

You can take the girl out of the country. And when you do, she might just end up playing with international music legends. Nigel Benson meets Jackie Bristow.

Gore girl loves her crazy life

IT'S a long way from Gore to sharing a stage with the likes of Art Garfunkel and Renee Geyer, let alone looking up during a concert to see Jackson Browne standing there.

It all sounds pretty exciting and exotic in former Gore musician Jackie Bristow's world.

"I'm living the dream, but it's not easy. It's not an easy dream," she says.

"I went to a party recently and Jackson Browne was there and I had to sing in front of him. He was standing there right in front of me. He came up to me afterwards and said 'well done'.

"That was so amazing. But there's been years of hard work involved, too."

Bristow discovered singing in the St Mary's School choir when she was 8. She hasn't stopped since.

After a decade spent touring the United States, Europe, Australia and New Zealand, the 35-year-old singer-songwriter has earned her spurs.

Her sweet melodies and hypnotic tones have US critics heralding her as one of New Zealand's most talented musical exports.

"I've done a lot of travelling over the last six or seven years. I love it. I don't think I'll ever stop, really," she says.

Her most recent concerts were at the Canadian Music Festival in Toronto and a sell-out Australian tour with Daniel Lanois.

She has also performed with artists including Art Garfunkel, Madeleine Peyroux, Renee Geyer, Bic Runga, Mark Seymour, The Whitlams, The Badloves, and British band Capercaille.

"The musicians I get to play with are among the best in the world. My keyboardist is touring with Steely Dan while I'm here and my drummer is off with Jackson Browne somewhere," Bristow says.

"The venues I play are usually singer-songwriter venues. There's live music seven nights a week in LA and the level of musicianship is amazing."

Bristow has been based in LA for the past two years and regularly plays around Los Angeles, Seattle, Austin, Monterey and Big Sur.

"I used to sing in a covers band at Foxy's in Dunedin. I can't even remember the name of the band, now," Bristow says.

"It'll be nice when I get back down south near home. I can't wait to get back to Gore to see Mum and Dad. It's been about 10 years since I was in Otago."

She has returned home for the international launch of her new album, *Crazy Love*, which is already being lauded by critics.

"They said I could either release it here or in Australia first. It was a very easy decision to make," she grins.

"I'll stay in New Zealand until summer and then go back to the US to release the album."

The album was recorded and produced in LA by Helik Hadar (engineer to Rufus Wainwright,

It didn't take long sitting there in Hollywood's Hotel Café to realise that Jackie Bristow was special. Bristow brings to the stage a soulful voice, acoustic guitar with pop accessibilities and folk sensibilities

— Desert Highway magazine.

Madeleine Peyroux and Walter Becker) and Mark Howard (Tom Waits and Lucinda Williams) and features a line-up of international musicians.

Bristow's songs have gained international appeal, featuring on Australian television shows *The Secret Life Of Us* and *Home And Away*, and her 2004 track *Carry Me Away* accompanied the Australian movie *Go Big*.

Back on the more refined side of the ditch, two tracks from *Crazy Love* have been playlisted on Air New Zealand flights, and another two have featured on the hit New Zealand television show *Outrageous Fortune*.

Bristow relocated to Los Angeles in 2005 to record *Crazy Love*, the follow-up



Girl with a golden guitar . . . Jackie Bristow.

to her 2002 debut *Thirsty*.

The first three tracks on *Thirsty* were written by Bristow's childhood friend, Fortune Theatre marketing assistant Louise Moulin.

Moulin also has her first novel,

Saltskin, being released next March at Random House.

There must be something in the water.

Crazy Love is due for release in Zealand on October 8.

Jackie Bristow tour schedule:

Thursday, September 13, 8pm, Circadian Rhythm, Dunedin.
 Friday, September 14, 8pm, Revolver, Queenstown (Support for Jordan Luck).
 Saturday, September 15, 8pm, Revolver, Queenstown (Support for Jordan Luck).
 Sunday, September 16, 7pm, Golden Gate Lodge, Cromwell.
 Thursday, September 20, 6pm, Wild Thyme Bar and Restaurant, Invercargill.
 Friday, September 21, 6pm, Molly's Wine Bar, Invercargill.
 Saturday, September 22, 7.30pm, Old Post Cafe, Gore.