

THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT PROGRAM

February 26, 1951

Description: In the opening segment, ER and Elliott Roosevelt respond to a listener's question about what individual Americans can do to aid world peace. In the interview segment, ER's guest is American actress Janis Carter.

Participants: ER, Elliott Roosevelt, Janis Carter

[ER:] Good afternoon. This is Eleanor Roosevelt. I am happy to welcome you for another visit here in my living room at the Park Sheraton Hotel. As usual I have a guest that you will be anxious to meet, and as usual Elliott will assist me on the program. And now here is Elliott.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Thank you, Mother. No industry plays as important a part in the imagination of the American people as that of the motion picture industry. Very few Americans do not know down to the most minute [Elliott Roosevelt laughs] detail, a movie star's every activity. Mother's guest today is a young lady about whom the movie fans want to know more because her star is in the ascendancy. Her name is Miss Janis Carter. Many predict that Miss Carter's name will soon join the names of those stars that have become almost a legend in the minds of the great movie-going public. (1:12) But before we meet Miss Janis Carter, Mother will devote some time discussing a matter brought to her attention by a letter that was sent in by a listener. But first, a word from our announcer who has a few things to say for our sponsors who make this recorded program possible.

(Break: 1:32-1:39)

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Our discussion subject today, Mother, was sent in by Mrs. Davis of Waltham, Massachusetts. She says, "I'm a young housewife trying in my small way to do something worthwhile for peace. And I have a fifteen minute radio program each week on shortwave. One of my listeners wrote a most interesting letter asking the question, 'Just what are you Americans as individuals? You know - the little man. What are you doing to help build world peace?' This question set me to thinking. Just what are the individuals here in the United States doing to help build world peace? I can only observe what the folks here in Boston and vicinity are doing. And so I'd like-- uh I would like to have you answer this question as an individual who knows the feelings, ambitions, and desires of the folks throughout the United States."

[ER:] Well, that's quite a question. It presupposes that all of us are doing some things uh to meet the problems of the day. I imagine one of the things that um is increasingly done is to awaken in a community the awareness of um the need for understanding our own particular uh government and the philosophy on which our government was founded and the principles that uh we consider important. And then, it's everybody's job, every individual's job to live up to those. And that seems to me the first thing that every one of us should be doing and is doing in many cases at least throughout the United States. Then there are many other jobs, of course, now, um in civilian defense for instance, there are almost an endless number of jobs; in Red Cross. In um many of the other uh situations where um organizations um are requiring help which ordinarily they wouldn't need because ordinarily um it would be taken care of by people who perhaps now are busy doing other things. For instance, one uh little case of what individuals can do was brought to me in Poughkeepsie the other day and I am going to write a column about it, um, or I have perhaps already, I can't remember when it-- when it's appearing. Um but um, uh I was struck by being uh contacted by a friend of mine who said that they'd needed, suddenly, for the children's home

a large number of pairs of bedroom slippers and she had remembered that there had been a unit of the Red Cross where women sew, that had been lodged for quite a while during the last war in the post office. So she dashed down to the post office to find out what had happened to the unit. She found it was all broken up and the post office didn't have space anymore and wouldn't give it to them. So she got two or three of the names and she went to visit two or three of the women. And they were mostly women who didn't have a great deal of this world's goods, but who could use their hands. [Elliott Roosevelt coughs] So then she dec-- asked them if they would be willing to make the slippers and they said they would be delighted and at first they just got three or four of them together and they met in each other's homes. And my friend dashed around uh, finding out where she could get a sewing machine.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Mhm. (6:00)

