

'LOSING FAITH' Reviews
Audrey Auld

Santa Monica Mirror

She's from Tasmania and lives in Northern California but Audrey Auld puts over that alt-country sound like a Texas native. On *Losing Faith*, her second album, "Not Who I Am" is one of those calling card songs like Kasey Chambers' inviting "Cry Like A Baby." This makes sense since Australian Kasey sings on this track and her dad, Bill Chambers, plays on Auld's album. The soaring "Not Who I Am" also has a pop sheen to it. The wry "Next Big Nothing" has a country streak a mile wide and Auld's duet with Fred Eaglesmith about a lackluster affair is a low-key keeper. Call her a Tasmanian angel.

Tony Peyser, USA, 2004

Time Off

Audrey Auld – *Losing Faith* (Reckless

If you're looking for a companion disc to *Barricades & Brickwalls*, this one should hit the spot. The follow-up to Auld's 2000 debut *The Fallen* sees her continue in the same vein of jagged country pop, her aching voice carrying a raft of stories about could-have-beens and should-have-beens. Bill Chambers continues to bear a strong influence on her music and duets with Kieran Kane ('Harmony'), Fred Eaglesmith ('B-Grade Affair') and Mary Gauthier ('Ain't No Joy') also indicate her rootsy sensibility. Picks are the sorrowful 'You Did', raw 'Trashin' Da Blues' and folksy singalong 'Not Who I Am' (which also features Kasey Chambers).

Matt Connors, Aust.

Rootstown E-zine

It may still not be December for a long time to come but I'm sure that Audrey Auld's cd "Losing Faith" will be in my 2003 top 10. It's such a magnificent record this Australian singer has delivered. With the aid of good friends like Fred Eaglesmith, Mary Gauthier, Kieran Kane and father and daughter Bill and Kasey Chambers "Losing Faith" has turned into an absolute "dream record". To all surprise Audrey succeeded in giving it her own signature in spite of all those guest appearances. She managed doing this by writing 11 songs from the 13 tracks herself and taking the production into her own hands. It would be a real effort to try to pigeon-hole Auld in a particular format. She covers too wide a spectrum to be able to. Try to imagine work by Gauthier and Kasey Chambers and you're coming close. Pinpointing her best song on the other hand would be almost impossible. Be it "B-Grade Affair", a duet with Eaglesmith, "Ain't No Joy" with Mary Gauthier, "Harmony" sung with Kieran Kane the beautiful finale on the album or one of the many other varied songs on the album, each song is an outstanding gem in its own right. "Losing Faith" made the same impression on me like "Drag Queens And Limousines" by Mary Gauthier did at the time. That explains why Audrey Auld will be in my personal top 10 this year forthcoming. Perhaps you should venture into "Losing Faith" as well or rather... you'd better!

Jos van den Boom,

Roots Highway

In a time where most musicians create to please the crowd, it is always refreshing to stumble across both an artist and album made for the right reasons. Though she claims that she's going to be "the next big nothing", Audrey Auld's 2003 release "Losing Faith" claims the contrary. Wise beyond her years, Auld has penned a variety of moving and playful songs that make up the album. In the fashion of authenticity alt.country is famous for, Audrey Auld pours her audience a tall glass of noteworthy heartbreak spiked with just enough backbone to make them stand out with attitude.

Although her sound blends in with country and contemporary folk artists of both today and yesterday, Auld's voice is all her own. As if a heart could talk, Auld's voice soars the darkest skies with the purest raw emotion reminiscent of an angel scorned twice over. Giving life to her gorgeous lyrics, Auld's voice is the most important instrument in the arrangement. Offering everything from growls, snaps, whispers and scat solos, Auld's voice is just another part of her that is "doin' well", fitting in perfectly with her musical environment that houses her heartfelt

'LOSING FAITH' Reviews
Audrey Auld

works.

