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For Immediate Release...
By Bob Gray for THMF

Foster Care for the Blues

“If music that sounds as if it were naturally fermented from the bayous, cricks and back porches of rural America is what you seek, then look no further than Ruthie Foster’s *Runaway Soul*,” says Greg Barr of the *Houston Press*.

If you can get over to the Dietert Auditorium on Schreiner University campus in Kerrville, Texas, at 3 pm on Sunday, the 28th of September, you will have the opportunity to invest the best afternoon and fifteen dollars you’re likely to spend this year.

Ruthie Foster, with her manager/partner **Cyd Cassone**, is the headliner for the **Literacy and Learning Concert**. Her songs have been described as a remarkable hybrid of blues, gospel, roots and folk music. Rich with honest spirituality and emotion, Ruthie’s amazing vocals have critics comparing her favorably to Ella Fitzgerald and Aretha Franklin.

Raised in Gause, Texas, a small town three hours southeast of Dallas, Foster grew up surrounded by the soulful sounds of gospel and blues. Musical influences include Sam Cook, Mahalia Jackson, Sister Rosetta Thorpe, Sarah Vaughn, and Etta James. But it was her biggest influence, Foster’s mother, Shirley Jones, to whom we owe the debt of gratitude for urging Ruthie to “Open your mouth and sing, girl!”

Mama was right! A rousing favorite at the Kerrville Folk Festival, she stole the show when performing at Willie Nelson’s Fourth of July Picnic, and toured with the U.S. Navy band, Pride, for five years. As Richard Skanse wrote for the *Texas Music Magazine*, “Ruthie Foster’s voice is so full of hallelujah, you sometimes have to listen to her songs

two or three times before you realize she's singing the blues." Or, as she puts it in *Runaway Soul*, the title track to her third album of the same name, "I believe my soul's found a happy home, and left me waiting here to suffer on my own."

Her two previous albums, *Full Circle* (1997) and *Crossover* (1999), are full of her own life. *Small Town Blues*, *Lost in the City*, and *Home* are universal messages that stir the ineffable in all of us. Her determination to make a decent life is expressed beautifully in *The Fight*, and life lessons learned are woven into the powerful *Heal Yourself* and *Full Circle*. *Another Rain Song* and *Real Love* are thoughtful ballads that bring understanding through introspection.

The Literacy and Learning Concert is a fundraiser for the Wayne Kennemer Scholarship Fund of the Texas Heritage Music Foundation, which provides an annual scholarship to promising newcomers who have a passion for music. The Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and perpetuating the Texas music tradition, tracing influences and patterns of Texas music and documenting the role music plays in society. And Ruthie Foster is one of those rare Texas originals for whom all the Foundation's goals were meant. Proceeds are split with Families and Literacy, a local organization making a difference in this community.

Ruthie's music incorporates all the traditional basics: blues, gospel, roots, folk, country – it's all there. But the ultimate product is an original sound that is wholly her own. Comparisons to Ella and Aretha can only be made in the sense of the power of her voice and convictions. Ruthie is an original. Just about the time you think you have a handle on a phrase or verse, you realize she has moved on to something else altogether.

The simple truth is that failure to take advantage of this appearance in Kerrville, Texas on **Sunday, the 28th of September**, means odds against you ever having the chance again. Her touring schedule is such that, unless you travel far and often, you're unlikely to see her perform in a live venue. She will headline the Dietert Auditorium stage starting at **3 pm, on the Schreiner University** campus. Come listen and see for yourself that Foster cares for the blues. And life. She will make you care, too.

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**What: Three Day Event sponsored by the Texas Heritage Music Foundation
Friday, 26th September, Living History Day, 9 am to 3 pm, Schreiner campus
with over 40 performers, and Noon tribute to Jimmie Rodgers. FREE!
Sat, 27th, Texas Heritage Seminar, 10 am to Noon, Cailloux Hall, Schreiner
University FREE!
Also Sat, 27th, Hill Country Youth Orchestra Fiddle Contest, 10 am –over FREE!
Sun, 28th, Literacy & Learning Concert, 3 pm, Dietert Auditorium,
Schreiner University –
Headliner: Ruthie Foster with Cyd Cassone. \$15 cover.**

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