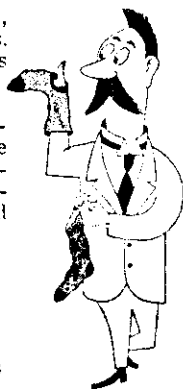


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★ **DOLORES GRAY** in a CinemaScope pose from the film version of "Kismet" ★

ONE of the most glittering opening nights in recent theatrical history was on December 3, 1953, when the curtain went up on *Kismet*. A setting of such magnificence and colour had scarcely been seen since Aladdin gave up cave-robbing and, coruscating as it was with the talents of Broadway stars like Alfred Drake, Doretta Morrow and Joan Djener, the show was sure-fire, in spite of the fact that it came in the middle of a newspaper strike and there were no reviews. One of the most alluring aspects of *Kismet* was its

music, which was adapted from themes of the Russian composer Alexander Borodin by Robert Wright and George Forrest. These two American-sounding gentlemen had already made a hit composer out of Edvard Grieg a few years earlier when they adapted his music to the peculiar demands of Broadway under the title *Song of Norway*.

Following *ZB Sunday Showcase*, at 10.35 p.m. on April 15, a selection of music from the new CinemaScope film of *Kismet* is to be broadcast. The singing stars are Ann Blyth, Howard Keel, Dolores Gray and Vic Damone in the roles of the poor girl Marsinah, her beggar-poet father, Haaj, the court favourite LaLume, and the Caliph. Ann Blyth and Howard Keel are, of course, well known to amateurs of film musicals, but Vic Damone is best known for his ability to make the disc fans' hearts flip over. Dolores Gray is comparatively new to films, although she took London by storm a few years back as the sharp-shooting heroine of *Annie Get Your Gun*.

Not unnaturally, the larger part of the *Kismet* score is material taken from Borodin's most extensive work, the opera *Prince Igor*. "Stranger in Paradise," which only the fortunate deaf have been spared hearing at least three times a day, is adapted from the Polovtsian Dances in *Prince Igor*. From the short orchestral piece *In the Steppes of Central Asia* comes "Sands of Time." An adaptation from the Third Movement of the Quartet No. 2 in D becomes "And This Is My Beloved," while "Fate" comes from the Symphony No. 2 in B Minor. The lilting "Rhymes Have I" has its origin in the first act of *Prince Igor*, and "Not Since Nineveh," a high-

spirited plug for the Rabelaisian allurements of old Bagdad, is another adaptation from the Polovtsian Dances, as are "Bazaar of Caravans" and "He's in Love." A little-known piano composition called "Serenade" provides "Night of My Nights."

It is doubtful whether *Kismet* in CinemaScope will bear much resemblance to the original Edward Knoblock play of 1911, which starred Oscar Asche in England and Otis Skinner in New York, but with all that screen space one can assume that the Gorgeous East will be at least gorgeous as ever.



**HOWARD KEEL** and **ANN BLYTH** as Haaj and Marsinah

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