Kenny Neal - Hoodoo Moon (1994)

01. I'm A Blues Man
02. Don't Fix Our Love
03. Why Should I Stay?
04. Just One Step
05. Real Thing, The
06. If Heartaches Were Nickels
07. Bad Memory
08. Hoodoo Moon
09. Believe In Yourself
10. Carrying The Torch
11. Money Don't Make The Man
12. It Hurts Me Too

Kenny Neal (guitar, harmonica, vocals)
Bill Samuel (tenor saxophone)
Bob Greenlee (baritone saxophone)
Bruce Staelens (trumpet)
Lucky Peterson, Dwight Champagne (keyboards)
Noel Neal (bass)
Ken Johnson (drums)

Kenny Neal is such a terrific singer that he can make any kind of blues sound good. On Hoodoo Moon, Neal does the Delta blues justice on a version of Elmore James's "It Hurts Me Too," and does a fine job on the Chicago blues with "I'm a Blues Man." He even pulls off some James Brown funk on "Just One Step." Nonetheless, Neal makes his most valuable contributions when he allows his Louisiana roots to show. On "Don't Fix Our Love," for example, Neal lays his blues-harmonica solo and gravelly vocal over a New Orleans second-line parade rhythm. Lucky Peterson plays the Professor Longhair-like piano part expertly and does the same with the Fats

Domino-like piano triplets on "Why Should I Stay." "The Real Thing" and the album's title track boast the slippery shuffle beat of upstate Louisiana's swamp blues. As the son of Raful Neal and the former protégé of Slim Harpo and Lazy Lester, Neal is the legitimate heir of this tradition and he plays it beautifully. These four Louisiana-influenced songs are the highlights of Hoodoo Moon. Neal is a tremendously talented young man--excelling as a guitarist as well as a singer and harmonica player--but lots of talented young men are plowing the overworked ground of Chicago, Memphis, and Delta blues. Neal would be better off leaving those crowded fields alone and concentrating on his inspired swamp-blues inventions. --Geoffrey Himes, Editorial Review

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