



**DIVERSE
WORKS**

**PRESS RELEASE
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**DiverseWorks presents
Elia Arce's *First Woman on the Moon*
November 30 and December 1, 7:30 pm
at Frenetic Theater
5102 Navigation Blvd, Houston, TX 77011**

(Houston, TX, November 2012) - DiverseWorks is pleased to present a re-mounting and re-working of Elia Arce's seminal performance piece, *First Woman on the Moon*, at Frenetic Theater on November 30 and December 1, 2012 at 7:30 pm. Tickets are \$15 general admission, and \$10 for DiverseWorks members and students, and are available online at www.diverseworks.org.

In *First Woman on the Moon*, performance artist Elia Arce conducts an investigation of space, movement through it, and the claiming of one's own. Through the use of her body, language, sound and visual images, Arce leads the audience through a series of places both physical and emotional, from the dark, lush jungles of her Costa Rican roots to the barren, lunar landscape of her adopted desert home. Arce's nomadic journey to the center of the self is met with obstacles at every stop along the way, until she claims the space that she can fence and call her own.

First Woman on the Moon was first conceived more than 10 years ago in response to cultural issues that were then being discussed and debated within the performance community regarding issues of identity. Originally commissioned in 1991 by Highways Performance Space (Los Angeles), *First Woman on the Moon* is historically important as one of the earliest performance pieces to give a different voice to the Latino identity movement, focusing more on issues of class and spirituality rather than race and ethnicity.

Arce has said:

I was interested in thinking about the whole identity issue by asking what would be considered identity if we were to strip ourselves of all the visual characteristics that we are grabbing onto to identify ourselves. Whether it is the color of our skin, our accents, our language or how we dress or how we look...what is the core, what actually makes us who we are.

The remounting of the work, made possible through the National Performance Network (NPN) Recreation Fund Project, has been commissioned by MACLA (San Jose) and co-commissioned by DiverseWorks and Links Hall (Chicago). It gives Arce the opportunity to reach new audiences, and to document and archive a seminal piece. For its re-creation, *First Woman on the Moon* received an American Masterpiece Award.

About the Artist

Elia Arce is a pioneering performance artist working in a wide variety of media and modes. Her work has been performed extensively at national and international venues. She has received considerable critical attention in *Ms. Magazine*, *Latina Magazine*, *High Performance*, *Heresis*, *Conjunto*, *Artlies*,
(more)

ArtWeek, *Out of Character*, *The Other Los Angeleses* and *ArtForum* among other publications. Arce has received awards from The Rockefeller Foundation, The J. Paul Getty Foundation and the NEA. She received a 2008-10 New Voices fellowship (a Ford Foundation Initiative) for her pilot social sculpture project: [Gulf Coast Art Corridor](#), which she did while in residency at DiverseWorks. In 2010, she received an American Masterpiece Award from the National Performance Network. A dual citizen of Costa Rica and the United States, Arce is based in both countries.

Support

First Woman on the Moon is a National Performance Network (NPN) Re-Creation Fund Project sponsored by MACLA in partnership with Links Hall, DiverseWorks, and NPN. The Re-Creation Fund is supported by The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Ford Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency). For more information: www.npnweb.org

Originally produced by Deborah Winski and Nomadhouse, *First Woman on the Moon* was made possible by the City of Santa Monica Co/Arts Grant Program, a project of the Santa Monica Arts Commission, the Durfee Foundation and Highways Performance Space.

DiverseWorks is generously supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Texas Commission on the Arts, the City of Houston through the Houston Arts Alliance, foundations, corporations, businesses, and individuals – including DiverseWorks Members.

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About DiverseWorks

DiverseWorks is a non-profit art center in Houston, Texas dedicated to presenting new visual, performing, and literary art. DiverseWorks is a place where the process of creating art is valued and where artists can test new ideas in the public arena. By encouraging the investigation of current artistic, cultural, and social issues, DiverseWorks builds, educates, and sustains audiences for contemporary art.

DiverseWorks

4102 Fannin, Suite 200

Houston, TX 77004

(entrance on Cleburne between Fannin and Main)

713.223.8346

Gallery Hours: Wednesday-Saturday, Noon-6pm or by appointment.

Admission is open to the public and FREE

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