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FirstWorks' 'The Paul Taylor Legacy Project: Art in Motion'

Season-long program with renowned Paul Taylor Dance Company kicks off November 13 with free event at the RISD Museum

Providence, RI — FirstWorks celebrates Paul Taylor, hailed by critics as America's greatest living choreographer of the 20th and 21st centuries. A season-long project connecting audiences with art, dance, music and American history kicks off on November 13 at the RISD Museum. FirstWorks and community partners will explore Taylor's visionary work through a series of workshops, lectures, films, and concert performances. Taylor himself will be "in-residence" with his namesake Paul Taylor Dance Company to debut a new work as part of FirstWorks Artistic Icons Series in Providence on February 3, 2017, prior to its three-week run in New York City.

November events begin on Sunday, November 13 at 3 p.m. with "Setting Art in Motion: Robert Rauschenberg Dance, Performance and Paul Taylor's 'Tracer.'" Art historian Dr. Robert S. Mattison will discuss the rich collaborations between Taylor and visual artist Robert Rauschenberg. The program culminates in a performance of "Tracer", an early Rauschenberg/Taylor collaboration by Taylor 2, the legendary company's smaller ensemble. The November programs continue with community master classes and inschool workshops with members of Paul Taylor Dance Company.

"We are thrilled to honor a master artist who is living his legacy along with our partner American Dance Legacy Initiative and the RISD Museum," said Kathleen Pletcher, FirstWorks Executive Artistic Director. "This is an amazing opportunity for Rhode Island

audiences to see a "lost dance" and truly understand the genesis of an amazing artdance collaboration."

"Tracer" was the 12th and final collaboration between Mr. Taylor and Rauschenberg, who had created works together since 1954; the year Mr. Taylor started his company. For "Tracer," Rauschenberg made a kinetic sculpture—a "combine," or mash-up of found objects, consisting of a bicycle wheel mounted on a wooden base and driven by a variable-speed electric motor.

"Bob created the 'Tracer' designs first and presented them to me," said Mr. Taylor. "I did the dance around them. This was not always the way it worked."

Rauschenberg, a prolific American artist who reshaped art in the 20th century and was called a forerunner of virtually every post-war movement since Abstract Expressionism, defied the traditional idea that an artist stick to one medium. The RISD Museum collection includes over 80 Rauschenberg works.

Robert S. Mattison, the Marshall R. Metzgar Professor of Art History at Lafayette College is the author of four books and over sixty articles and exhibition catalogues on modern art, including "Robert Rauschenberg: Breaking Boundaries" (2003). Fascinated by the creative process and evolution of artists' ideas, he has spent time throughout his career with practicing artists in order to write about them and organize exhibitions of their work.

LISTINGS:

"The Paul Taylor Legacy Project: Art in Motion" November 2016 schedule:

Sunday, November 13 at 3 p.m.

"Setting Art in Motion: Robert Rauschenberg Dance, Performance and Paul Taylor's 'Tracer'"

RISD Museum, Michael P. Metcalf Auditorium (20 North Main Street, Providence) FREE and open to the public.

Art historian Dr. Robert S. Mattison highlights Rauschenberg's powerful and long-held interest in dance and performance in a conversation capped by a performance of "Tracer," an early collaboration between choreographer Paul Taylor and visual artist Robert Rauschenberg, who went on to become giants of dance and art.

Throughout his career, Paul Taylor collaborated with visual artists who created set pieces and costumes for his dances. Neo-Dadaist artist Robert Rauschenberg was one of the first visual artists to work with Taylor, and designed some of Taylor's most groundbreaking early works.

"Tracer" will be performed by the Taylor 2 dance company. This 1962 dance was lost to history before dancer Kim Jones reconstructed the "lost" dance at Taylor's request. "Tracer" was reintroduced to the dance world in 2016 and is the foremost (and final) collaboration between Paul Taylor and Robert Rauschenberg.

Monday, November 14 [PHOTO OPPORTUNITY]

School Workshops

A unique opportunity for high school students to learn Paul Taylor's philosophy and techniques from professional dancers from his renowned Taylor 2 company. Four company members will lead workshops with students from Jacqueline M. Walsh School for the Performing and Visual Arts (Pawtucket), Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts (Providence), Juanita Sanchez Educational Complex (Providence) and Central Falls High School (Central Falls).

Monday, November 14, 5-6:30 p.m.

Community Master Class with Ruth Andrien of the Taylor 2 dance company

Ashamu Dance Studio at Brown University (83 Waterman Street, Providence)

Reservations \$5 in advance through FirstWorks 401-421-4278; \$10 at the door. (Some dance experience needed).

This is a unique opportunity for Rhode Island-area dancers to take a master class with **Ruth Andrien**, who originated roles as former principal Taylor dancer, and has restaged Mr. Taylor's work around the world. At American Dance Festival Andrien has directed

the Paul Taylor Project for the past three years. Since 2010, she has been rehearsal director of the Taylor 2 dance company and is a close collaborator with American Dance Legacy Initiative.

Tuesday, November 15 [PHOTO OPPORTUNITY]

School workshops with Taylor 2 dance company members continue for dance students at additional Rhode Island schools TBA.

"The Paul Taylor Legacy Project: Art in Motion" is a Widening the Circle initiative developed by FirstWorks and American Dance Legacy Initiative, along with partners including the Brown University Orchestra, RISD Museum, and Cable Car Cinema.

About Paul Taylor

Paul Taylor is the greatest living pioneer of American modern dance, with 144 dances made since 1954 when he established the Paul Taylor Dance Company. He continues to offer cogent observations on life's complexities and society's thorniest issues through his dances. A virtuoso dancer for 20 years, Mr. Taylor turned exclusively to choreography in 1974; the dance that followed, "Esplanade," was hailed an instant classic. His works are performed by the Taylor Company, Taylor 2 and ballet and modern dance companies the world over. In 2015 he established PAUL TAYLOR'S AMERICAN MODERN DANCE to bring to New York's Lincoln Center – in addition to his own repertoire – great dances of the past and present by other modern choreographers, and works by the next generation of choreographers working directly on his Company. A Kennedy Center honoree, he is the subject of the Oscar-nominated documentary, "Dancemaker," and author of the acclaimed autobiography, "Private Domain."

About FirstWorks

FirstWorks is a non-profit based in Providence, Rhode Island whose purpose is to build the cultural, educational and economic vitality of its community by engaging audiences with world-class performing arts and education programs. Since 2004, **FirstWorks** festivals, performances and programs have attracted more than 366,000 participants. The **FirstWorks Arts Learning Program** reaches over 4,000 students from public and charter schools across Rhode Island with transformative arts-based learning experiences. **FirstWorks** is Founding Creative Partner for PVDFest, partnering with the City of Providence to produce an international arts celebration held each June in downtown Providence. The 2016 PVDFest drew over 75,000 to experience music, art and spectacle. Visit http://first-works.org to learn more.

About American Dance Legacy Initiative

American Dance Legacy Initiative (ADLI) transforms how people think about and experience dance through collaborative programming that connects with American heritage and builds a dance literate public. Founded in 1993 by the trailblazing Adams sisters—Carolyn Adams and Julie Adams Strandberg, ADLI is housed at Brown University's Center for Public Humanities and Cultural Heritage to strengthen a shared commitment to public engagement with the arts and culture. ADLI's performing and teaching ensemble, Dancing Legacy, leads activities with ADLI's network of artists, educators, specialists, and supporters from across the nation. Visit www.adli.us to learn more.

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