

Media Advisory/Photo Opportunity/  
Calendar Listing



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[High-resolution images available](#)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 16, 2019

**FirstWorks Brings Heather Henson and IBEX Puppetry to Rhode Island for Artist Residency Events and New England Premiere Performance**

Community Workshops, Puppet Film Screenings, Artist's Talk and Arts Learning Programs; Events Culminate with Performances of Environmentally-Themed 'Ajijaak on Turtle Island'

**PROVIDENCE, RI** - Members of the community are invited to attend, and Media are welcome to cover exciting events and thought-provoking performances as FirstWorks welcomes puppet artist Heather Henson and her production company, IBEX Puppetry to Rhode Island. Henson, the daughter of puppet legend Jim Henson and a RISD alumnus, has had a long creative partnership with FirstWorks.

A variety of public events are scheduled to take place at venues around the region starting on January 24, 2019 and culminate on January 31 and February 1, 2019 with the New England premiere run of "Ajijaak on Turtle Island" at Moses Brown School's state-of-the-art Woodman Center in Providence, RI. As part of FirstWorks' commitment to arts education, private residency events include film screenings and artist-led puppetry workshops at schools throughout the state, and three sold out Arts Learning matinee performances of "Ajijaak on Turtle Island" for K-12 students.

FirstWorks is a Providence-based non-profit dedicated to building the cultural, educational and economic vitality of its community by engaging audiences with world-class performing arts and education programs.

“Ajijaak on Turtle Island” brings together an ensemble of Native American performers to tell the tale of Ajijaak, a young whooping crane who must face her first migration cycle on Turtle Island (North America) after being separated from her family. “Ajijaak on Turtle Island” was written by Grammy Award winner Ty Defoe, with lyrics by Defoe and Dawn Avery, music by Avery & Larry Mitchell, Kevin Tarrant and Defoe, and is based on original storyboards written and drawn by Henson. Puppets built by the world-renowned Jim Henson’s Creature Shop™, indigenous songs and dances, kite-flying and video projections create an immersive experience that honors contemporary Native American cultures and illustrates the harmonious relationship between humans, animals and the environment.

Performance tickets range from \$22.50 to \$40 and are available now online at [first-works.org](http://first-works.org) or by calling the box office at 401-421-4281. Special discounts for students, Native American community members, working artists and groups of 10 or more are available by calling FirstWorks at 401-421-4278.

#### PUBLIC EVENTS SCHEDULE:

WHO: FirstWorks artist residency with Heather Henson and IBEX Puppetry

WHAT/

WHEN/

WHERE: **Film Screening and Panel Discussion**

Thursday, January 24, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.

Dedee Shattuck Gallery, 1 Partner’s Drive, Westport, MA

FirstWorks and Dedee Shattuck Gallery present a screening of short films selected from Heather Henson’s “Handmade Puppet Dreams” film series, followed by a panel discussion with local stop-motion

animators and puppeteers Adam Buck and Rachel Nadeau.  
Recommended for ages 17 and up  
Registration required – email [htaylor@first-works.org](mailto:htaylor@first-works.org) to RSVP  
\$5 suggested donation at the door

**Family Film Screening and Workshop**

Saturday, January 26, 2019 from 10:30-11:30 a.m.  
Jamestown Arts Center, 18 Valley Street, Jamestown, RI  
FirstWorks and the Jamestown Arts Center present a screening of family-focused short films selected from Heather Henson's "Handmade Puppet Dreams" film series, accompanied by hands-on activities for children ages 7 and up.  
Pre-registration is recommended – [first-works.org](http://first-works.org)  
\$5 fee

**FirstWorks Artist Up-Close Conversation with Heather Henson**

Monday, January 28, 2019 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. talk and Q&A  
Rhode Island School of Design Chace Center  
Michael P. Metcalf Auditorium, 20 North Main Street, Providence, RI  
Free and open to the public  
*Made possible with support from RISD Liberal Arts Department Humanities Fund*

**FirstWorks and Heather Henson Present  
"AJIJAAK ON TURTLE ISLAND"**

Thursday, January 31, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. and  
Friday, February 1, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.  
Woodman Center at Moses Brown School, 250 Lloyd Avenue, Providence, RI  
An immersive environmental spectacle of puppetry, Native American inspired song and dance, video projections and soaring kites.  
Tickets range from \$22.50-\$40 with discounts available  
Tickets at [first-works.org](http://first-works.org) or 401-421-4281

WHY: Opportunities to view puppet film shorts, hear thought-provoking discussions, participate in workshops, hear a conversation with Heather Henson, enjoy a live theatrical puppetry performance with an environmental theme and indigenous performers while connecting with, learning from and being inspired by the performance artists from IBEX Puppetry.

### **About IBEX Puppetry**

IBEX Puppetry is an entertainment company devoted to health and healing for the planet through artistic spectacle, outreach, and devotion to the fine art of puppetry in all of its mediums. Founded in 2000 and receiving multiple UNIMA (Union Internationale de la Marionette) awards since its inception, IBEX Puppetry supports puppet art in the mediums of film, stage, gallery exhibits, workshops, and artist presentations. IBEX Puppetry produces Heather Henson's own Environmental Spectacles and Sing-Along events. IBEX also nurtures the creation and continuance of contemporary puppetry works by independent artists through the "Handmade Puppet Dreams" film series, The Puppet Slam Network and IBEX Presents.

### **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 500,000 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 in 2018 drew 100,000 visitors to Providence to experience music, art and spectacular performances. Visit [first-works.org](http://first-works.org) to learn more.

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