

THE FLATLANDERS

Hills And Valleys
New West

★ ★ ★ ★

**Texas legends recon-
vene for fourth
studio album in
37 years.**

Joe Ely, Jimmie Gilmore and Butch Hancock's resurrection of the long-dormant Flatlanders in 2002 was made even more sweet by blindingly good new material. The relatively understated *Hills And Valleys*, lacks some of that album's *joie de vivre*. Still, this trio runs around most any song-writing competition. This stellar set is anchored by existential bar-band thumper "Just About Time" (with flashes of the group's trademark 'musical saw') and "Homeland Refugees", Ely's haunting, Dust-Bowl-Ballad-in-reverse, which traces contemporary hardships against the backdrop of The Great Depression.



LUKE TORN