JAZZED

I remember the first time I heard Eva Cassidy. Grace Griffith, another Blix Street recording artist, sent me a tape of Eva's Live At Blues Alley album cued up to Fields of Gold. A couple of seconds into her vocal entrance I knew Eva Cassidy was extraordinary. By the time I finished listening to the whole album, I had heard one of the best singers ever. A technically stunning singer who literally inhabited the gospel, blues, jazz, and folk roots upon which popular music is built, with an emotional depth that enabled her to breathe truth across the full musical spectrum. The bonus was impeccable taste that extended musical boundaries without overstepping. Major labels either couldn't believe their ears or imagine audiences who could.

Frustrated with having her strength mistaken for weakness, Eva took matters into her own hands and cashed in a small pension from her day gig at a local nursery to fund her original Live At Blues Alley album. No one knew that the night of January 3, 1996 would be the high point of Eva Cassidy's short career as a performer and the foundation of her unparalleled posthumous international career as a recording artist.

Shortly after Blix Street released Live At Blues Alley, I prepared the draft of an album named *The Jazz Side of Eva Cassidy*. Over the years the album evolved as previously unknown recordings came to light; *Summertime*, *At Last*, *Still Not Ready* and *It Don't Mean A Thing*. Complementing these discoveries, previously unthinkable technological advancements enabled the separation of original vocals to be combined with newly recorded instrumental performances. JAZZED is the musical descendant of the original draft, utilizing upgraded musical components recorded over the years, as detailed in the credits. Fans may think they've heard *The Jazz Side of Eva Cassidy*, but they've never heard anything like JAZZED.

Bill Straw
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