



ESTHER OFARIM IN NEW YORK with Bobby Scott and his Orchestra

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"When was the last time that you were completely bowled over by an amazing new talent? If you can recall brushing the dust off your trousers and straightening your tie, get ready to go through it all over again. Esther Ofarim will knock you out."

These words were penned over 40 years ago by the leader of the band, a young Bobby Scott. They appeared on the sleeve of the album "ESTHER OFARIM – IS IT REALLY ME", which he recorded with the exceptional singer in New York and has finally earned a release in mainland Europe, on CD, of course. What better home could one have found for the recordings than the reissues label BUREAU B? As one has come to expect of the label, they have conjured up an elaborate digipack featuring extensive liner notes and rare photographs. Continuing the theme of "In New York" productions on the BUREAU B imprint, this CD carries the title **ESTHER OFARIM IN NEW YORK**.

Scott's gushing praise may sound a little over the top. Maybe it is, but on hearing the recordings it is not hard to understand how he could get carried away – all the more so considering just what a great bandleader Scott believed himself to be, as the liner notes by his friend James Gavin, the biographer of Lena Horne, reveal. (Scott counted himself among the top five arrangers in the world!)

It is a shame that Bobby Scott did not live to see the album reissued. Right up until his death at the young age of 53 in 1990 he always sang the praises of this particular record. The reason for such enthusiasm was a singer who could do just about anything. She mastered soulful ballads as easily as swinging up-tempo tracks, dreamy fantasies or blithe pop songs. It wasn't just the fact of Esther Ofarim's exceptional talent which caused such amazement: her vocal excellence was all the more remarkable in the light of her diminutive figure.

The fragile-looking Esther Ofarim was a mere 24 years of age at the time, a star in Europe and Israel. Recording with Bobby Scott represented a kind of break from her career with her husband, Abi (Abraham) Ofarim, whom she divorced one year later. In an interview conducted exclusively for this re-release, Ofarim reveals that she considers this to be one of her finest albums. Meeting Bobby Scott was, in her own words, a "coup de foudre", a flash of lightning or perhaps "love at first sight" – in a creative sense, that is ...

A bonus track is included, also with Bobby Scott - "He's Mine", recorded in 1964.