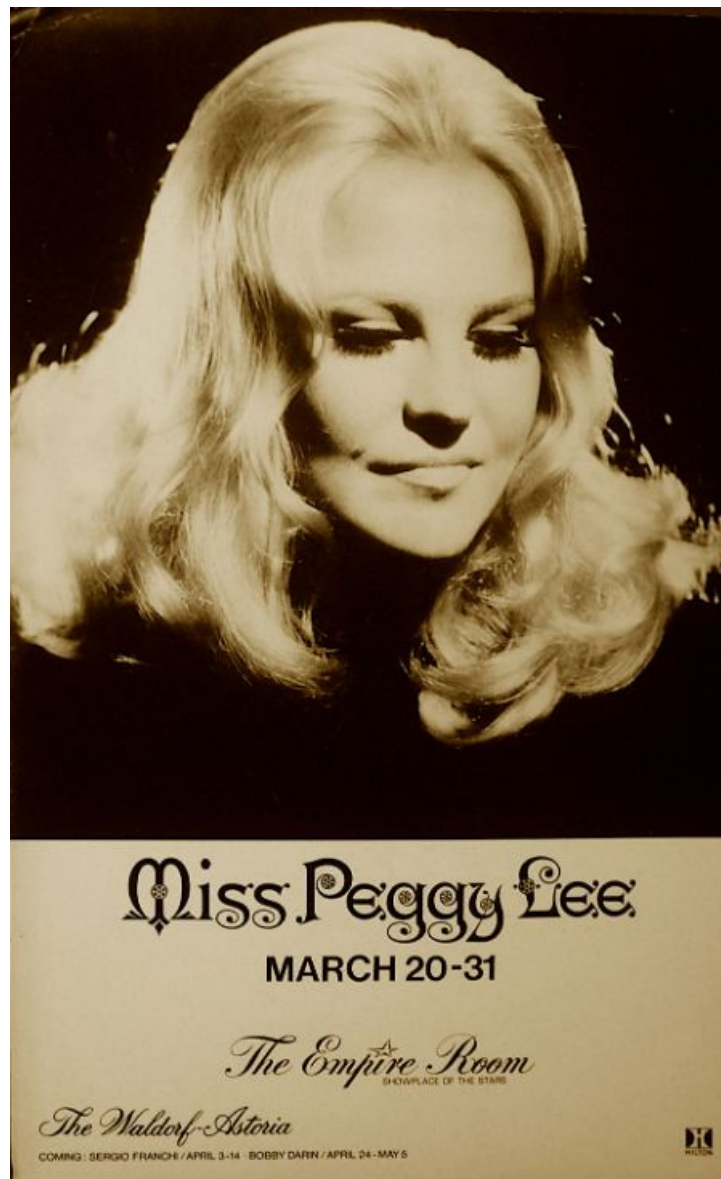
Also worth pondering is the possibility of some movie media restrictions. Concerned parties could have objected to the inclusion of the track on an album whose street release date was set for June, thereby predating the movie's official August premiere by a couple of months.



Photography

Above: Two screenshots from the animated movie *Snoopy, Come Home*. The second was taken from the sequence during which Charlie Brown is heard singing "It Changes," while pining after the recently departed Snoopy. (For what is worth, Charlie's vocal interpretation is more mental than chordal. As the song plays on the soundtrack, his lips do not open—not at all atypical for this animated series.)

Below: An advertisement poster announcing a Peggy Lee engagement at the Empire Room of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel (NY), scheduled for March of 1973. Lee had introduced the song "It Changes" to the public on her previous Waldorf-Astoria engagement. (I do not currently count with advertisement or pictures for that engagement.) In the estimation of a *Variety* reviewer who attended that earlier, March 1972 turn, "Miss Lee not only gives evidence of the most careful preparations, but also provides one of the swingiest songfests ... In the current crop of tunes, of which there is a plenitude, she becomes a woman who remembers and a girl with hopes. It's an infectious session in which she recounts a long history of her hits but still has enough of a youthful outlook that seems to look ahead to a future in which her charms won't be wasted."



12. Pieces of Dreams (Little Boy Lost)

Here is a movie plot. A celibate Catholic man struggles between, on the one hand, his duties at the Lady of Our Assumption parish where he serves as a junior priest and, on the other hand, temptation in the shapely form of a fashionably dressed divorcée/social worker. He winds up running away with the latter for a brief vacation on the snowy mountains of Albuquerque, New Mexico. As the pair succumbs to some scandalous deeds, such as frolicking in the snow, Peggy Lee's voice suddenly pops up in the soundtrack of this 1970 film, titled *Pieces of Dreams*.