[ER:] Um then she found that uh as these women talked to their friends and to the people they'd worked with before, more and more people were volunteering. And so she went to the different institutions in town and she said are you having hard time to raise your budget? Do you need any sewing done? She feels that they have--she finally, now I believe, has twenty-six of the old unit. They call themselves the Civic Sewing Association, and um she got some space in the Vassar Institute. They moved back in one room the cases containing various things of interest and uh she got finally [Elliott Roosevelt coughs] eleven sewing machines, with great difficulty. [Elliott Roosevelt coughs] They had been declared surplus in the city from something. And uh there they meet once a week [Elliott Roosevelt: Mhm.] and they now sew for all this-- the institutions in town that need sewing done. They feel they've saved Vassar Hospital about 2,000 dollars this year and they've saved the children's home considerable money and various other hospitals and institutions in town. And the women are delighted! They are so glad to meet again; they're so glad to feel they're being useful. And she says it brings women from all kinds of different areas of the town together who otherwise wouldn't be meeting and they bring five cents each week. They don't have any officers I should tell you, but just different ones are asked to do certain little jobs. So um one of them keeps the five cents that everybody brings in every week for a sunshine box, [Elliott Roosevelt: Mhm] and they pack a box, and, when they get enough money together, and send it to someone they know of who needs a little sunshine.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Yeah.

[ER:] And uh then they bring ten cents every week and that is held by somebody and once a year they have a grand dinner at a hotel and they all sing songs and they all have a grand time and they look forward to that all year! And so all together, this little organization that came out of the need for forty pair of slippers for the children's home [Elliott Roosevelt: Yeah.] has worked wonderfully in Poughkeepsie. And I just wonder--

[ER and Elliott Roosevelt Overlap]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] You think that spirit--

[ER:] if something like that spirit might not be the thing that every one of us could do, um first at home, and then going a little further afield. For instance, we all know that um in Great Britain today uh they're living still on a very austere diet where food is concerned. I wonder if we couldn't get together and in a community send a certain amount of food that was needed to a certain community uh in Great Britain every now and then.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Now that's a very interesting suggestion because uh do you remember the friendship trains that were sent

[ER:] Yes. Of course I do.

(9:22)

[Elliott Roosevelt:] and how communities--

[ER:] they came back to us.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] and people throughout the entire United States participated. Now of course, that was done--

[ER:] Well I wasn't thinking of anything as--

[Elliott Roosevelt:] That was done in just feeding uh countries that have approximately the same diet that we do. But actually if you want to promote peace uh you've got to go to those millions and millions of Asiatics and people in-in the Near East and the Arab people who are starving today and we must-- it seems to me that whole communities could study what uh the food is that is the staple diet of a certain part of the world.

[ER and Elliott Roosevelt Overlap]

[ER:] And save that food!

[Elliott Roosevelt:] And save that food! And make it a whole community--

[ER:] And give it to such United Nations org-organizations

[Elliott Roosevelt:] No. May-- Organized as communities.

[ER:] That would be a good idea.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] And they don't have to give it to uh any organization or anyone else.

[ER:] That's true they can send it direct.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] They can send it direct to the country. (10:27)

[ER:] That's true, they could.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] And I believe that the action of communities in the United States in sending food direct to uh countries in Europe uh would, not in Europe but in Asia, and in uh [ER: Near East.] the Near East.

[ER:] The trouble is the shipping, if that were done in any large way you would have to get it organized through either the-- our own government or the United Nations on account of shipping.

[Elliott:] Ah yes, that, that was done in the case of the friendship trains. But that would be a positive action showing that the people of the United States were interested in those people. (11:07)

[ER:] Yes and I think that it would be very educational because it would make us meet together and study what were the real needs of the other countries and we know, that um,

[Elliott Roosevelt:] It would be highly educational for our people to find out [ER: To find out what people want.] that for instance um India, I happen to remember you were telling a group one time of the difficulties in feeding India because in one part of India they ate-- they had as a staple...uh wheat, and another part of India they couldn't even feed the people wheat because they didn't know how to use it, and when they did use it...it swelled up and it caused all kinds of internal problems.

[ER:] Yes because they didn't know how, they didn't know how. (11:49)

[Elliott Roosevelt:] That's right.

[ER:] Um, that of course has happened many times when we've tried, well don't you remember, well you, you're too young to remember, but in World War I um Mr. Hoover asked us all to eat corn meal in this country, so many times a week and cut down on wheat because in Europe, they didn't know how to use corn meal and they could use the wheat. And, um, but I think just that study of what is needed and the conditions that would have to be met, [ER and Elliott Roosevelt Overlap] would be one of the things.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] And the fact that hunger is one of the basic things that is working against peace throughout the world.

