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Dallas-Fort Worth Foote Festival participants announce festival selections

DALLAS (November 19, 2010) – Dallas-Fort Worth arts organizations and cultural institutions participating in the metroplex-wide Foote Festival have announced festival selections and events. The Foote Festival, March 14 – May 1, 2011, will celebrate the life and work of the late award-winning Texas playwright, Horton Foote (March 14, 1916 – March 4, 2009).

“Horton Foote is widely considered to be one of the most influential American playwrights, and the most influential Texas playwright of the 20th century,” says Kevin Moriarty, Artistic Director of Dallas Theater Center. “Arts institutions from across the metroplex have come together to create a comprehensive look at Foote’s body of work, which includes theater, film and television. Dallas-Fort Worth area theaters, libraries, museums and educational institutions have selected some of the most widely recognized and acclaimed plays and will create several exciting events to honor a truly legendary man.”

Selections include *Courtship*, *The Young Lady of Property*, *The Dancers* (Booker T. Washington High School for the Visual and Performing Arts); *The Trip to Bountiful* (Contemporary Theatre of Dallas); *Dividing the Estate* (Dallas Theater Center); readings of *A Nightingale*, *The Dancers* and *Land of the Astronauts* (Flower Mound Performing Arts Theater); 3 FOOTE: AN EVENING OF THREE ONE-ACT PLAYS (Kitchen Dog Theater); *The Old Beginning*, *John Turner Davis* (Rotunda Theatre); *Talking Pictures* (Stage West); *The Roads to Home* (Theatre Three); *Young Man from Atlanta* (Uptown Players); *The Traveling Lady* (WaterTower Theatre) and a staged reading of *The Carpetbagger’s Children* (WingSpan Theatre Company and One Thirty Productions). Special events include a showing of a Horton Foote classic (Dallas Film Society); Arts & Letters live with Wilborn Hampton and Hallie Foote (Dallas Museum of Art); a special evening of Horton Foote programming (KERA’s Art&Seek); the Life and work of Horton Foote: An Exhibition (Southern Methodist University – DeGolyer Library).

“It would be impossible for a single institution to produce an event of this magnitude,” says Moriarty. “But by bringing together Dallas and Fort Worth’s leading theater companies and arts organization in an unprecedented community-wide collaboration, we can celebrate his legacy and introduce audiences throughout the metroplex to his unique voice.”

Foote, born in Wharton, Texas, was a prolific playwright whose plays, among the 60-plus he wrote, included *Dividing the Estate*, *The Trip to Bountiful*, the three-part *Orphans’ Home Cycle*, and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Young Man from Atlanta*. His work has been nominated for numerous awards, including Emmy Awards, Tony Awards and Writers Guild of America Awards. Foote’s Academy Award-winning screenplay adaptation of Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird* is perhaps his most well-known recognition.

Information about the Foote Festival including locations, dates and ticket information can be found at www.footefestival.com. Individual organizations will provide complete details regarding their selections on their respective websites.

For immediate inquiries, please contact Kelsey Guy at kelsey.guy@dallastheatercenter.org or 214-252-3923.

PARTICIPANT SELECTIONS:

Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts Theatre Department

Courtship, The Young Lady of Property, The Dancers

Proud to be part of this Metroplex wide tribute to award-winning Texas playwright Horton Foote, Booker T. has selected these three one-acts that exemplify his profound love and respect for his own past and the journey of self-discovery each of us must make out of adolescence and into the knowledge and understanding of our place in the world.

Contemporary Theatre of Dallas

The Trip to Bountiful

Our heavyhearted tribute to the recent passing of Texas author Horton Foote and entry into the Dallas – Fort Worth Foote Festival honoring the Oscar-winning screenwriter and Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright. This is the tender and heartfelt story of an aging widow trapped in a three-room Houston apartment shared with her son and daughter-in-law and her journey to regain strength, peace of mind, and dignity in a Texas Gulf Coast town called Bountiful. Directed by René Moreno.

Dallas Film Society – DALLAS International Film Festival

Showing of Horton Foote classic

Possible Dates – April 3 or April 10

Dallas Museum of Art – Arts & Letters Live

Horton Foote: Memories, Readings & Recollections

The participants will share stories and engage in an informal conversation, interspersed with readings of letters and selected excerpts from Foote's work. Participants include Wilborn Hampton, Hallie Foote, Tess Harper and Kevin Moriarty. Wilborn Hampton is a theater critic for *The New York Times* and author of the definitive 2009 biography *Horton Foote: America's Storyteller*. Hallie Foote is a stage, film and television actress as well as the daughter of Lillian Vallish and Horton Foote. Father and daughter collaborated on a number of plays, including *The Trip to Bountiful*, for which she won the Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Featured Actress, and *Dividing the Estate*, for which she won the 2008 Richard Seff Award and was nominated for a 2009 Tony Award. Tess Harper is an award-winning film and television actress. She received a Golden Globe nomination for Best Supporting Actress for her role in Horton Foote's *Tender Mercies*. She also received an Oscar nomination for her role as cousin Chick in *Crimes of the Heart*. Kevin Moriarty, Artistic Director of the Dallas Theater Center, will moderate the evening.

Dallas Theater Center

Dividing the Estate

Dallas Theater Center presents the regional premiere of this richly drawn character study of a multi-generational Texas family during the 1980s oil bust. A hit on Broadway last year, *Dividing the Estate* is a clear-eyed, witty portrayal of a family slow to surrender its sense of entitlement—and quick to start a feeding frenzy when the matriarch passes on.

