

► CD CHOICE

TITLE: Crazy Love
ARTIST: Jackie Bristow
REVIEWER: Steve Trotman

★ ★ ★

Jackie Bristow has managed to bridge the gulf between two music capitals. Born in Gore, the centre of New Zealand's country music, the singer/songwriter is making a name for herself in Nashville – no mean feat.

After recording her debut in Australia, she moved to Los Angeles in 2005 and has made enough of an impression to attract some top people for her follow-up. Co-producer Helik Hadar, who has worked with Rufus Wainwright and Joni Mitchell, among others, has assembled crack musicians, including Joni's bass player Larry Klein, whose solid playing anchors the sound.

Ironically, *Across the World*, the song that most sounds like Mitchell on this album, does not feature Klein. While talking bass players, Daryl Johnson, who has played with the Stones and Dylan, also appears. If that's not enough, Bristow somehow shares a couple of band members with Jackson Browne. Bristow recorded the album previously but was unhappy with the sound, saying it was too "alternative".

The result of redoing the entire



thing with one producer is a very polished effort, sitting comfortably between the country slick of Nashville and the sunny radio-friendly sound of LA. Bristow sings prettily, a little like Shawn Colvin, plays guitar and cites Patty Griffin and Neil Finn as favourites. Singing songs of heartache, loss and longing, she shares a similar knack for melody with Te Awamutu's finest export. The songs are all Bristow's, despite *Crazy Love* also being a title used by Ivan Morrison and Poco. Looking like a cross between Kirsten Dunst and Elle Macpherson won't hurt her career one bit, either. No track really stands out as the production is so even. It's one to absorb little by little. She's currently touring NZ to promote the album.