

IGNITE FILMS

CLASSICS FOR THE FUTURE

LETTER FROM AN UNKNOWN WOMAN

1948 / 86:00 / B/W / Drama/ Romance

Director: Max Ophuls

Starring: Joan Fontaine, Louis Jourdan, Mady Christians



SYNOPSIS:

Joan Fontaine's own production company recruited John Houseman to produce and Max Ophuls to direct this stylish romance. And it shows. Fontaine plays Lisa Berndl, a young Austrian schoolgirl who falls hopelessly and endlessly in love with the man who moves in next door. Louis Jourdan is the glamorous young concert pianist she instantly adores but the love is one-sided. It develops into a real tear-jerker as she finally spends a night with him, only to have him move away and up in the world of music. She, meanwhile, bears his son and marries a millionaire to give the child a name, but never loses her love for the pianist. They meet years later in a crowd and she again runs after him, ever chasing her dream. But it's not to be. The 'Letter' from the title is one she has sent to Jourdan (we see him read it) where she explains the years of obsession and adoration. The final layer of pathos is spread when we find out, as does Jourdan, that she and his son are both dying of typhus. A very heavy tale, indeed, with layers of beautiful Viennese music to beat in time with the heart throbs.

REVIEWS:

"As the lady of deathless adoration, Miss Fontaine virtually wrings herself dry, and as the darling but fickle concert pianist, Louis Jourdan saturates the air with charm." 29 April 1948 New York Times Reviews

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AWARDS:

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