Of all the things that can be determined from listening to "Losing Faith", one of the most important things is her undeniable talent the album showcases. Her songs have the personal touches of diary entries, yet they cover general anecdotes that anyone can relate to. Stories about struggles with faith, relationships, and acceptance make up the majority of those on the album, each one executed with elegance and integrity. Unafraid to say "that's not who I am", Auld makes the biggest name for herself on the standout tracks, "Next Big Nothing", "Trashin' da Blues", and "Denied". Though she can easily be compared to artists like Kasey Chambers, Gillian Welch, Freakwater, and even Jay Farrar, Auld is definitely an individual whose relationship with music is more than "a b-grade affair".

Just as Auld says "I Know About Nashville", there will hopefully be a time when the world knows about her. And though many are "losing faith" in the authenticity of today's country music, Auld gives us all a reason to hang onto hope. As long as genuine emotion like hers continues to create songs to flood courage and spill tears, the future looks just fine. It just might take others awhile to catch on. Grade: A-

Holly Estrella del Dia

Americana-UK.com

Knowing nothing about Audrey Auld and putting this CD on is like having a revelation, the title track comes blasting out with energy and feeling it's like returning home and the dog jumping up to lick your face. The vocals start acappella until drops of piano and harmony vocals enter the mix, I was thinking Caitlin Cary and Kasey Chambers, a great start. Then I looked further and found a host of country luminaries appearing throughout the record, Kasey Chambers, Mary Gauthier and Kieran Kane being just a few. The songs vary in tone and style; Denied is a simple pretty ballad (the type of thing she does best) with excellent harmony from Chris Haigh. Her voice can convey sweetness and pain at the same time as it does on Our Lady of Sorrows, where the verses are let down by the chorus her voice is nowhere near as effective when she is belting it out. There are terrific harmonies on the female anthem Not Who I Am courtesy of Kasey Chambers, Crystal Bailey and Camile Te Nahu. The delicate acoustic Your Eyes brings things back on track after a couple of unconvincing rockier numbers. Fred Eaglesmith shares vocal duties on B-Grade Affair as they trade verses like a married couple re-treading the same arguments they always have. Resigned sadness permeates You Did and again this mood suits her voice, it has a warmth and a shape and a proudness that could rise up above any degradation. The penultimate track Ain't No Joy with Mary Gauthier sharing vocals (you can tell I'm going to like it from the title) is more twangy and superbly paced, with some excellent slide and baritone guitar. The closing duet Harmony is similarly excellent with minimal backing the two voices (Kieran Kane guests on a song he penned) curl around each other like grapevines growing up an arbour. If it were trimmed back this would be worth at least an extra * there are 4 or 5 excellent songs here, which really isn't a bad ratio.

DC

Forte Magazine

She used to cohabit with Kasey's father, Bill Chambers. Bill, Kasey and Nash Chambers all contribute to this album. Three of Americana's leading lights drop by to sing with her, and other big names abound. There's songs here that'll sound every bit as good on radio as any of Kasey's. And she looks damn sexy on the cover, (in a slightly gothic fashion). Both Audrey's voice and songwriting have rocketed into a whole new league since her 2000 solo debut, **The Fallen**, and its big hit, 'I'd Leave Me Too' - *"Dreamers never like the cold light of reality, It's easier to walk away than look and really see,"* she sings here in 'Denied'. This album's 'I'd Leave Me Too' is 'Doin' Well', but the real winner is 'Next Big Nothing', wherein Audrey confronts the harsh realities of the (country) music business - *"I'm a gonna be the next big nothing, No-one knows my name in Tennessee"*. She joins with Canadian star Fred Eaglesmith to produce the magnificent Iris Dement & John Prine-like 'B-Grade Affair', while the Eaglesmith composed 'You Did' is another standout. Bill Chambers' guitar and George Bibicos' organ power the barely country

'LOSING FAITH' Reviews
Audrey Auld

'Heartache' through a rocking minute-fifty-five that almost leaves you gasping for more. On 'Ain't No Joy', her duet with Mary Gauthier, (pronounced *go-shay*), the two women's voices complement each other so exquisitely that at times it's near impossible to separate them. Fittingly, 'Harmony', the Kieran Kane duet that closes **Losing Faith**, is, quite simply, beautiful.
Kim Porter,