[ER:] I think that would be good. (12:25)

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Well, I think that our time is just about up so I hope that we have answered Mrs. Davis's question from Waltham, Massachusetts. I think that she's doing a very worthwhile job herself with her dai...weekly program over shortwave directed to other parts of the world. Now we must go on to another part of our program. (12:46)

[Pause]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] There's a young lady here today who moviegoers will be seeing frequently in the near future, for she's just been signed into a new long-term contract with RKO. She is Miss Janis Carter, actress, model, church soloist, radio writer, and a student of the writings of Dr. Albert Schweitzer. Will you take over now mother, please, and let's hear how Miss Carter became interested in so many diversified subjects. (13:24)

[ER:] Well, I'm very glad to have you with us today and certainly that is a build-up for you (laughs).

[Janis Carter: Certainly is.] But let's begin with your most up to date assignment, Miss Carter. That's the contract with RKO, how did this come about?

[Janis Carter:] Well I was making a personal appearance in Miami over New Years weekend, and uh, flown to the co-star with John Wayne in "Flying Leathernecks." It turned out so well that somehow I ended up with a contract with Mr. Howard Hughes.

[ER:] That was very easy way [ER and Janis Carter laugh] to get a contract.

[Janis Carter:] Well you see I'd been in Hollywood for uh, seven years before that I'd just finished a long-term contract so I'm not exactly new.

[ER:] So then is not your first [Janis Carter: No it isn't.] trip to Hollywood? What were some of your past assignments in Hollywood? (14:12)

[Janis Carter:] Oh, I've made some thirty-five pictures I think to date, and uh, the most recent, I have three that are unreleased, uh, "Santa Fe" with Randolph Scott and John Wayne in "Flying Leathernecks" and um, "My Forbidden Past" with Bob Mitchum.

[ER:] Well now, um, how did you begin this, was it an outgrowth of radio on, on Broadway or um radio or um you're acting on Broadway?

[Janis Carter:] Oh it was probably a combination of many things. I, uh, so never believe in closing a door and one thing sort of joined another and somehow I ended in Hollywood. But I wrote some radio scripts, "Gangbusters," strangely enough, and uh sang in church choirs, where I earned my living to pay for my singing lessons, and uh got as far as the Metropolitan auditions and decided being an opera singer wasn't for me, and then ended up in musical comedies. Did "Barry was a Lady" and "Panama Hattie." "Panama Hattie" took me to the coast. (15:11)

[ER:] Well, um, tell us a little about your program that you shared with Grace Moore.

[Janis Carter:] Well, it was just, I think, a 6-week engagement, Mrs. Roosevelt, ah the *Nash-Lafayette Show*, I was just in a quartet, two female and two male voices, in back of Miss Moore, but uh, it was as close as I ever got to a real operatic star (laughs). (15:34)

[ER:] Did you enjoy it?

[Janis Carter:] I loved it!

[ER:] You loved it?

[Janis Carter:] Indeed I did.

[ER:] And um do you like uh do you like acting as acting, or um uh do you like the singing best?

[Janis Carter:] I--that's a very difficult question. I uh-- my present contract's going to permit me to do both and I think that's why I like it so much. I uh am going to do a personal appearance, I leave tomorrow to sing in Boston in a show for a week there, and uh, this contract is going to permit me to do that all year long. In between my picture assignments I'm going to be permitted to do theater where I'll have a chance to sing and maybe, who knows, someday I might sing on the screen. (16:11)

[ER:] Well that's very, uh, that's very interesting, and um uh what- what do you feel has been your most satisfactory acting assignment?

[Janis Carter:] Well, although the part in "Flying Leathernecks" is quite small, it's a story naturally of the Marine fliers in the past war at Guadalcanal, and it's uh really frighteningly small, the smallest part I've ever played, but the only woman in the script, and it was the most satisfying acting wise.

[ER:] Yes, I can imagine that.

[Janis Carter:] It was. It was very nice

[ER:] And you sort of stood out uh in a way you wouldn't in an ordinary part of course.

[Janis Carter:] That's right and it was beautifully written with great understanding and a director who, uh, did a very lovely job, directorially, and I was very happy with it when I saw it on the screen.

