



# CRAZY LOVE IN CANADA

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**Kiwi singer/songwriter Jackie Bristow makes Canadian debut Saturday in Toronto.**

"What's a moose?" asks Jackie Bristow. Being that the lady's from New Zealand and is rarin' to tour across Canada, she needs to know about the moose factor. A few tales of band vans ending up in snow filled ditches trying to avoid moose or band vans being totaled after tapping said moose and we agree a summer tour would be best.

Bristow makes her first ever Canadian appearance Mar.10 at Holy Joe's in Toronto, as part of Canadian Music Week, introducing the emo-rich tunes off debut album Crazy Love. One run through of the album leaves a sense this woman'll break your heart when you think you're not even paying attention. Even at her most forceful, there's an element of enticement in Bristow's voice. Coupled to lyrics that sound like journal entries from emotional battlegrounds, you fall in with this stuff at your peril.

The former choirgirl from the bloody sounding but plaid backwater of Gore knows her way around smoky contraltos, minor chord modulation and a grabby chorus..Reference points there are aplenty, among them Stevie Nicks, Shania Twain, Lucinda Williams, Joni Mitchell. But Bristow stamps a song with a specific emotional authenticity not to be confused with anyone else's.

Which makes the tale of "the first but not debut album, at least over here", all the more believable.

Bristow's first recording deal was with Australian label Liberation, signed on the strength of the originality of voice and approach. Once in the studio, things took a gradual but firm turn for the pop and while she isn't ashamed of the album, doesn't talk it up much.

"It did very well for me in Australia, both in financial terms and in getting my name established. Creatively, it wasn't so much fun. The label kept pushing me in a more pop direction. They set me up to write with pop oriented writers, including the Matrix team.

"I learnt a lot but I wasn't comfortable with all that; I felt I was moving further away from the direction I thought we'd established at the beginning.

"I came away from that experience determined that the next album would be more personal. I call this the proper debut album because it's my songs and my vision, unedited and unfiltered". And beautifully enhanced by co-producers Mark Howard and Helik Hadar. The tunes are studded with tasty moments of organ and guitar evoking a roots Americana sound.

"They were both just so amazing to work with and totally understood my vision for the songs. These guys have resumes that include people like Lucinda Williams, Sheryl Crow and Joni Mitchell. In fact, at one point Helik had to leave the project to go work with Joni and I had a moment like, How come she comes before me?"

Then Jackie laughs the self-deprecating laugh of someone who knows her place in the food chain. "It was a very painstaking process but when I listen to the album, I know I made the right choices. There isn't a song on there that shouldn't be there and no song that I left off which I later felt should be".

Friday night Bristow's gonna roll out the tunes at the heart of Crazy Love. If you go, keep an ear out for the soulful swing of "Rollercoaster" and the offbeat rhythm pattern in "Tempted", a legacy of Bristow's stint as a teenager in Maori pop bands.

And with her sheepherders' daughter/ California dreamin' blond looks, it shouldn't be too hard to sit in a darkened room and watch her pour her heart out.

Oh yeah. If you're at all in an emotionally fragile space, bail as soon as she launches into "It's Gonna Be Alright".

You'll know it. It's the last song of the set and it'll stick with you a long time.

MirrorWarp

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