

MEDIA CONTACT: Karen Greco  
[karen@kgrecopr.com](mailto:karen@kgrecopr.com)  
212-560-9868  
[High-resolution images available](#)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **FirstWorks Brings Performances by Acclaimed Global Innovators to Providence with Three-part Frontier Series**

Performance series highlights stories of resilient women from around the globe with music and new media artistry from Central Asia, Venezuela and Chicago

**PROVIDENCE, RI – FirstWorks**, a Rhode Island non-profit dedicated to building community through world-class arts, announces its three-part **FirstWorks Frontier Series** featuring performances and Arts Learning opportunities from internationally acclaimed artists curated from around the globe. The spring 2018 series carries a theme of women's strength and resilience across the genres of music, film and new media theatre. Tickets are on sale now at <http://first-works.org> and 401-401-4281 starting at \$25 advance general admission and \$15 for students. A Frontier Series Passport is also available offering admission to all three performances for the price of two.

The **FirstWorks Frontier Series** kicks off on **Wednesday, March 14, 7:30 p.m.** at RISD Auditorium (7 Canal Walkway, Providence) with “**Qyrq Qyz/Forty Girls**,” an ancient epic of Central Asian girl power told through live music and poetry set against a backdrop of contemporary film. A cutting-edge collaboration between filmmaker Saodat Ismailova and composer Dmitri Yanov-Yanovsky, two of Uzbekistan's most acclaimed contemporary artists, “Qyrq Qyz/Forty Girls” tells a centuries-old story of 40 women warriors who defend their land against Persian invaders and

establish a rule of justice and compassion. This international production from the Aga Khan Music Initiative makes its Providence premiere with FirstWorks in partnership with the Rhode Island School of Design Provost's Office prior to its New York City debut at Brooklyn Academy of Music.

The series continues at RISD Auditorium on **Sunday, March 18 at 7:00 p.m.** with a soul-shaking concert and dance party with **"The Voice of Venezuela" Betsayda Machado** and her multigenerational band of musicians and dancers, **La Parranda El Clavo**. Machado and her band have accumulated accolades on their crowdfunded first worldwide tour away from the tiny Venezuelan village of El Clavo, where their music has been igniting parties in the town square for over 30 years. Their debut appearance at WOMEX, Europe's largest annual world music exposition in October 2017 called new global attention to *tambor*, a genre of Venezuelan Afro-Soul music said to make dancers float. The performance is presented in partnership with RISD Liberal Arts.

The globally acclaimed performance collective **Manual Cinema** caps the spring 2018 FirstWorks Frontier Series with its multimedia performance **"Lula Del Ray"** on **Saturday, April 7 at 8:00 p.m.** at the Moses Brown School Woodman Center (250 Lloyd Ave.) Manual Cinema weaves together shadow puppetry, theatre, cinematic techniques, multi-channel sound design and live music to create haunting, immersive stories that have earned the collective cult status at major art venues and festivals around the world including Brooklyn Academy of Music, Chicago International Music and Movies Festival, The Kennedy Center, International Festival of Arts and Ideas, and the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, among others. "Lula del Ray" is a mythic reinvention of the classic coming-of-age story, set in the mid-century American Southwest and inspired by the music of Hank Williams, Roy Orbison and Patsy Cline. A New York Times "Critic's Pick," it tells the

story of a lonely girl living with her mother on the outskirts of a vast satellite array in the desert. After a chance encounter over the radio, Lula becomes obsessed with a soulful country music duo, inspiring her to run away from home and into a world of danger, deception, and disappointment. The performance is presented in partnership with Moses Brown School.

“Through our spring 2018 FirstWorks Frontier Series, we are thrilled to not only introduce diverse audiences to a global treat for the senses from innovative creators taking the performance world by storm, but to ignite a celebration of the feminine strength that powers history and infuses our shared humanity,” said Kathleen Pletcher, Executive Artistic Director of FirstWorks.

Daytime student matinees and in-school workshops are also planned as part of the FirstWorks Arts Learning program serving grades K-12. School representatives may contact Kathleen McAreavey, FirstWorks Education and Community Manager at 401-421-4278 to participate.

### **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 400,000 participants. The **FirstWorks Arts Learning Program** reaches more than 4,000 students from public and charter schools across Rhode Island with transformative arts-based learning experiences. **FirstWorks** is Founding Partner for PVDfest, collaborating with the City of Providence to produce an international arts celebration held each June that draws tens of thousands of visitors to Providence to experience music, art and spectacular performances. Visit <http://first-works.org> to learn more.

### **Listings Information:**

WHO: **FirstWorks Frontier Series presents “Qyrq Qyz/Forty Girls”**

WHAT: An ancient epic of Central Asian "girl power" told through music, poetry and contemporary film.

WHEN: **Wednesday, March 14, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.**

WHERE: **RISD Auditorium** (7 Canal Walkway, Providence)

TICKETS: \$25 advance general admission / \$30 at door / \$15 students  
PURCHASE: Tickets are available at <http://first-works.org> and at 401-421-4281

**Listings Information:**

WHO: **FirstWorks Frontier Series presents Betsayda “The Voice of Venezuela”**  
WHAT: A spirit-shaking percussion and voice fiesta, said to make dancers float!  
WHEN: **Sunday, March 18, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.**  
WHERE: **RISD Auditorium** (7 Canal Walkway, Providence)  
TICKETS: \$25 advance general admission / \$30 at door / \$15 students  
PURCHASE: Tickets are available at <http://first-works.org> and at 401-421-4281

**Listings Information:**

WHO: **FirstWorks Frontier Series presents Manual Cinema “Lula Del Ray”**  
WHAT: A haunting, immersive coming of age story spun from shadow puppetry, cinematic techniques, multi-channel sound design and live music.  
WHEN: **Saturday, April 7, 2018 at 8:00 p.m.**  
WHERE: **Moses Brown School Woodman Center** (250 Lloyd Avenue, Providence)  
TICKETS: \$30 advance general admission / \$35 at door / \$15 students  
PURCHASE: Tickets are available at <http://first-works.org> and at 401-421-4281

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