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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FirstWorks Festival 2008

International Performers, World Premieres, and First Performances

All in Providence October 2 – November 9

Providence, RI – The 2008 FirstWorks Festival will bring an array of global talent to Providence this fall creating a cultural crossroads of international talent. World premieres and first performances will span theater, dance, music, new media and family as FirstWorks champions cultural firsts while highlighting Providence as a “First City of the Arts”. The festival runs from October 2 – November 9, 2008.

Now celebrating its fifth year, FirstWorks connects art with audiences throughout the region. This year’s astonishing festival line-up brings talent to Providence from Bulgaria, Africa and France, celebrates Haitian-American roots, presents cutting-edge urban culture, and showcases new digital media.

Headline performances include: **Compagnie Heddy Maalem** [FRANCE/AFRICA], a group of fourteen dancers from across Africa who come together for an explosive interpretation of Stravinsky’s, *The Rite of Spring*, set against a stunning backdrop of film projections; family music superstar **Dan Zanes** will introduce his new Spanish album; and **Momix** movement-illusionists fool the naked eye using light, shadow, humor, and the human body. No two performances are alike. [*Note to editors: an at-a-glance listing of all festival performances is included below.]

“FirstWorks is a terrific example of the special relationship our City has with the arts,” said David N. Cicilline, Mayor of the City of Providence. “Co-produced by FirstWorks and the City of Providence’s Department of Art, Culture and Tourism, the FirstWorks Festival has become a multimedia, multi-genre arts extravaganza attracting artists from all over the world and promoting culture through community involvement.”

Extended Festival events include Artist-Up-Close conversations, pre-performance JumpStart festivities and performances and festival workshops. FirstWorks Festival 2008 brings audiences together with artists and provides unique opportunities to discuss the inspiration and ideas behind the work, expanding the festival experience beyond its signature first performance events.

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Performances will be presented at the Providence Performing Arts Center, Rhode Island School of Design Auditorium, Brown University, the Sol Koffler Gallery and other Providence venues. All venues, show specifics, ticket prices and free event listings are available at www.first-works.org. Tickets for all performances are on sale now and the FirstWorks Festival pass is available again this year, an opportunity to save over 50% on individual tickets.

About FirstWorks

FirstWorks was launched in 2004 as a vehicle to build community, reach underserved audiences, and present extraordinary arts programs that elevate Providence's national profile. In collaboration with the City of Providence's Department of Art, Culture & Tourism, FirstWorks has flourished. In four years FirstWorks has produced eight groundbreaking arts festivals, attracted 55,000 participants, and engaged more than 100 nonprofit community organizations and schools.

FirstWorks leading supporters (as of 8/28): Produced by FirstWorks in collaboration with the City of Providence, Dept. of Art, Culture and Tourism, and made possible in part by Amica Mutual Insurance Company, Bank of America Charitable Foundation, Brown University Creative Arts Council, Carter Family Charitable Trust, The Felicia Fund, John and Happy White Foundation, Johnson & Wales University, LEF New England, National Endowment for the Arts, New England Foundation for the Arts, Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, Rhode Island Foundation, Rhode Island School of Design, State of Rhode Island, Textron Charitable Trust, and the June Rockwell Levy Foundation. Media sponsors: B101, Coast 93.3, 94HJY, Lamar, *Motif*, NBC10 WJAR, Poder 1110, *Providence Phoenix*, *Providence En Español* and *Rhode Island Monthly*.

Headline Performances at a Glance

Who	What	When and Where
Dan Zanes and Friends	Music/Family Grammy Award-winning Dan Zanes is a family music superstar. The former <i>Del Fuegos</i> lead singer throws an exuberant folk-rock music party including songs from his new album <i>¡Nueva York!</i>	Saturday, October 11, 2pm at PPAC
Compagnie Heddy Maalem – France/Africa	Dance/New Media-U.S. Premiere Tour Fourteen dancers from across Africa come together for an explosive interpretation of Stravinsky's, <i>The Rite of Spring</i> , set against a stunning backdrop of film projections.	Tuesday, October 21, 7pm at PPAC
Momix	Dance/Family MOMIX movement-illusionists fool the naked eye using light, shadow, humor, and the human body. With spectacle that defies gravity, MOMIX captures the imagination of audiences worldwide.	Saturday, November 8, 8pm at PPAC

FirstWorks All Festival Performances at a Glance

Who	What	When and Where
Lo Còr de la Plana - France	Music/U.S. Premiere Tour With passionate Mediterranean roots, African influences and touches of Gregorian chant, the a cappella harmonies of this all-male vocal ensemble from Marseilles stir the soul with rhythmic percussions and vocal techniques.	Thursday, October 2, 8pm at RISD Auditorium
Pixilerations [v.5]: <i>fragments & (w)holes</i>	New Media/Free Events The work of more than sixty new media artists will animate downtown Providence with interactive gallery installations, surround-sound electronic media concerts, experimental nightclub jams, and video art.	Opening: Thursday, October 2, 6-9pm For a listing of screenings and concerts visit www.first-works.org Exhibition runs through October 12.
Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR) with DJ Scientific, Wynne Bennett, and the Providence String Quartet	Music/ World Premiere Performance A superb violinist with a rock-star persona and hip-hop credentials, DBR fuses his classical music roots with soundscapes celebrating traditional Haitian music and rhythms.	Friday, October 3, 8pm at RISD Auditorium
Credo Theatre - Bulgaria	Theater/Family/U.S. Premiere Tour Theatrical clowns and stunning puppet techniques transform a bare stage into a winter fairyland in a moving performance - <i>Daddy's Always Right</i> - created for the 200 th anniversary of Hans Christian Anderson's birth.	Saturday, October 4, 8pm at RISD Auditorium
Chris Turner & The Maxi Minimals	Music/New England Premiere Providence artistic treasure Chris Turner creates a musical happening as he gathers friends and community members to perform <i>In C</i> , a work	Sunday, October 5, 2pm at Waterplace Park

heralded as changing the course of 20th century music.

Universes

Theater/Northeast Premiere Tour

Universes delivers a unique theatrical experience - *Live From the Edge* – and is reshaping American theater by fusing poetry, jazz riffs, hip-hop, down home blues and Spanish boleros.

Thursday, October 9,
8pm at RISD Auditorium

Providence Singers
with Boston Modern
Orchestra Project

Music/ World Premiere

The 100-voice Providence Singers premiere Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Dominick Argento's *Jonah and the Whale* with sounds ranging from sea chanteys to 14th century English poetry.

Friday, November 7, 8pm
and Sunday, November 9,
2pm at Blessed Sacrament
Church

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