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In 2005, some 26 years after launching her recording career singing of her *Dreams of Tomorrow*, Marilyn Scott became the only vocalist in *Billboard Magazine* history to have two different albums charting on the Contemporary Jazz and Traditional Jazz charts simultaneously.

The dual success of her pop-oriented career retrospective *Handpicked* (which stayed on the Contemporary chart for 14 weeks) and the George Duke-produced Great American Songbook tribute *Nightcap* perfectly captures everything that's made Scott a great asset to both genres—and unfortunately to this day still a vastly underrated talent whose career road, despite these kinds of accolades, has been topsy-turvy in an ever changing marketplace.

The singer-songwriter's difficulties in establishing breakout hits and sustained momentum has nothing to do with material (it's consistently top-notch) or hooking up with the wrong co-writers and producers; she's collaborated with Yellowjackets Russ Ferrante and Jimmy Haslip throughout her career and has worked consistently with George Duke since her days on Warner Bros. in the mid-90s. Her thousands of fans across the U.S. and Japan—where her audience is particularly passionate—could listen to her mix of pop and jazz all day long. But to thrive commercially beyond that base, Scott may soon need to choose one path over the other.

Recorded over the course of three days at NYC's now defunct The Studio in The Village, her latest disc *Every Time We Say Goodbye* is being touted as her first truly straight ahead jazz project because it's the only one she's ever cut live in the studio with all acoustic instruments. Working without the Duke-Ferrante-Haslip driven safety net of the L.A. studio scene, this eloquent, sensual date makes a brilliant case for Scott to go the trad jazz route. Produced by Todd Barkan, the artistic director of Dizzy's Club Coca Cola at Lincoln Center, and financed by the Japanese label Venus Records, the ten-track collection finds her vibing instinctively with the Big Apple quintet of pianist Cyrus Chestnut, reedman Ken Peplowski, guitarist Paul Bollenback, bassist Gerald Cannon and drummer Willie Jones III—all of whom she met for the first time when she walked in the studio.

"Japanese labels like Venus are looking for more vocals to add to their largely instrumental rosters," Scott says, "and they're turning to U.S. artists like me and Ernestine Anderson to fill those needs. We were given a shoestring budget so everything had to be done really quickly, which lent the project this cool old school 70s element. I was a little nervous worrying about how we were going get in and out so fast and how the musicians would interpret my ideas. But these guys are consummate pros and everything was effortless once we got rolling. We overcame the time element beautifully and their solos still blow me away."

The sessions weren't completely without a West Coast influence. Scott brought a total of five finished arrangements to the sessions: a high spirited twist on Ellington's "Caravan" by John Beasley; blues-drenched spins on "Somewhere" and the Herb Ellis tune "Detour" by Ferrante; and romantic and subtle, soul-kissed takes on "Autumn In New York" and "I Love Paris" by Mitch Forman. The set also includes "Cry Me A River," Leonard Bernstein's "Lonely Town" and a fascinating samba romp through "Do You Know The Way To San Jose?"

Beyond the music, Scott is taking the environmental concerns she addressed on her song "The Wilderness" (from *Innocent Of Nothing*) to a new level with the opening of *Starting Green*, her own online store of all organic clothing for first year babies. "I was at a function held by LOHAS (Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability) where I learned about different factions of environmentally conscious businesses," she says. "It got me thinking about doing something to help sustain my life but in a healthy way. My niece had a baby and kept talking about the problems she had finding suitable clothes. I started looking into organic fabric, where no pesticides and chemicals are used in growing, to make clothes. It's important that the clothes they wear so close to their skin are as pure as possible.

"During a period of slowdown in the industry where gigs are less available for artists like me, this has been a great venture for me economically," she adds. "But it's also an extension of the passion for making the world a better place that I've always expressed in my music. It's wonderful to be able to find new ways to contribute to the joy in people's lives."