While listening to the soundtrack vocal at theaters back in 1970, alert movie watchers probably realized that they were being submitted to a spiritual questionnaire in song. Lee spurs them to ponder many a philosophical question. Has this "little boy lost" finally found all what he nearly is, ever was, forever will be ... or is he just unraveling — wandering, stumbling and tumbling 'round and 'round? To find out the answers to such momentous mysteries, 1970 audience members had no choice but to stay tuned until the end of this pseudo-sociological melodrama, whose fine music score was composed by Michel Legrand.

Two weeks after the recording date, Lee told the following to the Associated Press: "I recorded a song Michel Legrand wrote, 'Pieces of Dreams,' to go over the titles of the movie *The Wine and the Music*, and he asked me to write some lyrics. He is sending me some melodies." (*The Wine and the Music* is the name of the book on which *Pieces of Dreams* is based, and could have also served as the film's original working title.)

Recorded on June the first, Lee's interpretation of "Pieces of Dreams" was also released as the B side of a 1970 charting Capitol single, but never incorporated to any of her original albums. Such lack of long-play visibility may explain why her version of "Little Boy Lost" has almost vanished in the mist of time, timidly resurfacing only on two or three anthological issues where it did not manage to make itself noticed, either. (The tune has become better known through versions recorded by the more mass-popular singers of the day, some of whom happened to have a close professional association with the authors of the lyrics, the Bergmans.)

Despite its original release on a 45-rpm single with no direct connection to this album's sessions, "Pieces of Dreams" is a fitting bonus companion to the present collection. Embedded into its fabric are the motifs of loss and longing, which permeate the album as well. Also worth noting is the song's conceptual resemblance to the preceding track: "Pieces of Dreams" and "The Scenery Changes" are both heavily sentimental movie themes featuring so-called lost boys. No wonder then, that this "Little Boy Lost" can now boast to have found a welcoming home in the present *Norma Deloris Egstrom* deluxe album edition. Lost no more.



Photography

Right above: The Capitol single on which Peggy Lee's recording of "Pieces of Dreams" was originally released, herein seen in its Japanese edition. Not pictured, the American edition comes in a plain sleeve, without photography.

Further up above: Posters and screenshots from the 1970 film *Pieces Of Dreams*. Peggy Lee is twice heard in the soundtrack, singing the movie's theme on both occasions. The first time is during the sequence captured in these screenshots, which show the protagonists as they trek and cavort at their snowy vacationing resort. The second time is over the film's closing credits, which feature at least two verses heard in neither the earlier scene nor the Capitol recording (e.g., "Little boy lost / The woods are running with dreams / So with the faraway yesterday / Sail away / Pieces of long lost, lost dreams ..."). Those verses are absent from all the several versions of the song that I have heard on record.

