

Eva Cassidy
I Can Only Be Me
with the **London Symphony Orchestra**
Liner Notes

Ten months after recording the only solo album released during her tragically short life Eva Cassidy was gone. Recorded on January 3, 1996 and released later that Spring, *Live At Blues Alley* appeared like a comet in Eva's local Washington, D.C. area. The largest selling consignment album on record from D.C Tower Records stores launched a local musical legacy that would spread around the world in the years to come.

Six weeks before Eva's passing on November 2, 1996, **Grace Griffith** (an award winning D.C. Celtic/folk artist our label had just signed) phoned to tell us about "...this wonderful nightingale I'm afraid we're going to lose...may I send you a tape?" Three days later the tape arrived - *Live At Blues Alley*, queued up to **Sting's** *Fields Of Gold*. A few seconds in we knew Eva Cassidy was extraordinary. By the time it finished we had heard one of the greatest singers ever.

Nothing short of astounding. A previously unknown singer had mastered decades of multiple musical genres, effortlessly re-shaping and re-defining standards we only thought we had heard before. From *American Song Book* pop to the parallel musical universes of jazz, blues, folk and country - to their western swing, rock, soul, etc. musical descendants. Eva's dynamic voice, from a whisper to the ringing of mountains, was always subtle, while blending influences from different times and places into a musical continuum.

The **Washington Area Music Association** awarded her nine **WAMMIES** (in four different musical categories, plus **1996 Album and Artist of the Year**). She was immediately inducted into the **WAMA Hall Of Fame**.

While introducing Eva's music via her *Songbird* anthology album, our mantra was: "You'll remember the first time you heard Eva Cassidy." *People pulling over to the side of the road to listen* stories poured in from around the globe. Millions of albums later, Eva Cassidy has inspired a new generation of musicians.

After wrestling for years with the question ("What else would Eva have done?"), modern sound restoration technology has provided a window into what might have been - by enabling listeners to clearly hear existing performances in new musical settings. Specifically, *I Can Only Be Me* features Eva Cassidy's glorious voice in the midst of the **London Symphony Orchestra**. The effect seemingly stops time. For the listener, for a moment, the musical past, present and future co-exist.

Bill Straw
Founder/President
Blix Street Records