



JAMES LAST IN LOS ANGELES

The Legendary 1975 Record Plant Studio Sessions

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The Glitzy-Funk-Disco-Jazz-Fusion-Insider Tip from 1975, brand new on vinyl.

The cat is out of the bag. James Last's best kept secret is a secret no more. Considered by many jazz fans and DJs to be the finest album "Hansi" ever recorded, the erstwhile *Well Kept Secret* album now resurfaces under the title JAMES LAST IN LOS ANGELES – on brand new vinyl.

James Last teamed up with arranger and producer Wes Farrell and an array of top-flight American musicians for the 1975 recording sessions in L.A.'s Record Plant Studios. Glitzy jazz/disco arrangements and on the money funk rhythms culminated in a orchestration which would not have been out of place in a Blaxploitation score. Original copies of the LP fetch handsome sums at record fairs and on the internet, with tracks like *Bolero 75*, *Love For Sale* and *I Can't Move No Mountains* firm favourites with cool club DJs.

We have the Hamburg reissues label BUREAU B to thank for this release (appearing simultaneously on CD via Universal Music), the latest addition to their illustrious catalogue of almost forgotten gems of musical history, which includes such highlights as CATERINA VALENTE IN NEW YORK, ESTHER OFARIM IN NEW YORK and MARLENE DIETRICH WITH THE BURT BACHARACH ORCHESTRA.

How did this extraordinary record come about? In the seventies, James Last was selling vast quantities of records and filling concert halls the world over. There was, however, one significant gap on the map – the United States of America. Few in the USA had even heard of the hugely successful bandleader. Signed to Polydor, Last's desire to try out something different dovetailed nicely with his record company's ambition to conquer America. Deodato's funky version of "Also sprach Zarathustra" had been getting a lot of plays on the tour bus and Last was tempted to go down a similar musical route. The ball started to roll, coming to a stop in L.A. where Last met Wes Farrell and an unparalleled selection of musicians at one of the most renowned recording studios in the USA. They were about to record the most untypical album of James Last's career.

Producer and co-arranger Wes Farrell's day job was musical mastermind of the international success story, the "Partridge Family" ensemble. *Hang On Sloop* was just one of a number of hits he already had to his name. Also credited with a role in the arrangements was keyboarder and former Elvis pianist Larry Muhoberac. Among the musicians were sax stars Ernie Watts and Tom Scott, the guitarist Larry Carlton (Steely Dan, Crusaders), bass player Max Bennet (L.A. Express) and Jim Gordon (Derek and the Dominos) on the drums. Quincy Jones just happened to be around at the time of the recording and was visibly impressed, as James Last recalls. In spite of everything, the album failed to achieve the commercial breakthrough hoped for in the USA. Meanwhile, the rest of the world did not seem ready for such a funky James Last... ensuring the album's status as both cult classic and well kept secret.