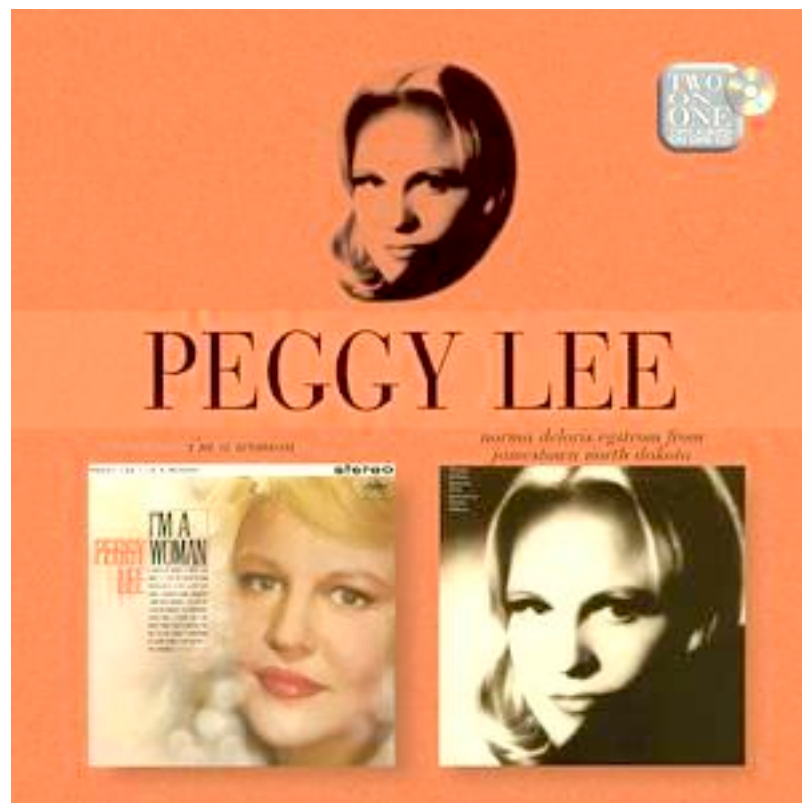
13-17. Alternate Takes

The practice of including alternate takes in CD reissues can sometimes divide listeners into two extreme factions. Dedicated fans of the given artist are prone to await for such bonuses with excitement. They will marvel at a nuance that might be barely detectable to other pairs of ears, less trained to the artist's stylistic traits. Casual listeners can be, on the other hand, far less receptive to alternate takes. They will sometimes register such takes as superfluous repetition or—worse yet—disturbances to the overall experience of re-listening to an original album.



This album's extant alternates are not, admittedly, vastly different from the masters. However, they present us with an opportunity to assess how Lee calibrated her recorded performances, in her quest to arrive at the peaks and valleys which she favored.

To appease any listener bemoaning the lack of clear-cut differences between masters and corresponding alternate performances, we will be happy to specify some easily audible vocal divergences. In the case of "Someone Who Cares," the curious listener should pay close attention to the vocal around the 1:50 mark. The master features Lee singing the words "Come lie with me / Dream with me / Sleep / Sleep while the morning is new." For its part, the alternate features no repetition of the word "sleep." Lee simply sings "Come lie with me / Dream with me / Sleep while the morning is new." In the case of "I'll Be Seeing You," listen to the master around the :55 mark, and to the alternate at a slightly earlier mark—around :45. You will hear a singular/plural divergence: "the chesnut tree, the wishing well" in the master, but "the chesnut trees, the wishing well" in the alternate.



Lastly, we should acknowledge that our CD edition of *Norma Deloris Egstrom* includes all but one of the alternates that are known to be extant. The excluded alternate is yet another take of the medley that closes the album. Unfortunately, this particular take is basically incomplete: only the "I'll Be Seeing You" half of it survives, with no corresponding "More I See You" counterpart. Listeners who still wanting to listen to that second alternate take of "I'll Be Seeing You" have the option of tracking it down: look for the 2004 EMI CD *I'm a Woman / Norma Deloris Egstrom*, on which it appears, preceded by the original album version of "The More I See You."

Photography

Right above: The EMI two-fer-one CD *I'm A Woman / Norma Deloris Egstrom From Jamestown, North and t Dakota*, which features several alternate takes from the album sessions under discussion.

Further up above: Peggy Lee with Arthur Fiedler and the Boston Pops, during a televised concert (July 28, 1974) on which she performed several songs from the *Norma Deloris Egstrom* album.

Below: an alternate shot from the *Norma Deloris Egstrom* photographic sessions.



VI. Concluding Remarks

The status of *Norma Deloris Egstrom from Jamestown, North Dakota* as a cult piece has been slowly but steadily growing since the 1970s. For decades, Peggy Lee fans have consistently cited it as a masterpiece of its time, and also as a timeless favorite.

On the occasion of the album's 50th anniversary, the current Peggy Lee team—of which I am one member—has set out to acquaint the public at large with this cherished opus. Universal's current CD reissue (2022) is a key component of our endeavor.

Among the other components is the present page, which is *All About Norma*. Meant to function as a supplement to the CD's contents, this web page offers not only album commentary but also press materials and session photography, the latter courtesy of Universal Records and The Official Website Of Peggy Lee. Readers still searching for additional detail may also want to consult the 1968-1972 page of my *Peggy Lee Bio-Discography* (<https://peggyleediscography.com/p/capitollee2c.php>).

Our extended invitation to meet *Norma* is now complete. We hope that these musings only enhance your meeting with the marvelously musical Miss Lee.

Photography

Below: Front cover the Universal Music Group CD release for which the present webpage serves as an online supplement. Made available on November 18, 2022, the CD's full official title is *Norma Deloris Egstrom from Jamestown, North Dakota (50th Anniversary Deluxe Expanded Edition)*.

