

The Quiet Circus: River Charrette 4
at Fairmount Water Works

Saturday, November 4, 2017 at 4:00 PM

A collaborative project presented by
Philadelphia Contemporary & Headlong
and hosted by the Fairmount Water Works

For the fourth and final *The Quiet Circus: River Charrette*, Philadelphia Contemporary and Headlong are revisiting the path of the city's watershed, urban expansion and cultural heritage. The public is invited to join a silent **Walk** into the Fairmount Water Works' hidden, underground natatorium and to witness a **Performance** and post performance **Conversation**. We will explore the correlations between society and its environment, and will rethink topics around diversity, sustainability and consciousness.

Following the path of the water, starting from the site of Philadelphia's **historic reservoir** and moving along the remains of the water pipes towards the Fairmount Water Works' landmark building, visitors will sharpen their attention to the significance of water and the human necessity for unimpeded access to this vulnerable resource. Apart from adding to the picturesque scenery along the Schuylkill River Banks, the Fairmount Water Works interpretive center tells the history of Philadelphia's water distribution in the 19th century, water pollution, public health, and architecture. This National Historic Landmark urges us to salvage today's waterway while reminding us of our direct responsibility to protect this resource that is not equally distributed among the city's communities.

Inside the historic Kelly Pool, artist and choreographer **David Brick** will perform with his 79-year old Deaf mother, **Carolyn Brick**. They will perform *Island of Signs* — a performance that informs and is informed by the weekly performance of the *Island* score in *The Quiet Circus*, a year-long performance residency at the Washington Avenue Pier. Their site-specific duet includes excerpts from the documentary "Beyond Silence", recorded in 1959 at Gallaudet University, that simultaneously features and silences Carolyn's experience as a Deaf student. *Island of Signs* is also a meditation on issues of power and vulnerability in a family with three Deaf and two hearing members. About this work David Brick says "Since receiving a diagnosis of progressive hearing loss as an adult, I have experienced myself slowly moving towards a land I once observed from a distance — an island you might say that has always been home, though I have yet to step upon its shore".

A **post performance conversation** will initiate questions about human interaction, contemplation and responsibility. Together with performance creator David Brick, special guests **Deenah Loeb** (Executive Director at the City Parks Association) and **David Barnes** (Associate Professor for History of Medicine and Public Health in the Department of History and Sociology of Science at the University of Pennsylvania) will jointly ask: How can linguistic diversity and

social inclusiveness contribute to the health and vigor of human societies, their cultures and their environment? How one can keep a commitment to equality, equity and inclusiveness while expanding and developing the city's urban landscape and maritime borders?

After the conversation, audience members are invited to a **gathering with hot drinks**, celebrating the fourth River Charrette.

**The River Charrette is free of charge and open to the public.
RSVP desired.**

** The event will start at 4PM at Philadelphia's historic reservoir, below the Philadelphia Museum of Art's steps towards west entrance and above the remaining water pipelines of the Fairmount Water Works.*

** Sign Language Translation will be available throughout the event.*

**Attendees will be partly exposed to the weather and should prepare accordingly.*

Major support for *The Quiet Circus* has been provided by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, with additional support from the William Penn Foundation. *The Quiet Circus: River Charrette* is a collaborative project by Headlong and Philadelphia Contemporary to engage and explore the city's maritime, industrial, and creative heritage.



Headlong



PERFORMER

David Brick is Co-Director of Headlong, a platform for performance and art research based in Philadelphia; and Director of the Headlong Performance Institute, an immersive training program for creating experimental performance. He collaborates broadly in creating performance, participatory installations and community. His current work includes the ongoing project *The Quiet Circus* which invites you to attend and participate on Saturdays at the Washington Avenue Pier along the Delaware River in Philadelphia and includes *The Quiet Circus: River Charrettes*, Performative Dialogues curated in collaboration with Philadelphia Contemporary.

<http://headlong.org/>

<http://www.headlongperformanceinstitute.org/>

<http://thequietcircus.com/>

<http://philadelphiacontemporary.org/river-charrettes-post/>

SPEAKERS

Deenah Loeb is Executive Director of City Parks Association of Philadelphia (CPA), co-founded and directs *Art in the Open Philadelphia* (www.ArtintheOpenphila.org). She has over 30 years of program innovation and implementation experience in the culture and environmental fields. Most recently, as a recipient of the inaugural Knight Cities Challenge (2015), she developed and implemented *Urban Arboreta: transforming ground* (www.urbanarboreta.org), a prototype for transforming urban vacant lots into productive, community engaged spaces. She also created *Philadelphia LANDvisions* (www.landvisions.org): a unique three phased program that challenged citizens and the international design community to imagine ecologically sound resolutions for Philadelphia's vast inventory of vacant lands. Previously, Ms. Loeb was a consultant for the Department of Culture at the Pew Charitable Trusts, and created landmark programs to support artists in a range of disciplines, including the Pew Fellowships in the Arts, the National Theater Residence Program and the Philadelphia Dance Initiative.

David Barnes is Associate Professor of History and Sociology of Science and Director of the Health and Societies Program at the University of Pennsylvania. He is the author of *The Making of a Social Disease: Tuberculosis in Nineteenth-Century France* (University of California Press, 1995) and *The Great Stink of Paris and the Nineteenth-Century Struggle against Filth and Germs* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), as well as several articles about the history, culture, and politics of public health. He is currently writing a history of Philadelphia's Lazaretto quarantine station (1799-1895). His other interests include public history, historic preservation, the history of the senses, and the history of disgust.

INSTITUTIONS

The Fairmount Water Works operated as a pumping station from 1815 to 1909, an aquarium from 1911 to 1962, as the Kelly Natatorium (pool) until 1972, and today houses an award-winning urban environmental education center, and Philadelphia Water's public education destination. For more than 200 years, the Fairmount Water Works has continually found ways of telling the story of our connection with water. The mission of Fairmount Water Works is to foster stewardship of our shared resources by encouraging informed decisions about the use of land and water. We educate citizens about Philadelphia's urban watershed, its past, present and future, and collaborate with partners to instill an appreciation for the connections between daily life and the natural environment.

Philadelphia Contemporary was founded in 2016 to serve as a multi-disciplinary platform for dynamic contemporary visual and performance art. Philadelphia Contemporary is a free-standing and non-collecting nonprofit space. Through partnerships and collaborations, Philadelphia Contemporary seeks to foster innovative cultural production within the city. While exploring sites on which to construct a permanent home, Philadelphia Contemporary is presenting a program of pop-up exhibitions and performances across its home city. Philadelphia Contemporary is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation.
<http://philadelphiacontemporary.org>

More details available on request.

Press Image Folder: <http://philadelphiacontemporary.org/press/>

PW: PCpressimages

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