SJB SELECTION

REVIEW · BLUES

Phenomenal Woman | Ruthie Foster

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Do you know what real confidence is? The kind that doesn’t need to walk into a room shouting: look at me.

Ruthie Foster does exactly that.

She walks in.

She sings.

End of discussion.

“Phenomenal Woman” lives on its ability to make confidence something natural, not a pose. Her voice carries gospel, blues and soul, but above all that rare quality where power and control never become enemies.

She could push harder. No need.

She could turn every line into a vocal showcase. She doesn’t.

And it is precisely this restraint that gives the song its strength.

It’s a **gentle strength**, but “gentle” doesn’t mean fragile. The voice has the warmth of amber and the texture of velvet, yet under that soft surface there is a blade.

Like a perfectly calm person who has no intention of convincing you of their worth.

She already knows it.

The gospel element adds an almost communal dimension to an individual statement. What starts from an “I” inevitably ends up opening towards a “we”.

> ***In “Phenomenal Woman”, Ruthie Foster doesn’t sing to win herself a space. She sings like someone who knows perfectly well that the space is already hers.***

LISTEN

Phenomenal Woman — Ruthie Foster — is in our playlist Acoustic Blues, Roots & Dust.

Ruthie Foster. Updated every Friday. Selected by ear.

LISTEN FIRST. SELECT SECOND.