



Nashville Skyline

Amelia White sings rock and country with spiky style.

Amelia White's cover photo for her 2004 EP *Candy Heart* shows her leaning against a beat-up old Buick, her cherry red top zipped down low and legs stretched out in front of her. I wanted to tell you that it's not the kind of pose and pretense befitting a mature woman.

But Amelia White won't say how old she is, so that's shot. And with her spiky red and orange hair, horn-rimmed glasses and girlish-yet-muscular voice, I came to accept the photo as fitting the country songstress, propriety be damned. "I don't think [my age] bears too much upon my music," she said. Does playing music keep her young? "Oh, yeah!" she said, and added, "I'm definitely old enough to know better, but young enough to do it anyway!"

Virginia-born White spent 12 years as a Boston-based singer, then relocated to Seattle, where Tucker Martine produced her 1999 debut *Comes and Goes*. Seattle re-inspired her but also left her feeling isolated. It's harder to find pickup musicians there, and with more miles between major cities, touring is harder. "I started to feel that Seattle wasn't the best place for me," she said. After relocating to Nashville, she followed up with

2002's *Blue Souvenirs*. Next came *Candy Heart*, a CD refreshingly lacking in the "Nashville polish."

It's not spit-shined like Shania, nor dolled-up and feminine like Faith Hill. It lets White's scruffy, street-smart attitude come through over tunes that flow like Lucinda Williams' best. White said *Candy Heart* is an expression of the primal sides of life. "The theme of *Candy Heart* is a lot about sex and

sexuality, the shadows of love and a little bit about worship," White said. The tune "Candy Heart" has her crooning, "I like variety" and "smoke my candy heart" with a chorus of "la la la's" and little yelps of pleasure.

It's enough rock to keep your attention, enough twang to be country and enough sexy groove to keep your hips shaking.

The beautiful "River" makes you want to gaze into your lover's eyes and slow dance. She sings, "Ride on down the river with me. I'm not sure where we're going, but I know we will go." The CD's opener, "Windowpane," sounds like an upbeat *Car Wheels on a Gravel Road* (Lucinda Williams) outtake, with White singing about hoping her love returns to her, but knowing she'll be OK if he doesn't. **ew**

**Amelia White,
Laura Kemp,
Myshkin**

Luna, 8:30 pm
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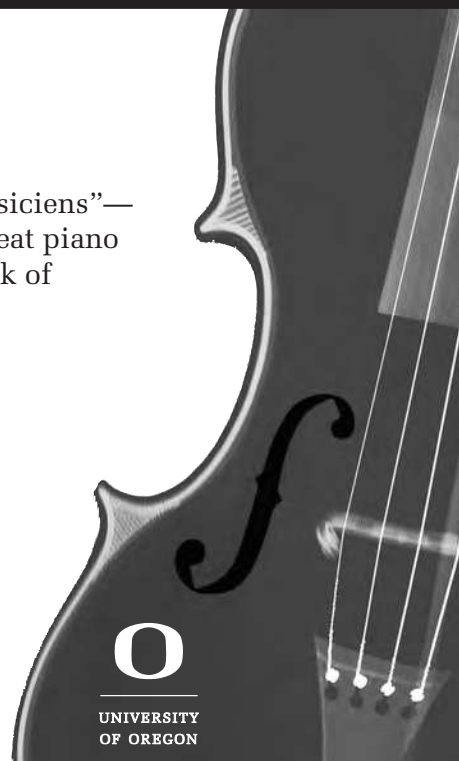
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