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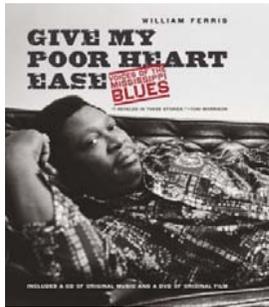
PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## GIVE MY POOR HEART EASE: VOICES OF THE MISSISSIPPI BLUES

Reading, book signing and exhibit by William R. Ferris

**VICKSBURG, MS (October 29, 2009):** The Southern Cultural Heritage Foundation welcomes Bill Ferris as he presents his newly published book, *GIVE MY POOR HEART EASE: VOICES OF MISSISSIPPI BLUES*. An exhibit of the photos from the book will be on display and available for purchase from the Attic Gallery. Proceeds from the sale of the photographs will benefit the SCHF. Bill will conduct a reading and a multimedia presentation. The program will be held in the SCH Auditorium on Monday, December 14 from 4:00pm-6:00pm. Lorelei Books will be selling the books on site.



Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, folklorist, William Ferris, toured his home state of Mississippi, documenting the voices of African Americans as they spoke about and performed the diverse musical traditions that form the authentic roots of the blues. Now, *GIVE MY POOR HEART EASE* puts front and center a searing selection of the artistically and emotionally rich voices from this invaluable documentary record. Illustrated with Ferris's photographs of the musicians and their communities and including a CD of original music and a DVD of original film, the book features more than twenty interviews relating frank, dramatic, and engaging narratives about black life and blues music in the heart of the American South.

In an autobiographical introduction, Ferris reflects on how he fell in love with the vibrant musical culture that was all around him but was considered off limits to a white Mississippian during a troubled era. This magnificent volume brings to life blues music, the broader African American experience, and indeed the history and culture of America itself.

**William R. Ferris** is Joel R. Williamson Eminent Professor of History and senior associate director of the Center for the Study of the American South at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A native of Vicksburg, MS, Ferris was the founding director of the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi. A former chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, Ferris coedited the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* and is the author of *Blues from the Delta*. Rolling Stone magazine has named him among the top ten professors in the United States.

*“Throughout my life, I have traveled with a camera and tape recorder and tried to capture the spoken word in all its mystery and beauty through tales such as the ones presented in this book, tales that are both moving and chilling.”—William Ferris*

For more information, please call the SCHF office at 601-631-2997 or email [info@southernculture.org](mailto:info@southernculture.org).

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