



Is That All There Is?: The Strange Life of Peggy Lee

James Gavin

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Praised by the *New York Times Book Review* as “fascinating, suspenseful, careful, musically detailed, and insightful,” this is a long-overdue biography of recording artist and musical legend Peggy Lee.

Miss Peggy Lee cast a spell when she sang. She epitomized cool, but her trademark song, “Fever”—covered by Beyoncé and Madonna—is the essence of sizzling sexual heat. Her jazz sense dazzled Ray Charles, Duke Ellington, and Louis Armstrong. She was the voice of swing, the voice of blues, and she provided four of the voices for Walt Disney’s *Lady and the Tramp*, whose score she co-wrote. But who was the woman behind the Mona Lisa smile?

With elegant writing and impeccable research, including interviews with hundreds who knew Lee, acclaimed music journalist James Gavin offers the most revealing look yet at an artist of infinite contradictions and layers. Lee was a North Dakota prairie girl who became a temptress of enduring mystique. She was a singer-songwriter before the term existed. Lee “had incredible confidence onstage,” observed the Godfather of Punk, Iggy Pop; yet inner turmoil wracked her. She spun a romantic nirvana in her songs, but couldn’t sustain one in reality. As she passed middle age, Lee dwelled increasingly in a bizarre dreamland. She died in 2002 at the age of eighty-one, but the enchantment with Lee has only grown.

“Raucously entertaining [and] full of evocative scenes, wry humor and exasperated sympathy” (*Publishers Weekly*), *Is That All There Is?* paints a masterful portrait of an artist who redefined popular singing.

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