

I was a money maker.

I have often wished that I might have had a phonograph record made if the things which were said at my table that night. They wanted to organize a company for producing motion pictures to star me. I was not only offered my usual salary but also a percentage of all sales.

"You can spend as much as you like,"
one man said.

"You can run the company just as you
like."

"You can have your say over everything
from the stories to sets."

"We will get the greatest director in the
entire business for you."

Bob Leonard sat at the foot of the table saying nothing. All conversation has been directed toward me.

At that point, I caught my breath long enough to say,

"To me, Robert Z. Leonard is the greatest
director in motion pictures."

I raised my hand toward Bob. The men turned their heads as one man toward him. It seemed that until that point they had forgotten he was with us.

"I don't say that he is the greatest because he
is my husband, but because we work so beautifully
together. We are a perfect working unit."

Bob's eyes met mine down the long length of the candle-lit table and I think we both were remembering in that split second his confession to me during our vacation.

Now these men had come to us with their offer -- the realization of our dreams handed to us on a golden platter.

We had talked about having our say, doing as we pleased and now there would be no one to tell us or to argue. But it had to be offered to Bob as well. I wanted it that way.

'A working unit,' one of the men said, and the way he said it was

gratifying to me. The other men indicated their agreement.

I wanted them to agree. I felt that Bob and I belonged together. And when I realized that the man also wanted Bob to be with me I felt happier and completely contented.

"Then it was to be a working unit?"

Eyes went from Bob to me from me to Bob and back to me again.

'What would you like to call your company, Miss Murray?' I looked at the huge Marquise diamond on my finger and replied:

"Tiffany!" Anything from Tiffany's had always seemed the essence of quality.

Then it is to be 'Tiffany Productions' another man said. Almost as simple as that millions were placed at my disposal. Everything was agreed on that night and the following day the legal side was settled by a number of lawyers.

All through this Bob and I were happy and excited. Filled with plans. I'd wake up at night and think, 'We'll try that idea..' Which would mean that I had thought of a new kind of set, a trick lighting effect a deeper emotional scene. Bob was just as enthusiastic.

I was to receive vast amounts of money, but the money part did not concern me greatly. I was never interested in details of the business end. I only wanted to think about the picture and, in being free to do pictures as I wanted them. I felt instinctively that Bob and I would do things to startle the whole film industry.

Our first picture was to be 'Peacock Alley' and was to embody all the ideas we had stored away during our vacation in Paris. We went about building the story, piecing it together with our various impressions and notes. We had great fun finding a vacant building large enough for a studio. We rented one on West 44th St.

In the midst of all this the question of how and where our pictures were to be released came up. All films had to have a means of distribution. Had we thought of this very practical angle of our business? The men from Detroit wanted to know.

I told them I believed we will do much better if we waited and did not arrange a release first. This caused considerable wonder. It was not usual procedure. The men looked at me as if they thought I had gone to far afield of their conventional business methods.

"You said I could have my way, carry out my own ideas, so this is my decision!

A decision based on intuition. I stuck by my guns, and Bob backed me up.

We worked early and late, getting the 44th St. building the way we wanted. The first thing we had to do was to build a two-boom dressing room for me, with a shower and cabinets for my costumes. There were a thousand and one other details to be thought of and taken care of. A story was ready. It called for a big lumbering kind of hero, of a New England background. He was to go to Paris as his Father's business representative, fall in love with a French acress, the toast of the town, marry her and bring her back to New England, where she was all but slaughtered by the disapproving townspeople.

Monte Blue seemed the right man for the part. His quiet reserve seemed ideal. So, Monte was engaged. Then we hired Ollie March, one pf Hollywood's ace cameraman. We handpicked electricians and mechanics. We carefully outfitted the studio down to the last man and prop and then we began shooting.

By this time it was July and scorching. Every day and often late into the night, I worked under tremendous l ights wearing my peacock costume, which consisted of wool tights thickly sewn with spangles to represent the feathered body of a peacock. The tights fitted like skin from head to toe. There was a massive tail of peacock feathers which only made the costume warmer. Lights used in taking colored photography give out the most intense heat and for long hours I danced in the heat, wearing this hottest of all costumes.

Each day the spangles melted, and each night twenty women had to be hired to work six or seven hours to sew them back on again.