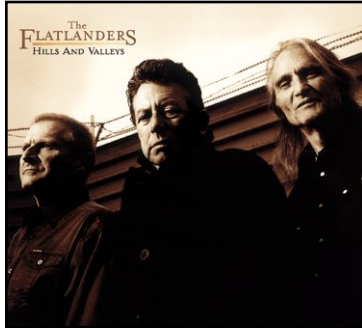


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The Flatlanders - "Hills And Valleys"

April 1, 2009, 9:59 pm by [Paul Byrne](#) | Filed under [CD Reviews](#)



Quietly released on the last day of March, 2009 is the brand spanking new album from Texan Alt-Country giants The Flatlanders. The Flatlanders, that is for those of you who never took note (Shame on you!) are Jimmie Dale Gimore, Joe Ely and Butch Hancock. "Hills And Valleys" is their first album in 5 years, and amazingly only their 4th in 30 years.

These three guys are all legends in their own right, and successful solo artists too, so it's always an event when they record together, and "Hills And Valleys" contains some of their very best work. The opening track "Homeland Refugee" is an instant stand out, and the prime storytelling like that on this song continues throughout the album. "After The Storm" addresses the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and the inadequacies of the Bush administration's response. The album also features a cover of another famous political singer/songwriter's song, Woody Guthrie's "Sowing On The Mountain." Another stand out is "Free The Wind" features some nice cellos, violins and close harmonies.

As usual, all three stars of this Texas supergroup get equal time in the spotlight, eight of the songs were co-written by the trio, and the singing duties are shared equally. No Ego's here my friends! To those readers who may never have heard of The Flatlanders, "Hills And Valleys" is as good a place as any to introduce yourself to their music. It has that comforting, familiar feel to it, yet totally fresh songs. It's just a pity these guys don't record together more often. Roll on 2014, roll on.

Bottom Line: Essential Listening, do yourself a favor - GET IT!! The Flatlanders have some NY dates coming up in early April, see www.theflatlanders.com for details.

Notable Tracks: "Homeland Refugee", "After The Storm", "Free The Wind", "There's Never Been"

Rating: (Another 5 star album, and I predict a future Grammy winner)