

FirstWorks Media Contact
Rebecca Pazienza / 401-447-8009
rmpazienza@gmail.com
[High resolution images available](#)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 25, 2019

FirstWorks Announces 2020 Season Lineup of Powerhouse Performances

Global pop star Angélique Kidjo, Los Angeles-based daredevil dance company DIAVOLO, Haitian-American composer Daniel Bernard Roumain, live-action animator Miwa Matreyek, Rhode Island-based Aurea Ensemble; performance tickets now on sale in time for the holidays

Providence, RI – **FirstWorks**, a Rhode Island non-profit dedicated to building community through world-class arts, unveils its winter/spring 2020 schedule of live performances and community engagement programs. **FirstWorks** connects audiences to the top creative forces of our time – from Benin-born global pop star **Angélique Kidjo**'s reimagining of the Talking Heads' revered album, "**Remain in Light**," to songs of civil rights and redemption from composer **Daniel Bernard Roumain and The Humanist Septet**, to glorious visions in animation by **Miwa Matreyek**, to chamber music from Rhode Island's own **Aurea Ensemble** inspired by humanity's place in nature, to architecture-inspired daredevil dance from LA-based **DIAVOLO**.

"We start a new decade with a powerhouse slate of FirstWorks performances to delight and inspire audiences through our winter and spring 2020 season," said Kathleen Pletcher, Executive Artistic Director of FirstWorks. "The alchemy of combining globally-renowned touring artists with the best of Rhode Island's creative talent is a hallmark of our 15-year history and sets the stage for our collaboration with the City of Providence and the sixth annual PVDFest in June 2020."

For the 2019-2020 season, FirstWorks embarks upon an ambitious project to amplify diverse voices and celebrate differences through the performing arts. This season-long project, entitled *Raise Your Voice*, will bring world-class artists to Rhode Island for artist residencies featuring K-12 educational matinees, artist-led workshops for students and older adults, film screenings, and community engagement programming designed to generate empathy through the arts. The *Raise Your Voice* project is made possible in part with support from the National Endowment for the Arts and Providence's Department of Art, Culture + Tourism.

FirstWorks presents **Aurea Ensemble**, the superb string quartet hailed for crossing boundaries between music and words, with **“Of Nature Composed”** on **Sunday, January 26, 2020, 4 p.m. at The First Unitarian Church of Providence**, 1 Benevolent Street, Providence. The concert, arranged by Aurea’s Artistic Director Consuelo Sherba, features compositions by some of America’s most eloquent composers, poets and writers, from Ted Kooser to Henry David Thoreau. “Of Nature Composed” premiered in 2016 to celebrate the centennial of the Pulitzer Prize through an exploration of nature, science, the arts, and humanities. Tickets are available at the FirstWorks box office by phone at (401) 421-4278, or online at first-works.org. Tickets are \$30 advance, \$35 at the door.

Three-time Grammy winner **Angélique Kidjo** brings her critically acclaimed reimagining of the Talking Heads’ landmark album, **“Remain in Light”** to the FirstWorks stage on **Saturday, February 22, 2020, 8 p.m. at The VETS**, 1 Avenue of the Arts, Providence. Kidjo and her full band underscore the album’s African roots live in concert with explosive percussion, euphoric singing, and traditional African language proverbs layered throughout chart-topping hits including *“Once in a Lifetime.”* Popular music was never quite the same after the Talking Heads (who met as students at Rhode Island School of Design) released “Remain in Light” in 1980. Kidjo recounts how the album’s Afrobeat polyrhythms helped to bridge her past and her future following her exile from Benin to Paris in 1983. “This is African,” Kidjo remembers thinking, “yet it’s got something that is turning my head upside down.” Tickets to **Angélique Kidjo’s “Remain in Light”** are available at the PPAC/VETS box office (220 Weybosset Street in downtown Providence), by phone at (401) 421-ARTS (2787), or online at first-works.org and thevetsri.com. Tickets are \$39-\$69 (prices include a \$4 per ticket facility restoration fee).

Renowned Haitian-American violinist/composer **Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR)** collaborates with local music makers – **The Humanist Septet** – in **“Redemption Songs and Sonatas,”** a concert celebrating a worldview of civil rights for all on **Saturday, February 29, 2020, 7:00 p.m. at First Unitarian Church of Providence**, 1 Benevolent Street, Providence. Known for combining his classical training with urban, electronic, and African American sounds, DBR’s genre-bending collaborations span the worlds of Philip Glass, Bill T. Jones, Savion Glover, and Lady Gaga. DBR has been embedded in Providence’s creative community as FirstWorks’ inaugural Artistic Ambassador during its 2019-2020 season. His role spans workshops for students, teachers, and elders, community meals,

collaboration with local artists, and live performances. The concert features six of Providence's own creative voices, including Becky Bass (steel pan, vocals), Christopher Johnson (spoken word), Joe Parillo (piano), Kim Trusty (guitar, vocals), and Jerry Wilfong (bass). From Bob Marley to the Haitian and Israeli national anthems, "Redemption Songs" is a composer's view of our desire to define ourselves, our world, and sometimes, one another. Tickets are available at the FirstWorks box office by phone at (401) 421-4278, or online at first-works.org. Tickets are \$30 advance, \$35 at the door.