[ER:] Well, um, I wonder a great, you know nowadays it's not as difficult for young people to get the consent of their parents to go in for careers of different kinds, but um because there are probably a great many mothers listening to us who have daughters who are planning a career on the screen or in television, I wonder if you would tell us a little about whether you planned to do this kind of work when you were in school, or whether it's something that developed uh slowly just one thing after another. (17:44)

[Janis Carter:] Well it really developed very slowly, although I don't think I ever wanted anything in the time I can remember other than the stage. Um I always rather kid my family a little bit, I come from a long line of frustrated thespians, there's no doubt about it. My mother was a singer, in fact she worked with Elsie Janice during the first World War and that's how I was named Janice. And um my grandmother was a singer and a very fine organist, played at one of the leading churches in Cleveland until she was about seventy five years old and um they all took part some way in music or in dramatics but somehow in those days it wasn't a particularly nice to go on the stage, or at least that's the way they were brought up, so they went to music schools and they taught and did other things. But I went in full force for it. However, my mother wouldn't let me do it until I had had a college degree, I-that was the assignment [Miss Carter giggles] (18:37)

[ER:] Well, you came, fortunately uh at a time in history when it was uh allowable for a girl to do what she did best, uh-

[Janis Carter:] I'm very grateful for that-

[ER:] I'd say, I think it's a very fortunate thing that we reached that point at last.

[Janis Carter:] I do too.

[ER:] But I think there are a good many of the younger people, if there are many younger people who listen to us, who would like a little advice as to how you finally became a movie star?

[Janis Carter:] Well I think you should start out - I wanted to be a model because I wanted to know about the camera, I wanted to know how to walk, dress, how my hair, whatever it might be, would look most becoming. I always had studied, as far back as I can remember. I don't think you should ever close any doors on an opportunity that comes to you. If you want to learn to play piano, if you have any opportunity to, learn to sing, learn to dance, always study, always read, and, uh, somehow they all some way or other, radio scripts, modeling, various different things, I learned something from everything I did. (19:48)

[ER:] And everything you did of course made you uh a little more ready for the next step you were going to take. And-

[Janis Carter:] That's Right.

[ER:] broadened your possibilities of having a better chance when you, uh-

[Janis Carter:] And each step, uh, be content when you reach it and reach for the next one up the latter.

[ER:] [ER laughs]

[Janis Carter:] Whichever it might be, whatever direction it might go.

[ER:] One is never quite content to know that [ER & Miss Carter laugh] someone's always-

[Janis Carter:] [laughs] I can hope!

[ER:] I think much, well no, I think much of the fun would go out of life if, uh, there wasn't always something a little up, a little further, that you thought of as soon as you reached the point, you've been thinking of up to that time. (20:27)

[Janis Carter:] That's right.

[ER:] It wouldn't be fun if you stood still.

[Janis Carter:] No indeed it wouldn't. It would be awful, wouldn't it?

[ER:] [ER laughs]

[Janis Carter:] We only - We don't really stand still I don't believe. We either go forward or backwards don't we?

[ER:] I imagine that's so. Well now I heard you mention uh writing scripts. Did you write for the radio?

[Janis Carter:] The radio yes, for Phillip Lord. He did the at that time "Gang Busters" and I did research for "We the people."

[ER:] Oh well that must have been-

[Elliot interrupts]: How did you happen to get into that work?

[Janis Carter:] I'm afraid I uh lied a little bit. [Miss Carter laughs]

[Elliot laughs]

[Janis Carter:] I applied to the job, I needed it very badly and, um, I had my degree in English from school, it was my very first job when I came to New York, and I didn't know how to type but I got a type writer - I was living up at Columbia University and I got a type writer and I took lessons fast. And um, until I knew how, I took it long hand. [Miss Charter laughs a little] (21:20)

[ER:] Well, um how did you find your plots, for instance, because you were new at this game?

[Janis Carter:] Well I-I wasn't that much of a serious writer. I was one of six young writers they were breaking in. The plots were set and formed, and then I worked around those and then um mainly then I was on that about six or seven weeks and then I was transferred to *We the People*, which I found much more exciting because we had to pick out our own people for the show, from newspapers, magazines, whatever they might have been, track them down, and find them ourselves, sometimes they were all over the country, and of course, as you know, some of them weren't even real; we had trouble just finding them. [Miss Charter & ER laugh] But, um a woman tattooist once in the Bowery I remember was a very charming assignment. [Miss Charter laughs] (22:01)

[ER:] Well now um what other kind of writing did you do? Any other kind or was that just-just what [unclear].

