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[High-Resolution Image Available](#)

February 3, 2020

FirstWorks Welcomes Global Superstar Angélique Kidjo

2020 Grammy winner takes The Talking Heads' celebrated album *Remain in Light* back to its West African roots

Providence, RI – **FirstWorks**, a Rhode Island non-profit dedicated to building community through world-class arts, will present global pop star **Angélique Kidjo** at **The VETS** on **Saturday, February 22, 2020 at 8:00 p.m.** performing her reimagining of the Talking Heads' landmark album, "**Remain in Light.**" 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).

FirstWorks first introduced Providence to Benin-born singer, songwriter, and activist Angélique Kidjo in 2015 when she enthralled thousands of festivalgoers in the heart of Kennedy Plaza at the summer festival now known as PVDFest. Hailed as "Africa's premiere diva" (TIME Magazine), Kidjo creates sonic bridges between the realities of her continent of origin and its imagined identity in Western popular consciousness. The four-time Grammy winner's interpretation of the Talking Heads' afrobeat-influenced album "Remain In Light" reclaims rock for Africa and celebrates the many culturally-specific sounds that the album holds in conversation.

Lyrics of the original 1980 album, which includes chart-topping hits like "Once in a Lifetime," weave themes of gentrification and social control, modernization, and

struggle with beauty standards that resonate with modern audiences. Today, Kidjo infuses “Remain in Light” with her “canyon filling voice” (Billboard), explosive percussion and lyrical additions in languages from her home country in what the New York Times describes as combining “village traditions,” “cosmopolitan transformations” and “female solidarity.”

“FirstWorks is thrilled to continue our relationship with Angélique Kidjo and give Rhode Islanders an astonishing, dancing-in-the-aisles performance, on the heels of her phenomenal Grammy win,” said Kathleen Pletcher, Executive Artistic Director of FirstWorks. “Kidjo’s deeply entrenched belief in advocacy, girls’ education, and global connection make her as genius a humanitarian as she is a musical artist. We’re excited to have her talents reach Providence audiences and public school students through FirstWorks Education.”

Kidjo was most recently awarded Best World Music Album at the 2020 Grammys for her album “Celia,” her tribute to salsa legend Celia Cruz. Kidjo returns to Rhode Island after past appearances at the Newport Jazz Festival and the inaugural Providence International Arts Festival, now known as PVDFest.

As part of FirstWorks’ education programming, Angélique Kidjo will offer a duet performance and speak about her work as a humanitarian with students on Friday, February 21 from 3-4:00 p.m. at Classical High School Auditorium in Providence. This interactive matinee will include a post-show conversation facilitated by Providence City Councilwoman Nirva LaFortune. The event is open to public school students and is most appropriate for students in grades 7 through 12. Registration is free but required; more information at first-works.org.

Angélique Kidjo’s residency is part of FirstWorks’ “Raise Your Voice” programming, a season-long project designed to amplify diverse voices and celebrate differences through the performing arts. “Raise Your Voice” brings world-class

artists to Rhode Island for in-depth 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. "Raise Your Voice" is made possible in part with support from the National Endowment for the Arts, Providence's Department of Art, Culture + Tourism, and the Otto H. York Foundation.

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

About Angélique Kidjo

Four-time Grammy Award winner Angélique Kidjo is one of the greatest artists in international music today, a creative force with thirteen albums to her name. She is the recipient of the prestigious 2015 Crystal Award given by the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland and the 2016 Amnesty International Ambassador of Conscience Award. Kidjo has performed with several international orchestras and symphonies including the Bruckner Orchestra, The Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and the Philharmonie de Paris. Her rousing live show was captured at the revered Austin City Limits and made its television debut in January 2016.

Kidjo has received praise from some of the world's most influential media outlets. Time Magazine has called her "Africa's premier diva." The BBC has included her in its list of the continent's 50 most iconic figures, and in 2011 The Guardian listed her as one of their Top 100 Most Inspiring Women in the World. Forbes Magazine has ranked Angélique as the first woman in their list of the Most Powerful Celebrities in Africa.

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 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.

Listings Information:

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 at 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

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