

## Neon Blue

*Stories, Grooves & Melodies*  
(HMC)

By Robert Folsom

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From the sound of its newest CD, *Stories, Grooves & Melodies*, hometown R&B and soul band Neon Blue sure knows how to light up the dance floor. "I'm Not Your Puppet" hits it with that old-school Memphis horn sound but with a fresh take, thanks to Brian Macdonald on trumpet and Butch Smith on sax. These two guys sound like a larger horn section — must be those tight arrangements on seriously get-up-and-move tunes such as "Might As Well Dance." That song has a fast and funky rhythm guitar intro from Allen Blasco, who also has the bluesy, raspy lead vocals down. Drummer Rick Aubrey and bassist Gordon Larsen lay down a synchronous tempo, no matter the groove they're covering. And that's just it — all these cats are trained musicians with lots of stage and street experience. What that means: This CD nails every story, groove and melody it aims for with high-quality production that says *turn it up and dance*.