[Miss Carter interrupts talking over ER]: No, that was the extent of my writing. I had hoped to, you see, end up meeting someone in the radio field that might give me an opportunity to sing; It didn't work out that way. (22:16)

[ER:] Well, um now you-you said that you have uh gone all the way up to um a metropolitan audition-

[Miss Carter:] Yes they were the metropolitan auditions on the air, remember? On Sunday afternoon. I don't think they're still in uh

[Elliott Roosevelt:] No they've stopped them.

[Janis Carter:] Stopped though yes.

[ER:] Well, you've, um uh, did you-- and then you said that you had decided that you did not want to go into um uh singing in the opera. Um did you decide that your voice wasn't fitted for that and so you had, you had to change your-your learning so to speak or could you just go on without any changes? (22:57)

[Janis Carter:] No-- uh yes I did have to change a lot but um, I didn't win anything in this metropolitan audition on the air, I just had an opportunity to sing on the air. It looked like a good many years of very intensive hard work and um I wasn't equipped to finance it or uh, I didn't think I had the disposition; I'm rather high strung and nervous and uh they told me something about gaining fifteen pounds, which sounded dreadful to me at the moment. [Miss Carter chuckles] And also at the same time, with all of this hard work scheduled ahead of me, operatically, um there was also a theatrical agent there who heard me sing. (23:36)

[ER:] There was what?

[Janis Carter:] A theatrical agent. (23:38)

[ER:] Oh yes.

[Janis Carter:] And I was offered a role in *DuBarry Was a Lady* and um I accepted it.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] So you got off of the metropolitan stage and went onto the musical comedy stage in just one easy audition? [Janis Carter laughs] But I must interrupt here for just one minute and we'll come back to the interview after the announcer has a chance to say a few words. (24:01)

[PAUSE 24:01-24:21)

[Elliott Roosevelt:] And now we return again to the interview between mother and Miss Janice Carter, a new star for RKO. Not so new to Hollywood though because she's just told us that she's been out there for a great many years, over seven years to be exact. So, uh, mother will you start in and see what you can dig out of Miss Carter in the way of interesting items for our audience?

[ER:] (ER chuckles) I don't think it's very hard to dig [Janice Carter chuckles] I'm very glad to begin again and ask questions! Um I'd like to know, where you grew up.

[Janis Carter:] Oh I was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio.

[ER:] Cleveland, Ohio?

[Janis Carter:] That's right.

[ER:] Now that's interesting, do you call that Middle West or do you call that East?

[Janis Carter:] [laughter] Well our relatives in Amherst, Massachusetts always called it way out West but I've always thought of it as Middle West.

[ER:] Of course in Cleveland, Ohio, um you really had a chance, because that's a very musical city-

[Miss Carter interrupts]: Yes it is.

[ER continues]: And that's how you began, probably, to get your chance to, um uh, develop your interest in music, though you've already said your mother and grandmother, um, had that interest. Was it just on your maternal side of the family or did you have some inclination that way on your father's side? (25:39)

[Janis Carter:] No, it's just maternal. My father died when I was a baby and I lived with my mother and my grandmother, and uh, I was taught piano lessons in between the pupils who came in and out. [Miss Carter laughs]

[ER:] I see.

[Janis Carter:] And so--

[ER:] So they- they taught you?

[Janis Carter:] Yes they did.

[ER:] Oh well that's-that's easy to understand then how you got your- your [Janice Carter and ER overlap].

[Miss Carter:] I ushered for the Cleveland symphony under Doctor [Artur] Rodzinski) for all the way through college; the music students got to do that.

[ER:] Well uh you-you told me that you had to have a college degree before your mother would hear of your going in for your own chosen career. Um that amused me because um uh I'm pretty older than you are and I remember when I was very young, asking my grandmother, who brought me up, if I might go to college and at that age she was horrified at the thought that a girl would even dream [laughter] of going to college!

[Janis Carter:] She said what a waste of time I suppose?

