

Jonathan Foster takes the stage at Terminal Gravity

By Katy Nesbitt

Go! Magazine

ENTERPRISE — Singer-songwriter Jonathan Foster brings his solo show, featuring songs from his new album "Lantern Shade," to Terminal Gravity's outdoor stage on Friday, Oct. 8.

The show starts at 6 p.m. For reservations, visit www.terminal-gravitybrewing.com.

Packing all the essentials into a van ahead of a two-month tour, Foster said his home was also under an evacuation order from the nearby Fawn Fire outside of Redding, California.

"A new fire sparked up 6 miles away," Foster said. "I might pack it up until Thanksgiving."

Coming off a few weeks break from a summer tour, Foster said working as a solo artist made it easier to get back on the road. In three months he said he logged 20,000 miles.

"I have an advantage by playing small venues, so I was able to get a full tour booked for the summer," he said.

The music industry — from venues to artists and all the people who make concerts happen — has been decimated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Foster said it's still tough trying to line up gigs.

"There are still a lot of people sitting at home and shows are getting canceled," Foster said.

With 10 new songs, along with a broad catalog of music written over the course of a lifetime, he has a lot of material on which to draw when he performs.

"I am still playing songs I wrote as a teenager, and there are songs I play every single night, but diversity is the spice of life and I'm not bashful to put a song away for a while or play a request," he said.

Having a lot of time off gave Foster the space to write the

songs for "Lantern Shade" and possibly more than a dozen others. A prolific writer, Foster said only a few make it on stage or the recording studio.

"I don't even want to count the songs I don't perform — it takes a lot of songs to make a 10-song album," he said.

He usually tries songs out on audiences before they are recorded, and he said this summer's tour was a litmus test for the new work.

"The songs from the new album hadn't been performed, so I didn't know if they fit the meter or not," Foster said. "What's interesting with the solo structure of those songs is they are still taking on new identities. I am figuring out things that don't work — maybe changing the structure of the words to try and keep it fresh."

A graduate of the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and



Keli Tims/Contributed photo

Jonathan Foster brings his guitar, a harmonica and his songs inspired by his love of the natural world to Terminal Gravity Oct. 8 at 6 p.m.

Forestry, Foster came to California for a job in wetland ecology, and he'd lived there for 20 years. While music had helped pay the bills in college and was always a part of his life, Foster said he was in his 30s when he decided to steer his focus from the left side of his brain to the right.

Following the recovery of an illness he took a three-week trip to Australia. Foster said he realized, despite his successful career, he was burning out and life was too short. Around that same time the internet started shifting how music was promoted and shared. He said breaking into the

industry wasn't just showing up at a local open mic night, saving a lot of money to make an album or attracting enough attention to get a recording contract.

"The internet helped people like me a lot — I could afford to start recording songs in the digital age," Foster said.

With six albums under his belt — including "American Highway," a collection of songs recorded live — his repertoire of Americana-folk songs reflect his love of nature and celebrate the seasons and life's journey. To listen to Foster's music, visit www.jfmusic.net/songs.

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