Drum Media

"Since the success of Kasey Chambers, the accessibility of female country singers to the market place is a little more recognisable in this country. Auld has a roughly hewn tone to her voice, which actually ironically gives a sweetness to her songs. Having toured through the pubs of Australia, Auld has created a following and persona which is quite unique. Fortunately she steers far away from the boring quotient of mainstream country, coming closer to Chambers and Gillian Welch. She actually sounds quite like a female Richard Buckner who is an absolute bloody legend, even though he is relatively unknown. *Losing Faith* does just the opposite to the listener. The album is beautifully produced with enough variation on it to stave off any predictability. Our lady Of Sorrows gets bent and has some wicked playing on it. The lilting title track makes for a deep and well-considered album. There is another side to Audrey and it arrives with the track Next Big Nothing, which has a sense of humour and revolves around a classic country chord pattern. It does take the mickey although it almost sounds a little too convincing.

The artwork wrapping *Losing Faith* is an etched and quite suitable affair. Her lyrics are really strong (I do like a lyric sheet) and the mood of the album is captured in all the images. The duet B-Grade Affair with Fred Eaglesmith is quaint yet accomplished, allowing a change of tone mid album. The up-tempo borderline rockabilly Doin' Well is pretty darn cool and would kill it if performed at any country festival.

Auld has put together a solid album with *Losing Faith* without cutting corners or sacrificing her past credentials. The Americanisms manage not to rear their heads in cliché form on this country album. Like Lisa Miller or perhaps Kasey, Auld manages quite well with a little help from her friends.

Sebastian Skeet,

www.cow-punk-quarterly.com

"Audrey Auld is an adventurous and open-minded performer, and on this, her second album proper, she takes another step away from the dull mass of mainstream Australian country performers. Auld has always taken interesting directions, and *Losing Faith* sees her explore the spiritual dimension of her life and relationships, while moving into new areas in her music. The first clue is the packaging. Auld has again engaged the excellent designer/photographer Amy Cruickshank, whose work would seem on the surface to be better suited to an alternative rock release, but lends *Losing Faith* an air of independence and gothic invention. On the inside cover for instance, Auld looks more like Polly Jean Harvey than Beccy Cole. Which is as it should be with such songs of doubt and redemption.

As on *Fallen*, Audrey puts the eclecticism of her songwriting to the test. While *Denied* shows an Appalachian influence, 'Our Lady of Sorrows' has a swampy slide driven feel, with distortion on the vocals. Not only does this add texture to the sound, but is a brave move by any singer. Our Lady of Sorrows is perhaps Auld's best song so far. Mick Albeck's fiddle underlines the searching mood of the song, while Dave Steel's Spanish guitar adds a note of colour. On *Your Eyes*, Auld accompanies herself on guitar, bleakly and simply. Heartache is similarly fascinating, a Springsteen-style rocker, anchored by George Bibicos' organ, and with some sticky feedback drenched Bill Chambers' guitar.

Audrey has brought in some big guns to help out on the album. Kasey Chambers, Camille Te Nahu, Keiran Kane, Mary Gauthier and Fred Eaglesmith all add their voices and/or songs to the album. Ironically, as lauded as Eaglesmith is, Auld is the superior songwriter, rarely depending on gimmickry or word play.

To this ear, *Losing Faith* is an exploration of Auld's doubt, of her guilt, her hope and her fear. *Losing Faith* is a dark album, more personal than any other country-influenced singer in Australia. One song after the next deals with her distance from salvation.

'LOSING FAITH' Reviews
Audrey Auld

Examples? "I'm the one whose bearing the cross of your creation" [Losing Faith]; "I have not been Christened/No-one prays for me" [Our Lady of Sorrows]; "I got sorrow coming on and I can't seem to shake it" [Trashin' da Blues]

Losing Faith is Auld's own search for a saviour in her music, her career, her relationships, her spirit. A clue might be the line in Not Who I Am, "Do you violate sacred sites just because you can". Does it use religious imagery to refer to Auld's all-too-human body and soul?