[ER:] Terrible thing to go to college! [Janis Carter laughs] All you needed to do was to have a few of the graces of education [ER laughs and none of the really good, tough learning, how to use your mind. I'm sure you got some very good things out of your college years, you feel they were worthwhile don't you? (26:58)

[Janis Carter:] Oh I think its such a wonderful background for anything you might want to go into. I sometimes regretted the four years I might have been learning something more about theatre but uh, I think you make better choices maybe and uh have a better background with a lot of things.

[ER:] Well, it did give you one thing and that is it evidently gave you an interest in Doctor Albert

Schweitzer. And that uh I think must have originated in college didn't it?

[Janis Carter:] Yes it did. I was always interested in philosophy and all things-- sometimes religious, comparative religions, and uh philosophy, psychology I always-- those were my, that was my minor subject in college.

[ER:] Well, uh have you developed philosophies for yourself that- which have helped you in your own life out of your knowledge um of philosophers and contemporary religions in general?

[Janis Carter:] I think I have a basic philosophy probably, I lose it every now and then and become a bit frightened of things but if I sit down still long enough and do a little reading and a little study, I seem to get back on my feet, yes. (28:10)

[ER:] It happens that in the United Nations, um, two of the people that, um uh, have served both on committee three with me and on the Human Rights Commission, are philosophers. One comes from Lebanon and one comes from China, in the Nationalist uh. But I think that Doctor P.C. Chang is not the least interested in what he looks upon as the shifting events of history. I'm quite sure that his interest lies in what other cultural developments, uh in his country, which may eventually be of value to the world, what are the changes which have come through us, and I'm constantly interested at the way that sort of philosophy of the oriental can dissociate itself from the immediate events that are occurring and give itself over to contemplation of the long range of the future which is extremely interesting thing and which, if we all could do it, to a certain extent, uh would probably help us in our lives. Perhaps that's what you got a little bit out of the study of Doctor Schweitzer. (29:38)

[Janis Carter:] I-I think so I- its- it's just as you say; watch the panoramas of the whole and realize that you're just a small part of it and that really what uh part we play is so small and so unimportant as the whole picture of what is going to happen culturally. You can become very frightened when you look at the conditions just as they are today and nothing any father that. (29:58)

[ER:] And yet, its not good to feel, I think, that the part you play is small and unimportant because, if each part isn't played well, no matter how small it is, it can put the whole machinery out. (30:13)

[Janis Carter:] Oh Right, I don't mean that you shouldn't do all that you can to contribute as much as you can to the panorama so to speak.

[ER:] Well, now I want to ask you a little bit about your future plans and what you want to do and what ambitions you have for the future.

[Janis Carter:] I'm leaving that open philosophically speaking too [Janis Carter and Elliot Roosevelt laugh].

[ER:] You're not going beyond the present at all?

[Janis Carter:] No I don't think I should because as I've said before I--

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Didn't I just announce that you signed a long term contract with RKO? [Elliott Roosevelt laughs]

[Janis Carter:] Oh but you know there are yearly options. [Janis Carter laughs]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Ah but uh if they pick those options up that means that you're stuck .

[Janis Carter:] Yes that's right. [Janis Carter laughs] It's a one way road you mean.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Yup.

[Janis Carter:] I-- um as I said love theatre very much but it, uh, who knows where those things might lead you. (31:08)

[ER:] Well then your also able to do your um your singing and personal appearances besides your uh acting in picture films--

[Miss Carter:] That is right and I'm studying voice again, the first time since I went to Hollywood. I'm working two hours a day while I'm here and I will be doing the same when I get back to the coast so I rather feel I have another little iron in the fire so to speak. (31:30)

[ER:] I see, well I really think you're a very wise young lady. You like to have a great many irons in the fire. Now you started- [Janis Carter and ER overlap]

[Miss Carter (talking over ER)]: Yes I do. I'm taking another course in psychology too.

[ER:] Oh you are!

[Janis Carter:] Yes I am.

