



ESTHER OFARIM IN LONDON

produced by Bob Johnston

release date: 6/5/2009 • CD + Vinyl • BB24 (CD 927612/LP 927611)

The Essentials

- Esther Ofarim, who found fame alongside her then husband Abi (their greatest hits: *Cinderella Rockefeller*, *In The Morning Of My Life*). In recent times, back on stage again to universal acclaim.
- Bob Johnston, the producer of legendary albums by Bob Dylan, Johnny Cash, Leonard Cohen and many more.
- All tracks on CD for the very first time, including three bonus tracks, one of them previously unreleased.
- Digipack contains a 16 page booklet featuring rare photos and an interview with Esther Ofarim.
- Also available on 180 g vinyl

After *Esther Ofarim in New York* (2006), another treasure from the incomparable Esther Ofarim sees the light of day. Appearing on CD for the first time, her eponymous solo album from 1972 has been given the new title *Esther Ofarim in London* by the Bureau B label. Analogue fans can look forward to a fresh 180 g vinyl pressing. This masterpiece was produced by no lesser figure than Bob Johnston, famous for having produced legendary albums by Bob Dylan (including *Highway 61 Revisited*, *Blonde on Blonde*), Leonard Cohen (such as *Songs from a Room*), Johnny Cash (*At Folsom Prison*) and Simon & Garfunkel (*Sounds of Silence* was one of them).

Esther Ofarim in London sounds both composed and confident. Attentive listeners will hear a forceful orchestra in the background of what is a tender, fragile atmosphere. That Bob Johnston succeeded with a production of such apparently irreconcilable opposites is quite remarkable – this bombastic, yet intimate quality is exactly what he was aiming for.

The tracks were recorded in three sessions at the Command Studios in London, where Johnston enlisted the British arrangers Nick Harrison, Will Malone and Bob Merci. Once the recordings were completed, Johnston flew back to his home town of Nashville to mix the tapes. The extent to which he reduced the instrumentation in some places was nothing short of drastic. On one track, he removed almost the entire orchestra, leaving just a basic framework of guitar, bass and electric piano.

Johnston and Ofarim displayed wonderful intuition in their selection of songs, with compositions by Leonhard Cohen sitting comfortably alongside some by Johnston and the musicians he worked with at the time. The result is a gently shimmering necklace of poetic pearls, sung by one of the most beautiful voices in musical folk history.

As one has come to expect of Bureau B releases, this reissue comes complete with a wealth of detail, rare photographs and an interview with the artist Esther Ofarim. Both the CD and LP versions contain three bonus tracks: the A and B sides to a single which was recorded later in Nashville itself by Esther Ofarim and Bob Johnston, plus one track from the London sessions which, inexplicably, did not make it onto the original LP. This, then is a world premiere.

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