

## Mp3 Eliot Grasso - Standing Room Only



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The debut album by uilleann piper Eliot Grasso features a riveting selection of Irish traditional tunes, Cape Breton tunes, and original tunes performed with a cast of world class of musicians. 11 MP3 Songs

WORLD: Celtic, FOLK: Traditional Folk Details: "I first met Eliot Grasso in Achill Island, Co. Mayo in the west of Ireland in August 1999 at the island's annual summer school, Scoil Acla. After hearing him play the pipes for just a short while I was immediately aware that I was in the presence of a master musician, despite the fact that he was still in his mid-teens. Although he had only been playing the pipes for a few years at that stage, his technique and tone had developed to astonishing levels of excellence and richness and his repertoire was seemingly endless. This, combined with his intuitive sense of melodic and technical variation, makes him one of the most creative and dynamic musicians in the contemporary world of Irish traditional music." "One of the most striking facets of Eliot's music is that he displays an intimate knowledge and understanding of every tune he plays. Careful examination of his playing reveals an emphasis on melodic fluidity which he largely achieves by viewing tunes as harmonic structures. This, in turn, enables him to develop original and attractive melodic variations which are among the most distinctive hallmarks of his piping. Another prodigious aspect of his playing is that he has succeeded in taking tunes not normally associated with the pipes and making them accessible to pipers in a manner which both compliments the pieces themselves and the idiosyncrasies of the instrument. He revels in playing tunes in keys such as G and D minor and A major, keys where many pipers fear to tread, despite the fact that many nineteenth-century chanters were designed to facilitate playing in these keys. To his great credit, Eliot has spent many hours absorbing the finer points of the music of a range of virtuoso performers, both pipers and non-pipers, and this experience in itself has given his music a very solid and authentic basis. His appreciation and performance of the standard piping repertoire leaves nothing to be

desired and, furthermore, he has composed many fine tunes himself which show great understanding of both the pipes and traditional music itself." "I feel that this debut album from Eliot does him great justice and I have no doubt that it is only to be the first of many recordings in what is sure to be an illustrious musical odyssey." - Robbie Hannan Uilleann piper and Seattle resident, Eliot Grasso, is currently pursuing a Masters Degree in Irish Ethnomusicology at the University of Limerick. Eliot began playing Irish music on the flute at age seven, tin whistle at age nine, and in 1995, at age 11, he began uilleann piping, studying piping technique with former Na Piobairi Uilleann instructor Kieran O'Hare. Since 1996 Eliot has won multiple 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place titles in the New York Fleadh Cheoil and Ireland's Fleadh Cheoil na h'Eiraenn in both the uilleann pipes and tin whistle division. Eliot has performed at such venues as the Kennedy Center, Constitution Hall, National Geographic, the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall, the Library of Congress, the National Building Museum, and the home of the Irish Ambassador, and for such events as the National Humanities Awards, the National Endowment for the Arts Awards, Island, the American Ireland Fund, and the America-Ireland Business Summit. In 1998 Eliot was invited by Na Piobairi Uilleann, the Pipers' Club in Dublin, to record on New Dawn, a compilation of six pipers under age 18. Eliot was not only the youngest but the sole American on this album. In 2001-2002 Eliot was invited to perform as a soloist in Famine Remembrance with members of the Washington Chamber Symphony and in Mike Mulligan and the Steam Shovel with the Harrisburg Symphony. As a pianist and organist, Eliot has been an active member in Goucher's music program for the past three years concentrating his efforts in performance, music history, and artistic administration. While at Goucher, he has been awarded with the Rosenberg Scholarship in music four times and is currently celebrating the release of his self-produced debut solo album, Standing Room Only, which was released in January 2004. Included on this album are Jim Eagan, fiddle, Patrick Mangan, fiddle, Zan McLeod, guitar bouzouki, and Andy Thurston, guitar.

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