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FirstWorks Presents the Myth, Mystery and Laughter of MUMMENSCHANZ

Illustrious Swiss Mask Performance Troupe Kicks Off 2015 “Artistic Icons” Series

PROVIDENCE, RI – FirstWorks announces the kickoff of their 2015 “Artistic Icons” Series with **MUMMENSCHANZ**, a Swiss mask troupe who revolutionized wordless theatrical entertainment. For over four decades, MUMMENSCHANZ has broken new ground with experimental works using highly visual, sculptural forms in fun and comical performances that entertain audience members across generations. The illustrious MUMMENSCHANZ will delight Rhode Island audiences with classic favorites and brilliant new works on **Thursday, January 22, 2015 at 7:00 P.M. at Veterans Memorial Auditorium (The Vets). Tickets start at \$28 and are available at first-works.org or 401-421-ARTS.** The FirstWorks 2015 “Artistic Icons” Series presents three performances with artists whose work has dramatically influenced fields of music, dance, and theater.

MUMMENSCHANZ reinvented the white-faced narrative pantomime decades ago, by cloaking the human form in black and combining the arts of classical dance, comedy and masks to create characters and illusions that draw audience members from ages 2 to 92 into witty and playful stories. Through its pioneering work, MUMMENSCHANZ’s visual theater is known to have set the stage for groups like Blue Man Group. The troupe took Broadway by storm in the late 1970s, and in its rise to fame became a regular guest on network television hits

The Tonight Show starring Johnny Carson and *The Muppet Show*. MUMMENSCHANZ has since performed on five continents and continues to be Switzerland's mainstay theatrical troupe, with acts that capture human idiosyncrasies and poke fun at everyday occurrences.

“The beauty of a MUMMENSCHANZ performance is the silent simplicity that tells a dazzling story about ourselves and our lives,” said FirstWorks' Executive Artistic Director Kathleen Pletcher. “MUMMENSCHANZ is a unique performance art troupe that completely transcends your experience as an audience member – taking you on a mesmerizing journey without saying a word or playing a tune. After decades, and without the addition of technology, the work continues to spark the imagination, revealing a timeless insight on human connection.” The FirstWorks 2015 Artistic Icons Series brings artists who have significantly impacted their artistic fields to Providence. “This is a curated series filled with legends. These artists not only devote their lives to answering the question of how art shifts them individually, but how their art shifts the outside world,” continued Pletcher.

After the MUMMENSCHANZ “kick-off”, the Artistic Icon Series continues with *An Evening of Chamber Music* with **legendary composer Philip Glass** and Tim Fain on February 25, 2015 at 7:30 P.M. (tickets start at \$38) and the electrifying flamenco performance of Madrid-based **Soledad Barrio and Noche Flamenca** on March 27, 2015 at 8:00 P.M. (tickets start at \$28). All three shows take place at Veterans Memorial Auditorium (The Vets) at One Avenue of the Arts in Providence, RI.

A special offer of 25% savings is available on FirstWorks' “Artistic Icons” Series ticket purchases of all three performances. Series ticket packages range from \$93-138. Restrictions apply. All prices include a \$3 facility restoration fee. For more information on the artists or to

purchase tickets visit www.first-works.org or call The Vets box office at 401-421-ARTS.

About FirstWorks

FirstWorks is a non-profit arts organization that builds the cultural, educational, and economic vitality of our community through world-class performing arts and education programs. Since 2004, FirstWorks has offered Rhode Islanders access to some of the most exciting artists of our time including Yo-Yo Ma & the Silk Road Ensemble, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Wynton Marsalis, Joffrey Ballet, and the master artists of Pakistan through the Caravanserai project (2011-12). Celebrating its decade anniversary this season, FirstWorks has produced 23 groundbreaking arts festivals, attracted more than 170,000 participants, presented over 410 international artists and innovators, engaged more than 100 nonprofit community organizations and schools, and grown into a multidimensional arts organization recognized with 17 National Endowment for the Arts grants.

In June 2015 FirstWorks, in partnership with the City of Providence's Department of Art, Culture and Tourism will launch the FirstWorks Festival On the Plaza as a biennial, signature event in downtown Providence. In fall 2012, FirstWorks partnered with the City of Providence to present the inaugural FirstWorks Festival On the Plaza, leading a consortium of 18 organizations to create an event that drew 40,000 people into downtown Providence. In July 2013, the City of Providence and FirstWorks were named recipients of a second NEA Our Town grant to support a community design effort to create a cultural corridor in downtown Providence along Washington Street. Visit www.first-works.org to learn more.