[ER:] Now you started to tell us something about how you came to be called Janice, but you didn't go into it very much. You said your mother was eh-- (31:49)

[Janis Carter:] My mother worked during the First World War uh in a lot of um army sites that she was singing to at that time with my aunt and became a great admirer of Elise Janice. I was born in October of 1918 and named Janice. (32:05)

[ER:] Named Janice? [Miss Carter laughs] Because she so admired uh Miss Janice. Well I- I've- I think the origin of names given to children is very amusing. I have a young aunt who is named um (ER coughs), Maude, and she was named Maude because her elder sisters had just been reading a novel in which the heroine was the wife of a great gambler and they were so interested in the heroine they could think of nothing else and when asked what they would like their baby sister to be called they said "Maude!" That was how she got her name! [ER laughs] (32:43)

[Janis Carter:] Wonderful, wonderful.

[Elliott, ER, Miss Carter all laugh]

[Janis Carter:] But um, I finally met Miss Janice just about six months ago.

[ER:] Oh did you?

[Janis Carter:] And she had read that I was named after her and also that there was an auction of many of her very lovely things in uh Beverly Hills, California, most of which I bought because they were handsomely engraved and monogrammed and so on and so forth of course with Janice. And uh, when the auctioneer told her that I had bought most of them, she asked if I might come by for tea, which I did and we've become very good friends. (33:14)

[ER:] Oh well that's nice. It's nice to carry on the tradition.

[Janis Carter:] I think it is. I uh was very thrilled to meet her [ER: Which--], very excited [ER: Who--] about it because I had heard so much about her and she had a very special place in my life.

[ER:] Have you any other uh people that you particularly admire in-- I mean that you would try and um copy in certain ways in the stage?

[Janis Carter:] I've always been a very great admirer of uh Greta Garbo. I've studied a great many of her films, film wise.

[ER:] And any particular one, uh--

[Janis Carter:] On the stage? Helen Hayes.

[ER:] Helen Hayes? And um uh as singers, do you know uh any particular people that sing too that you have an admiration for? (34:02)

[Janis Carter:] Oh Miss Sayao, Bidu Sayao, I think is one of my very favorites. Wagnerian and I always... was a great admirer of Miss [Kirsten] Flagstad's ability. They're ah-- they're all--

[ER:] They're all, you can find, and people that you'd like, do you know all these people?

[Janis Carter:] No, I don't. I don't.

[ER:] You don't know them all?

[Janis Carter:] No, I don't.

[ER:] Uh, that's one of the things that I think that many people who think of Hollywood think is exciting which is you have a chance to meet so many people that you uh might never uh meet in any other uh place or in any other occupations. But you have met a great many of them.

[Janis Carter:] a great many of them, yes I have.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Mother, excuse me.

[ER:] Oh, I was just going to ask you if you've been abroad a great deal.

[Janis Carter:] I've been abroad twice. I made a picture in Italy.

[ER:] Mhm

[Janis Carter:] And uh, I went over twice.

[ER:] Well that's--

[Janis Carter:] fell completely in love with it

[ER:] you're completely in love with it?

[Janis Carter:] completely in love with it.

[all of them talking over each other]

[ER:] That's very interesting-- I'm sorry that I--

[Elliott Roosevelt:] the one question that I'd like to ask before we bring the interview to a close, and that is do you have an opinion about the importance of western pictures?

[Janis Carter:] Yes I have I uh, this summer I did a tour, I was mast-mistress of ceremonies I guess I should say for a stage appearance with four girls, we went all the way across the country, ten weeks and twenty-seven cities, and um, all I know is in every city there were long, long lines in front of every movie house that was playing a western--

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Mhm.

[Janis Carter:] And I was determined that when I got back to the coast I was going to learn to ride a horse and do westerns which I did. I made my first Technicolor western upon my return.

[ER:] and did you find it hard to learn to ride a horse?

[Janis Carter:] yes I don't like to ride a horse at all, I found it very difficult. I um--

[ER:] really there's nothing peculiar in that because really to be a good rider you have to begin when you're 3.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Oh! [laughter]

[Janis Carter:] I'm glad you've given me that out. I'm not any good at it.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Mother, I'm afraid we have to call the interview to a close because the time is running short and there are several more items on the program before we come to an end.

[ER:] Well I'm very happy to have had this chance of meeting you and talking to you.

[Janis Carter:] Thank you so much. I was very happy to be here. (36:22)

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