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ALBUM REVIEW

## Connie Smith, 'Long Line of Heartaches'



By Stuart Munro  
August 23, 2011

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Connie Smith put aside an active and successful recording career in country music in the late 1970s and has released only a single album since then. So what finally lured her back into the studio? According to her, it was a desire to counteract the "slipping away," in her words, of traditional country music by making an album of what was slipping away. With "Long Line of Heartaches," she has done that in spades; this is hard country, as hard as anything she recorded in her heyday. There are a few touches of variety here and there: a Latin tinge to "I Don't Believe That's How You Feel," a bluesy nod in Patsy Cline's direction with "Blue Heartaches." But the sustained focus is on hard-driving shuffles ("Pain of a Broken Heart," "You and Me") and aching-heart ballads ("That Makes Two of Us," "My Part of Forever"), several from the pen of the singer herself (along with her husband and musical partner, Marty Stuart). They're all delivered, with copious amounts of steel and Telecaster, by Smith's soulful pipes, which are now thickened a bit with age, but still clear, powerful, and emotionally compelling. (Out today)

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