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BLIX STREET RECORDS ARTIST GRACE GRIFFITH LOSES BATTLE WITH PARKINSON'S DISEASE AT AGE 64

Washington, DC-Area Vocalist Credited With Bringing Eva Cassidy to the Attention of Her Record Label...and the World

Blix Street Records recording artist Grace Griffith has lost her valiant battle with Parkinson's Disease. The Washington, DC based singer, who is credited with introducing Blix Street Records' Bill Straw to the music of the late Eva Cassidy, passed away at a skilled nursing facility in Maryland on June 5, 2021. She was 64 years old.

Grace Griffith, who recorded six solo albums for Blix Street Records, was diagnosed with young-onset Parkinson's Disease in 1998. Her final recording, 2014's *PASSING THROUGH* in 2014, took more than two years to painstakingly record with the help of musician friends and Eva Cassidy's long-time producer Chris Biondo due to the effects from the disease. For that project, Biondo opened his studio to Griffith and encouraged her to work with him at her own pace. The result was a haunting collection of folk and Celtic material inhabited by Griffith's still soaring vocals, made all the more poignant by her deteriorating physical condition. A tribute concert in her honor was held that year at the Birchmere Music Hall in Alexandria, VA to raise money for her ongoing care. It was her final concert appearance.

Grace Griffith grew up in a family of 10 children on a small farm in Southern Maryland, and the family loved to sing. Encouragement from her family to pursue a practical career led Grace to earn a degree in physical therapy from the University of Maryland in 1978. After graduation, she set aside performing for several years until was invited to sing lead for a D.C.-based Irish band called The Hags. She toured the college circuit with them for two years. In 1987, she joined forces with songwriter Susan Graham White as the duo Hazelwood, and a few years later she formed the Celtic band Connemara with fiddler Cathy Palmer and harper Tracie Brown. She maintained this pattern of physical therapist by day, singer by night until a few years ago when the advance of Parkinson's Disease forced her to give up her physical therapy work and cut back on performing.

A cherished part of the D.C. music scene, Grace Griffith has received more than a dozen Washington Area Music Association Awards (WAMMIEs) in the categories of Celtic, New Age and Traditional Folk and, in 2003, was named Artist of the Year. In addition to her solo albums for Blix Street Records – *GRACE* (1996), *MINSTREL SONG* (2000), *SANDS OF TIME* (2003), *MY LIFE* (2006), *SAILING* (2010) and *PASSING THROUGH* (2014), she recorded two albums with Connemara (*BEYOND THE HORIZON* and *SIREN SONG*), which were both re-released by Blix Street soon after the release of *GRACE* in 1996.

After Parkinson's Disease forced her to put her career as a physical therapist aside, her commitment to the healing art of music led her to become involved in educating people about the disease. She spoke and performed at the 2006 World Parkinson's Congress in Washington, DC and again at the 2nd World Parkinson's Congress held in Glasgow, Scotland in 2010.

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Visit: www.blixstreet.com

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