

## Les Paul & Mary Ford - Swingin' South!! (1963)

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A1 *Worried Mind* A2 *Columbus Stockade Blues* A3 *Your Cheatin' Heart* A4 *Cowpokin'* A5 *Trouble In Mind* A6 *Les's Country Blues* B1 *Waitin' So Long* B2 *I Just Don't Understand* B3 *Ham 'N Grits* B4 *Call On Me* B5 *Dance Hall Blues* B6 *The Big Cry* Mary Ford – vocals Les Paul – guitar

Les Paul and Mary Ford's second trip to Nashville is far more invigorating than their first, a grittier immersion into the country music universe with a slight touch of rock & roll besides. Paul's involvement is far more evident here; his spectacular guitar and fuzz-tone effects are a match for the buzzing harmonicas and swaggering basslines, and there is more evidence of his trademark sound-on-sound layerings. Ford too sounds more deeply involved with the material and the tougher backings; she even offers a bit of a down-home growl. The high point of this album -- and Paul's Columbia period in general -- is his own jangly, madly swinging Saturday night whoop-de-do, "Les' Country Blues" (later adapted into a song "So Long Baby, Goodbye" that didn't emerge until 1991 on Capitol's *The Legend and the Legacy* box). Indeed, five of the 12 tunes here are by Paul, all of them interesting, a burst of creativity unprecedented for him on an album and not even approached since. Alas, this highly spirited outing would be Paul and Ford's last album together, as they began divorce proceedings later in 1963. ---Richard S. Ginnell, Rovi

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