FirstWorks presents acclaimed multimedia performance artist **Miwa Matreyek** in a residency from **March 25-28, 2020**, highlighted by a performance of "**Glorious Visions in Animation**" (date and location to be announced). Using animation, projections, and her own moving shadow, Matreyek weaves fantastical narratives which leave audiences spellbound. "Glorious Visions in Animation" features two visually extraordinary pieces: Matreyek's newest work, "Infinitely Yours," which explores the web of intricate connections between humans and climate change, and "This World Made Itself," a journey from Earth's epic beginnings to today's fast-paced, human world.

FirstWorks' spring 2020 headliner will be **DIAVOLO | Architecture in Motion®**, on **Friday, April 24, 2020, 7:30 p.m. at Providence Performing Arts Center**, 220 Weybosset Street, Providence. Seen by over 95 million people as a top 10 finalist on NBC's "America's Got Talent," DIAVOLO shatters boundaries and soars beyond the grasp of gravity. Their unique style encompasses dance, acrobatics, and gymnastics in thrilling performances which use meticulously designed structures to explore the relationship between the human body and its surrounding architectural environment. Co-presented by FirstWorks and Providence Performing Arts Center, tickets to **DIAVOLO | Architecture in Motion®** are available now at the PPAC/VETS box office (220 Weybosset Street in downtown Providence), by phone at (401) 421-ARTS (2787), or online at first-works.org and ppacri.org. Tickets are \$39.50-\$69.50 (prices include a \$3 per ticket facility restoration fee).

For more information on FirstWorks' season, visit first-works.org. Educator and student discounts are also available to FirstWorks 2020 winter/spring performances by calling 401-421-4278.

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 diverse audiences with world-class performing arts and education programs. Since 2004, FirstWorks festivals, performances and programs have attracted more than 600,000 participants. Last season, FirstWorks arts education

programs reached over 5,500 students from public and charter schools across Rhode Island with transformative, arts-based learning experiences. FirstWorks is the founding partner of PVDFest, collaborating with the City of Providence to produce the City's free signature arts celebration held each June. In 2019 PVDFest drew 130,000 visitors to Providence to experience music, art and spectacular performances. Embracing collaboration, FirstWorks has fostered over 90 community partnerships across business, social service, government, arts, and education sectors. Sustained collaborations with higher education include ambitious arts programming with Brown Arts Initiative at Brown University, artist workshops at Providence College, and lectures at Rhode Island School of Design. Visit first-works.org to learn more.

Calendar Listing Information:

WHO: **Aurea Ensemble "Of Nature Composed"**
WHAT: Rhode Island's own performance ensemble with a superb string quartet at its core explores the intersection of nature, science, and the arts through America's most eloquent voices on our natural world.
WHEN: Sunday, January 26, 2020, 4 p.m.
WHERE: The First Unitarian Church of Providence, 1 Benevolent Street, Providence
TICKETS: \$30 advance at first-works.org, (401) 421-4278. \$35 at the door. Educator and student discounts available (401) 421-4278

WHO: **Angélique Kidjo's "Remain in Light"**
WHAT: Global pop superstar Angélique Kidjo and her full band reimagine the Talking Heads' great opus, "Remain in Light."
WHEN: Saturday, February 22, 2020, 8 p.m.
WHERE: The VETS, 1 Avenue of the Arts, Providence
TICKETS: \$39-\$69 (includes \$4 restoration fee) at the PPAC/VETS box office (220 Weybosset Street in downtown Providence), by phone at (401) 421-ARTS (2787), or online at first-works.org and thevetsri.com

WHO: **Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR) "Redemption Songs and Sonatas" with The Humanist Septet**
WHAT: Renowned violinist/composer DBR collaborates with local music makers in a concert infused with electronic, urban, and classical sounds, celebrating a worldview of civil rights for all.
WHEN: Saturday, February 29, 2020, 7:00 p.m.
WHERE: First Unitarian Church of Providence, 1 Benevolent Street, Providence
TICKETS: \$30 advance at first-works.org, (401) 421-4278. \$35 at the door. Educator and student discounts available (401) 421-4278

WHO: **Miwa Matreyek "Glorious Visions in Animation"**
WHAT: Merging animated vistas and her own moving shadow, Miwa Matreyek creates a moving art gallery of magical, spellbinding narratives and debuts her newest work exploring connections between humans and climate change.

WHEN/

WHERE: Date and Venue info to be announced

WHO: **DIAVOLO | Architecture in Motion®**

WHAT: “America’s Got Talent” finalist DIAVOLO | Architecture in Motion® uses daredevil dance to explore the relationship between the human body and its architectural environment.

WHEN: Friday, April 24, 2020, 7:30 p.m.

WHERE: Providence Performing Arts Center, 220 Weybosset Street, Providence

TICKETS: \$39.50-\$69.50 (includes \$3 restoration fee) at the PPAC/VETS box office (220 Weybosset Street in downtown Providence), by phone at (401) 421-ARTS (2787), or online at first-works.org and ppacri.org

###