

## Hubert Sumlin - Healing Feeling (1990)

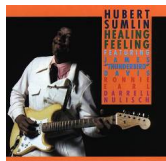
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01. *I Don't Want to Hear About Yours* 02. *Healing Feeling* 03. *Just Like I Treat You* 04. *Come Back Little Girl* 05. *Play It Cool* 06. *Without a Friend Like You* 07. *I Don't Want No Woman* 08. *Blue Shadows* 09. *Down the Dusty Road* 10. *Honey Dumplins* 11. *Blues for Henry* Hubert Sumlin - Guitar, Vocals James "Thunderbird" Davis - Vocals Ronnie Earl - Guitar, Producer Steve Gomes - Bass, Guitar (Bass) Per Hanson - Drums Mark "Kaz" Kazanoff - Sax (Tenor) Darrell Nulisch - Harmonica, Vocals Richard "Dickie" Reed - Organ, Piano T-Bird - Vocals

Hubert Sumlin arguably did his best work during the 23 years he was Howlin' Wolf's guitar player, and his ragged, angular guitar style was a big part of Wolf's rough-and-ready sound. The perfect sideman, Sumlin was by all accounts somewhat shy and reticent about taking center stage, and *Healing Feeling*, his second album for Black Top Records, much like his first, *Hubert Sumlin's Blues Party*, is really more of an all-star blues jam than it is a fully realized project. Recorded May 5 and 6, 1989, at Southlake Recording Studios in Louisiana, with two additional tracks coming from a live show at Tipitina's in New Orleans earlier in the day on May 5, the sessions were once again organized by guitarist Ronnie Earl, whose band the Broadcasters is used on most of the cuts. The vocal duties were shared by James "Thunderbird" Davis and Darrell Nulisch, with Sumlin singing on "Come Back Little Girl," "Honey Dumplins," and the set closer, "Blues for Henry," all of which gain poignancy because of Sumlin's somewhat fragile, whispered vocal approach. A clear highlight is Sumlin's solo electric guitar version of "Down the Dusty Road," which is focused, clear, and intimate. The sound of the album is a little thicker and punchier than *Blues Party*, but once again Sumlin pulls off the difficult task of sounding like a sideman on his own album project, which is a shame, since when he does step forward, things really start to take on a distinct character. The two Black Top albums (this one was originally released in 1990) are really like blues jam holding patterns recorded when Sumlin was still trying to figure out how to make the transition from ace sideman to revered bandleader. Both

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suffer a bit from not having a truly assertive Sumlin on board. ---Steve Leggett, allmusic.com

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