



Lone Star Swing

Duncan McLean

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***High Fidelity* meets *Blue Highways* in this gloriously offbeat quest for the true roots of Texas Swing.**

Using the prize money from his Somerset Maugham Award, Duncan McLean traveled from Orkney, Scotland, to Texas in search of the extraordinary mix of jazz, blues, country, and mariachi that is Western Swing.

This account of his travels takes in barbed-wire museums, onion festivals, hoe-downs, ghost-towns, dead dogs, and ten thousand miles of driving through the Lone Star State. A constant soundtrack of vintage music from bands like the Texas Top Hands, The Lightcrust Doughboys, and the Modern Mountaineers cheers McLean as he tries, with great difficulty, to track down any trace of his greatest heroes: Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys.

Both a quest for a musical grail and a wildly funny travelogue, *Lone Star Swing* captures the singular wonders of Texas and its maverick inhabitants, its staggering 100-in-the-shade heat, its mouth-blistering chilies. . . . Above all it captures the spirit of the glorious mongrel music-once incredibly popular, now all but forgotten-that he crossed the world to hear.

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