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Media Advisory
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**FirstWorks & PVDfest present *Requiem for the Living, In Color*
by Carlos Andres Toro and Daniel Bernard Roumain**

***Premiere work, originally commissioned for PVDfest, debuts on
FirstWorks Virtual Stage via Facebook Live on Friday, June 12 at 7PM***

Responding to the realities of creating as people of color during these extraordinary times, Providence-based multimedia artist Carlos Andres Toro and composer/violinist Daniel Bernard Roumain offer an online live stream cinematic journey in film and sound. Combining bold, dramatic imagery with a string and beat-based score, *Requiem for the Living, In Color* addresses the realities of living in modern-day America, where the inherent worth of black and brown bodies and souls requires impassioned pleas for their humanity to be recognized.

FirstWorks is proud to include *Requiem for the Living, In Color* as part of their ongoing commitment to lifting community through the arts. Especially poignant now in the midst of nation-wide protests for racial justice, FirstWorks' "Raise Your Voice" initiative amplifies and elevates traditionally unheard stories. In 2019-2020, FirstWorks welcomed global pop star and humanitarian Angélique Kidjo; female tap squad and activists Syncopated Ladies; champion of queer performance Taylor Mac; and composer, educator, and activist Daniel Bernard Roumain to stages, classrooms, and public spaces across our state. Residencies with "Raise Your Voice" artists included community meals and discussions on arts and activism, panels on representation, a social justice fair showcasing the work of local nonprofits, and performances by local artists directly supported by the Providence Department of Art, Culture + Tourism.

This newest collaboration by Roumain and Toro frames the role of creative expression and "raising your voice" in the context of contemporary movements for social and economic equality, police reform, and antiracist action. In Roumain's words, "Right now, we need art that is resistant. Art that is disruptive. And we need artists who are willing to be a part of what are some massive changes in terms of social justice and politics. I aim to create conversations that

share and understand how wonderfully diverse we are, in terms of how we identify and define our bodies, passions, politics and work.”

“Daniel Bernard Roumain’s belief in the power of music to effect positive social change reinforces FirstWorks’ mission to lift Rhode Island through the arts,” Kathleen Pletcher, Executive Artistic Director of FirstWorks, shared; “we thank Daniel and Carlos for their leadership and vulnerability. It is our hope that these artists performances might help inform and unite us as a community.”

FirstWorks has been collaborating with Daniel Bernard Roumain for almost 10 years, naming him Artistic Ambassador in 2019. Roumain’s community work spans local collaborations, workshops, performances, and public dialogues.

[Link](#) to Roumain speaking about his work on social injustice and racial and cultural identity. *Special thanks to Steer Media for this artist video.*

[Link](#) to Roumain’s 2017 PVDfest community performance of *En Masse*.

[Link](#) to Roumain’s work in a FirstWorks Arts Learning classroom in 2019.

[Link](#) to Roumain’s community gathering a Higher Ground International.

Requiem for the Living, In Color reveals life, loss and an enduring legacy of hope. Many thanks to the City of Providence, Department of Art, Culture + Tourism, the Providence Tourism Council, and the Providence City Council for their support of this project.

About Carlos Toro & STEER Media

STEER Media is a Providence-based film and digital team that works closely with community partners to produce mission-specific and artistically significant video content. Partnering with FirstWorks for the past 5 years to document PVDfest and capture the impact of our Arts Learning Program, STEER has developed a unique understanding of the way FirstWorks programs create community and foster productive exchange through the arts. Dedicated to its community, STEER has produced films, web content, and digital campaigns for a range of Rhode Island groups, from local farmers, to HIV-awareness public health campaigns, to the Providence Boys and Girls club. Creative Producer & Director Carlos Toro, son of Colombian and Puerto Rican immigrants, believes in creating open spaces that bring people together through his projects, and in continuing to support Rhode Island even as his scope of work takes him out of state; he says of Providence, “This is a city that needs to have more personal ambassadors creating relationships throughout the world to infuse it with new ideas.” With an ear to the ground and a hand on innovative design, STEER has established itself as a strong player in making Rhode Island stories heard.

About Daniel Bernard Roumain

Daniel Bernard Roumain’s acclaimed work as a composer, performer, educator, and activist spans more than two decades, and he has been commissioned by venerable artists and institutions worldwide. 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. He is a composer of chamber, orchestral, and operatic works; has won an Emmy for Outstanding Musical Composition for his collaborations with ESPN; featured as keynote performer at technology conferences; and created large scale, site-specific musical events for public spaces. DBR earned his doctorate in Music Composition from the University of Michigan and is currently Institute Professor and Professor of Practice At Arizona State University. An avid arts industry leader, DBR serves on the board of directors of the League of American Orchestras, Association of Performing Arts Presenters and Creative Capital, the advisory committee of the Sphinx Organization, and was co-chair of 2015 and 2016 APAP Conferences.

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. Visit first-works.org to learn more.

About Providence's Department of Art, Culture + Tourism

The Providence Department of Art, Culture + Tourism ensures the continued development of a vibrant and creative city by integrating arts and culture into community life while showcasing Providence as an international cultural destination. The Department envisions a Providence that is a global destination for arts, humanities, and design, where neighbors celebrate diverse cultural and artistic experiences, and where all residents and visitors feel that a relationship to arts practice, making, and culture is a part of their everyday lives.