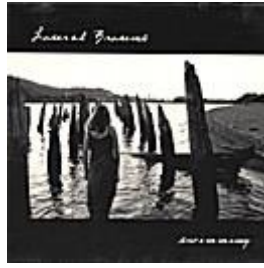


Mp3 Laurel Brauns - Swimming



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Nostalgic ballads about coming of age in rural New England traveling in Ireland, produced with arrangements of Irish traditional instruments, drum-set and bass. 10 MP3 Songs FOLK: like Ani, ROCK: Acoustic Details: Laurel's voice is the most distinctive part of her first full-length album, entitled Swimming. At times it is aerial like Dar Williams with Irish inflections - other times it is smoky and rough around the edges. The subject matter is equally diverse, combining coming of age ballads set in New England and Ireland with memorable images and metaphors. The tone ranges from nostalgic: with melancholy arrangements of fiddles and uilleann pipes, to upbeat and angsty, with drum-set and male vocal harmonies. Swimming showcases the best of five years of singing/songwriting by Laurel, and eight months of rehearsals and recording in basements and living rooms in Portland, Oregon. The album was recorded independently with friend and engineer Dave Casey and, as a result of the extra time spent in the studio, it is professional while still maintaining the raw emotion of a debut. Laurel talks about her inspiration: "I grew up in a little town in New Hampshire just south of the Appalachians, population 7,000, and most of those years were spent skidding around in pick-up trucks, drinking Schlitz Tall-boys, kind of going crazy from wanting something. 'Apathy Drenched in Alcohol' was a really bad poem I wrote in high school. It's ironic because most of the stories on this album are either a longing for that ruralism that I was trying so hard to escape, or else just stories about figuring out where home is..." Laurel is a storyteller. Her honesty is refreshing and her vulnerability is endearing. Her live show combines the folk-rock material of her more recent project, the coffeehouse style of her first album with a few Irish drinking songs thrown in. "I'm confident enough to be a little more controversial now, to stir things up a bit by addressing political and sexual topics more head-on... My audience can identify with a challenge to our sugar-coated culture." Laurel has recently performed at the Northwest Music Festival as well as a number of bars and coffee

houses in the Portland, Oregon area. After recording a second album, Laurel will be touring the New England college circuit in the fall.

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