First United Methodist Church Dallas Rotunda Theatre

The Old Beginning, John Turner Davis

The Rotunda Theater at First United Methodist Church, Dallas, is proud to be a part of this festival. We will produce two Horton Foote one-acts. *The Old Beginning* looks at the struggle between a father and a son as the younger man tries to find himself and discovers he must break with the old traditions to do it. *John Turner Davis* is a gentle story of a young boy who is abandoned by his family during the Depression. He must find his own ways of belonging. Horton Foote characters always have a timelessness, a familiarity and a gentleness that draws us into their struggles as if they were our own.

Flower Mound Performing Arts Theater

A Nightingale, The Dancers, The Land of the Astronauts

FMPAT is excited to be among the Dallas-Fort Worth Theaters honoring Horton Foote by presenting three readings of his plays on three different nights. The interpersonal relationships between people that Horton Foote writes so well will be featured in *A Nightingale*, *The Dancers* and *The Land of the Astronauts*.

KERA

KERA's Art&Seek presents a special evening of Horton Foote programming on KERA TV. Look for additional festival coverage on artandseek.org.

Kitchen Dog Theater

3 FOOTE: AN EVENING OF THREE ONE-ACT PLAYS by Horton Foote

The plays: KDT will stage three one-act plays - each using an ensemble of the same 5 actors - by Horton Foote as part of the D/FW Foote Fest. Theaters from all over the metroplex will unite to celebrate the iconic Texas writer, with KDT offering productions of *Blind Date*, *The Man Who Climbed Pecan Trees* and *One Armed Man*. Directed by KDT Company Members Karen Parrish, Jonathan Taylor & Christina Vela.

Southern Methodist University DeGolyer Library

Life and work of Horton Foote: An Exhibition

DeGolyer Library will celebrate the life and career of Horton Foote, renowned playwright and screenwriter, with an exhibition March-May, 2011. Foote's extensive personal papers, housed at the DeGolyer, illustrate his prolific writing career, spanning six decades. Highlights include his Oscar-winning screenplays for *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Tender Mercies*, and the Pulitzer Prize-winning play, *The Young Man from Atlanta*. Photographs, letters, programs, posters, and other documents and memorabilia will be on display. DeGolyer Library is also publishing a memorial volume, with tributes from Horton Foote's colleagues and friends. The exhibition is free and open to the public.

Stage West

Talking Pictures

In 1929, the residents of Harrison, Texas, quietly strive to carve out a place for themselves in a new era. At the center of the play's changing world, Myra Tolliver, a divorced mother with a teenage son, just makes do by playing piano for the silent movies, a job she knows will disappear with the arrival of talking pictures.

Theatre Three

The Roads to Home

Foote was the master of the one-act, and in the 50's and 60's made regular contributions of Texas stories in the format which were always enthusiastically reviewed and enjoyed in New York. In 1982, he wrote *The Roads to Home*, which is a set of three one-acts written to be performed together in one performance, and centered on three women whose small Texas town's values ill-equip them for the tough city lives they are now leading. Foote's masterful storytelling is full of unblinking honesty and laced with humor. In *The Roads to Home*, he reveals that the women's small town ways, built on kindness and discretion, have no system for dealing with less well-behaved feelings like the terror, anguish, and passion that loom in their big city lives. Theatre Three's production of *The Roads to Home* will be directed by Terry Dobson, Theatre Three's company manager and musical director.

Uptown Players

Young Man From Atlanta

Foote's Pulitzer prize-winning play, *Young Man From Atlanta*, is about a middle-aged couple whose rags-to-riches American Dream suddenly turns into a nightmare. Will Kidder has just moved into his new \$200,000 home when he is let go by the company for whom he has worked for nearly forty years. He decides to start his own business and hopes to use the money he gave his wife and his late son, who committed suicide. But Will soon learns that both wife and son gave all their money to Bill's roommate, a young man from Atlanta, and Will is left to face a troubled and uncertain future. The Kidders' painful but often funny story won the 1995 Pulitzer prize for drama.

WaterTower Theatre

THE TRAVELING LADY

The Traveling Lady follows Georgette Thomas and her journey to a small Texas town where her husband will soon be released from prison. After waiting patiently for the past six years to see a husband she barely knows, this journey will force her to come to terms with her own expectations of love and loyalty. This touching play is widely considered to be an American classic. *The Traveling Lady* will be directed by Dr. Marion Castleberry, a Graduate Professor of Theatre Arts at Baylor University and co-founder of the Horton Foote American Playwrights Festival.

WingSpan Theatre Company and One Thirty Productions

A Two Day Staged Reading of *The Carpetbagger's Children*

The Carpetbagger's Children, by Horton Foote, explores the bonds of a family to the land that has shaped their identity, influenced their destiny and, like the family itself, undergone dramatic change with the passage of time. Three sisters, Cornelia, Grace Anne and Sissie spin the tale of their family and an era. Their father, the eponymous carpetbagger, was a former Union soldier who used his post as county treasurer and tax collector, to amass a Texas plantation of twenty thousand acres. Persevering that plantation through the vicissitudes of their lives becomes a central issue for his daughters. Directed by Susan Sargeant, Producing Artistic Director for WingSpan Theatre Company.

ABOUT FOOTE FESTIVAL

Foote Festival is an unprecedented community-wide collaboration of Dallas-Fort Worth theaters, arts organizations and academic institutions scheduled for March 14 – May 1, 2011, to honor and celebrate the life and work of award-winning Texas playwright Horton Foote. For more information, visit www.footefestival.com.

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