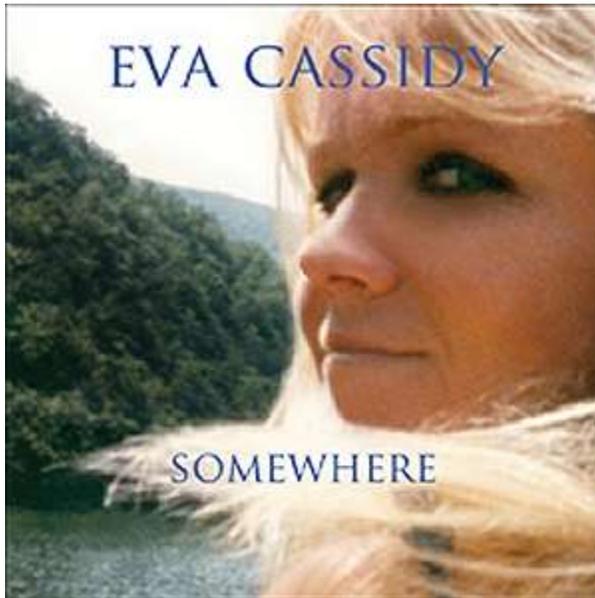


## Eva Cassidy Biography – SOMEWHERE album



“Definitions”, wrote *Los Angeles Times* critic Don Heckman, “become virtually useless to describe the singing of Eva Cassidy.”

The career of the gifted and acclaimed vocalist has likewise defied description and easy analysis. Her eclectic tastes: everything from folk and country to jazz, standards, blues, rock, and pop made Eva Cassidy hard to pigeon-hole, and her lack of exposure beyond her native Washington, D.C. kept her profile low during her lifetime. Now, ten years after the posthumous release of *Songbird*, the platinum-selling recording that brought her worldwide attention, independent Blix Street Records is

releasing **Somewhere**, a collection of all new previously unreleased Eva Cassidy material that once again covers a broad musical spectrum.

Following her untimely 1996 death from melanoma at the age of 33, Blix Street arranged for the national release of *Songbird* in April, 1998, a collection compiled by label founder Bill Straw. *Songbird* included Cassidy’s re-defining version of *Over the Rainbow* with *Fields of Gold* and other tracks from two existing Cassidy albums, *Live at Blues Alley* and *Eva by Heart*. In the summer of 1998, Blix Street also released *Live at Blues Alley* and *Eva by Heart*, the first national exposure for both albums, and all three albums were released internationally. A groundswell of interest developed across the United States, England, and Australia, and by May of 2000, when *Time After Time* was released, total sales were approaching 200,000 units.

After National Public Radio aired an Eva Cassidy segment on their Morning Edition news program in December of 2000, Eva Cassidy albums held down the top four positions on amazon.com’s sales chart in America, with *Songbird* at No. 1. “Top of the Pops” 2 BBC television show’s airing Eva Cassidy’s *Over the Rainbow* video (first in December of 2000 and repeated by popular demand in January 2001) ignited a media frenzy in England that culminated in *Songbird* reaching the top of the English pop charts in mid-March, 2001. This, in turn, spawned media attention in the United States, garnering coverage on The Today Show, ABC World News Tonight and a whole program devoted to Eva Cassidy by ABC-TV’s Nightline, in People magazine, the Wall Street Journal and Entertainment Weekly.

Subsequent albums, on which Cassidy lent her distinctive vocal style to songs written by or associated with John Lennon, Paul Simon, Ray Charles, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Stevie Wonder, Buddy Holly, and Joni Mitchell, drew critical praise (She could sing anything...”, gushed the Washington Post, “and make it sound like it was the only music that mattered”) and sold

## Eva Cassidy Biography – **SOMEWHERE** album

significantly. *Imagine* commandeered the top slot on Billboard's Independent Albums chart in 2002, while 2003's *American Tune* reached No. 4, and both albums joined *Songbird* in reaching the No. 1 position on the British pop charts. *Songbird*, which started it all and resided on Billboard's Catalog Albums chart for 28 weeks (nine of them at #1 and sixteen in the Top 10), is now quadruple platinum in Britain and platinum in the U.S. A retrospective collection called *Wonderful World* was released in 2004.

Born in Washington, D.C., Cassidy grew up around music in Oxon Hill, Maryland (and in Bowie, Maryland after the age of nine). Her father, a special needs teacher, played bass while her brother Dan played violin. She was encouraged to sing at home with her three siblings from an early age and became serious about music and guitar playing at age nine. By high school, she was in a band and sang at weddings.

Cassidy worked in a plant nursery by day to fulfill her desire to be close to nature and played in local clubs by night, developing a loyal following. Her recording career began when she wandered into producer Chris Biondo's studio to sing backup on a band's demo to make extra money. Biondo, impressed with her talent, asked her to come back so he could record her as a soloist, eventually introducing her to Washington's "king of go-go" Chuck Brown. In 1992, *The Other Side*, a collection of blues duets by Brown and Cassidy was released by local Liaison Records. Next came *Live at Blues Alley*, released locally in the spring of 1996 and recorded at the D.C. nightspot during a performance at which Cassidy felt she was not at her best. At the time, she and Biondo were also at work on a studio album to be called *Eva by Heart*. Cassidy didn't live to see it released, or to see the Washington Area Music Association (WAMA) honor her and *Live at Blues Alley* a scant three weeks after her death with nine WAMMIES, including Artist of the Year, Album of the Year and Best Female Vocalist in four separate musical genres. They also inducted her into the WAMA Hall of Fame, which was, according to the Washington Post, (a gesture inspired more by sentiment than by any actual fame garnered by the sadly under-noticed Cassidy.)

***Somewhere*** is a collection of 12 songs recorded by Cassidy at various venues and studios between 1987 and 1996 that have not previously been released. ***Somewhere*** includes the first two songs co-written by Cassidy that have come to light, "Early One Morning" and the album's title song. Once again, the expressive vocalist displays her definition-defying range, tackling and triumphing over material made famous by Dolly Parton, Aretha Franklin, Willie Nelson, Bobby "Blue" Bland, and others. ***Somewhere***, which brings the Cassidy catalogue to nine CDs, showcases a uniquely talented artist once again effortlessly and thoroughly inhabiting many widely diverse genres of music united by one clear voice. According to Blix Street Records label president Bill Straw, "***Somewhere***, certainly the most diverse Eva Cassidy album to date, is a vocal tour de force that could become the hallmark for one singer covering this breadth and depth of material on one album."