

Doggie Hamlet

Doggie Hamlet is a full-length outdoor performance that weaves dance, music, visual and theatrical elements with aspects from competitive sheep herding trials. The work is performed by four dancers, one boy, one American Sign Language interpreter, two herding dogs and a flock of sheep in a 30 x 50-foot fenced field. *Doggie Hamlet* recalls the bucolic impression of a landscape painting or a 3D pastoral poem. The sheep, the dogs, the human performers, and the earth's surface are at once performing as themselves and as living symbols in this work. Through story, motion, site and stillness *Doggie Hamlet* explores instinct, sentience, attachment, and loss, and is a beautiful and dreamlike performance weaving instinct, mystery, and movement into an unusual performance event.

Ann Carlson borrows from dance, performance, theater, visual and conceptual art to create award-winning work that defies categorization. From the concert hall to the dairy farm, the opera house to the mountainside, in the museum or on a frozen pond, this post-modern dance pioneer continues to expand the parameters of choreography and performance.

Know Before You Go!

- **Where do I go for the performance?** Performances will take place in Fairmount Park at Belmont Plateau, off 1800 Belmont Mansion Drive, Philadelphia 19131. The GPS coordinates are Latitude: 39.990246; Longitude: - 75.212658.
- This is a site-specific, outdoor performance so please dress appropriately.
- The parking is paved; however, there are no sidewalks leading to the field. It could be muddy so wear sensible, outdoor shoes.
- **What is the seating?** Seating is general admission on hay bales placed along the sidelines of the field. We will make sure that they are dry, but you may want to bring a blanket or cushion to sit on.
- **How long is the performance?** The performance is approximately 1-hour in length. The evening performances are timed to end before sunset. Please let staff know if you need assistance getting to your car.
- **What if it is raining?** The performance will occur rain or shine, unless there is lightening. Dress appropriately for the conditions. You may want to bring an umbrella if rain is forecast. And thanks for your flexibility if we find we need to hold a show for a few minutes to avoid a downpour.
- **For what ages is *Doggie Hamlet* appropriate?** *Doggie Hamlet* is appropriate for all ages.
- **Is *Doggie Hamlet* wheelchair accessible?** The field is wheelchair accessible. But please advise us in advance if you will need assistance or if

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there is a wheelchair in your party so we can reserve seating for you that can accommodate a wheelchair.

- **Can I bring my dog?** No dogs are allowed as they will frighten the sheep.
- **Will there be restrooms?** Yes, portable restrooms will be on site.
- **Is this a production of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* performed with animals?** No, Ms. Carlson was inspired by shepherding trials and David Wroblewski's novel "The Story of Edgar Sawtelle," that is structured like *Hamlet* and tells of a boy who can hear but not speak. *Doggie Hamlet* doesn't retell that story but borrows from it to look at, in part, what it means to be a citizen of the world, nature included.
- **May I pet or feed the animals?** No. The sheep and dogs are under careful supervision and this experience does not include direct access to petting or feeding the animals.
- **Who looks after the animals?** The sheep and dogs have full time onsite caretakers and security. In working with live animals for this performance we adhere to the FIVE FREEDOMS OF ANIMAL WELFARE:
 1. Freedom from hunger or thirst by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigor.
 2. Freedom from discomfort by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and resting area.
 3. Freedom from pain, injury or disease by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
 4. Freedom to express (most) normal behavior by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of animal's own kind.
 5. Freedom from fear and distress by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.



Belmont Plateau