The loneliness and deep metaphysical searching on Losing Faith is perhaps brave or foolhardy. In turn however, that courage has produced what I believe to be Audrey Auld's Slow Train Coming, and the best Australian roots music release of the past twelve months."

Craig Wilson, Aust.

Big Rigs

The second solo album for Audrey Auld, although she did release the duet Bill & Audrey Cd with Bill Chambers four years ago. Always one for the hillbilly side of country, Audrey has come up with another superb collection of songs to rival her debut album The Fallen.

Trashin' Da Blues, for example, shows the former Tassie resident to still have an uncompromising attitude. Other revealing tracks include Our Lady Of Sorrows, where Audrey has obviously come to terms with a failed relationship, while on the title track Losing Faith, she sings of disillusionment. She can kick up her heels though, as she shows on the positive Doin' Well.

There's some impressive guests on this album, including Americans Mary Gauthier and Kieran Kane, and Canada's Fred Eaglesmith. Audrey came close to winning an ARIA award for her first album, and she'll be in the firing line again.

Greg Bush, Aust.

Drum Media

The coy cow girl supplications of Audrey Auld, who with her innocent voice is not afraid to face the darker side of the psyche, continue to provide a beacon of relevance and reality in the Australian country scene, which is an environment populated by small imaginations and Nashville wannabees. Now I don't go for some of Audrey's more hoedown-oriented material (Next Big Nothing being a perfect example) but when you have this B-grade material left in the shade by songs such as the title track (reminiscent of Jackson Browne with its spumes of coruscating guitar contrasted by Audrey's sweet little girl lost voice) or Not Who I Am, which is a subversive, seemingly spring roses sing-along that gets very dark at times. Then there's the Springsteen-esque Heartache that puts the guitars in the fire and forges a hard edged tune that should kick any party worth its salt into gear (go the adrenalin-charged organ!). Duets with Fred Eaglesmith, Mary Gauthier and Kieran Kane (the latter being particularly affecting) adorn an already impressive album.

Craig N Pearce, Aust.

"A pretty radical change here for Audrey. Willful even, given her two previous albums (the first one with Bill Chambers) were basically retro-country affairs. There were hints of a grungier alt sound on 'The Fallen' - here it dominates. Included are collaborations with Fred Eaglesmith, Kieran Kane and Mary Gauthier, with Audrey supplying the material for each save Kane, with whom she performs his song *Harmony*, another version of which is on his latest album. Gauthier, a wonderful Louisiana born singer/songwriter has obviously been a big recent influence while the gruff voiced Eaglesmith is an interesting foil for Audrey's hillbilly twang. The quasi-religious imagery and confessional lyrics may take some converting for the fairly conservative audience. Audrey is obviously casting a wider net here and it is a brave attempt to break out of the mold. She has written all but two of the songs solo and produced the package using some great Australian and overseas musicians. I'd say her faith is intact."

Keith Glass

'LOSING FAITH' Reviews
Audrey Auld

GREENMAN REVIEW

Australian Audrey Auld writes and sings Americana music in a variety of styles, from confessional folk to country-rock. She's also an entrepreneur and founder of her own record label, making her something of an antipodean Ani diFranco, without all that manic energy.

"Music with the dirt left on," is how Auld describes her music in her press packet, and that's a pretty good description. Playing acoustic guitar herself, she draws on the talents of labelmate Bill Chambers (father of alt-country wunderkind Kasey Chambers) for harmony vocals and deft touches of slide guitar and dobro. Auld has a singing style and a musical outlook somewhere between the younger Chambers and American doom-and-gloom queen Mary Gauthier, and not surprisingly, she also enlists both of these singers on this disc.

Most of the first half of **Losing Faith** is dark and darker. From the opening title track, this album is rife with a sort of gothic religious imagery, and "Losing Faith" employs it effectively in a bitter kiss-off song: "You gave me bread and fishes/and spoke of burning bushes/and I drank your blood just to prove my faith," she sings in the chorus. Her husky alto, slightly rough around the edges, breaks in all the right places and carries a pleasing combination of Aussie burr and country twang.

