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7 Blips out of 10

By August Brown



Jon Auer: *Songs from the Year of Our Demise* (Pattern 25)

Compared with the side projects of his Posies colleague Ken Stringfellow, Jon Auer's solo output has been scarce, consisting only of a couple of EPs. *Songs from the Year of Our Demise*, Auer's debut solo full-length, is a long time coming and worth the wait. Simply,

Songs showcases some of the most melodically satisfying tunes since The Posies' *Dear 23*. It also contains the most arresting songwriting of Auer's career. Composed while the songwriter was suffering through a divorce (and subsequent remarriage), the tone of the album is often haunting. The opener, "Six Feet Under," addresses a doomed relationship in a perfect melody over acoustic guitar, gentle chimes, and subtle orchestration, while the album's closer, "The Year of Our Demise," creeps along with pulsing rhythms and understated, pointed vocals, slowly building in an intensity reminiscent of Elvis Costello's "I Want You." Quasi-Mexican piano rhythms are featured in the brush-off of a former lover ("Four Letter Word") and cello lines echo hurt and deception in "Song Noir." This is Jon Auer at his best. (www.jonauger.com)