"Denied" is an acoustic ballad with lovely three-part harmonies on the chorus, from Chambers and guitarist Chris Haigh. On this and all the tracks, Chambers never over-plays with his dobro or slide guitars.

"Our Lady of Sorrows" is dense, anthemic folk, with imagery and words reminiscent of Julie Miller's deeply religious compositions. It's a plea for shelter to a figure representing the feminine side of spirituality, and it sets up the next track, "Not Who I Am." This one, featuring lovely harmonies from Kasey Chambers, Crystal Bailey and Camille Te Nahu, is a feminist cant against the macho men of the world who confuse love and war. Despite all that, it has a jaunty tune, a catchy refrain and lively instrumentation from banjo, mandolin, fiddle and congas.

Things pick up in the middle of the record, with the sassy, bluegrass "Doin' Well," in which Auld turns up her nose at the music scenes in Austin, New York, Santa Cruz and Nashville, in favor of staying right where she is and making music her own way. "Trashin' Da Blues" is a bluesy workout with some fine lap steel from Chambers. "B-Grade Affair" is a honky-tonk comic piece, a duet with labelmate Fred Eaglesmith, whose gravelly voice is perfect for this humorous take on a one-night stand. And Auld bounces back with the honky-tonk swing of "Next Big Nothing," another wryly funny and independent look at her place in the music biz. Nestled in amongst these uptempo numbers is the solo-acoustic anti-love song, "Your Eyes," as bitter a put-down song as you'll hear this year: "You're smiling hard and they're believing you/but your eyes give you away..."

Auld covers an Eaglesmith song, another bitter love song called "You Did," with some nice electric guitar from Jeff Mercer; she rocks out with "Heartache," an anthemic mid-tempo number with soaring B-3 organ; she duets with Mary Gauthier on another lost-love song, "Ain't No Joy," and finishes off on an upbeat note, dueting with Kieran Kane (The O'Kanes) on one of Kane's songs, the lovely "Harmony," in which music serves as a metaphor for love.

Losing Faith offers contrast aplenty, but it's not jarring. Everything fits together in a solid statement of Auld's independence, integrity and grit, as a woman and a musician. Audrey Auld is a welcome addition to the music scene on these shores.

Gary Whitehouse

RootsTown Music Free-zine

Het mag dan nog lang geen december zijn, ik weet zeker dat ik dan de cd Losing Faith van Audrey Auld in mijn top-10 van 2003 zal zetten. Wat een prachtplaat heeft deze Australische

'LOSING FAITH' Reviews
Audrey Auld

zangeres weer afgeleverd. Met hulp van goede vrienden als Fred Eaglesmith, Mary Gauthier, Kieran Kane en vader en dochter Bill en Kasey Chambers is Losing Faith een absolute droomplaat geworden. Wonderwel is Audrey er daarbij in geslaagd om, ondanks de inbreng van zoveel gasten, het geheel een duidelijk eigen stempel mee te geven. Daartoe schreef zij 11 van de 13 liedjes zelf en hield ze ook de productie in eigen handen. Auld in een hokje plaatsen is onbegonnen werk, daarvoor is haar oeuvre tĒ breed. Maar met verwijzingen naar het werk van Gauthier en Kasey Chambers is nog wel de richting te duiden. Het noemen van het beste liedje is echter een volstrekt onmogelijke opgave. Of het nu gaat om B-Grade Affair, een duet met Eaglesmith, Ainít No Joy met Mary Gauthier, Harmony de prachtige, met Kieran Kane gezongen afsluiter van het album of ĒĒn van de vele andere gevarieerde songs op het album, elk liedje is een weergaloos pareltje op zich. Op mij maakt Losing Faith net zoveel indruk als indertijd Drag Queens And Limousines van Mary Gauthier. Dat verklaart volledig waarom Audrey Auld dit jaar in mijn persoonlijke top-10 zal staan. Misschien zou u zich ook eens aan Losing Faith moeten wagen. Of beter: zeker weten dat u dat zou moeten doen! (JvdB)

Marc Nolis, Feb '03