



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Old MacDonald's Farm at the Center for Puppetry Arts, August 2- September 11

And at the Center there was a new show...EIEIO!

ATLANTA (July 6, 2016) – More than a dozen animal puppets and two farmhand-puppeteers will take the stage at the **Center for Puppetry Arts** in the upcoming production **Old MacDonald's Farm, August 2- September 11**. Adapted and directed by the Center's head puppeteer Amy Sweeney, **Old MacDonald's Farm** is the most recent **Theater for the Very Young** production, designed specifically with the developmental stages of young children in mind. Based on the universally well-known children's song, the show explores a day in the life of a farm.

"This show is all about sound, movement and the interaction between the puppets and the children. We've want to create an environment that is about fun and discovery," says Sweeney. "Audience participation for children this age engages both the children and the parents, inviting them all to play."

In designing and building the show, Resident Puppet Builder Jason Hines and his team focused primarily on two things: scale and texture. To capture the experience of actually being on a farm, the puppets were built as close to the actual size of the animals as possible. The puppet bodies are fabricated out of materials that replicate the same textures as their real life counterparts. Even the set has a textured look and feel. The show will be performed using Overt Puppetry in which the puppeteers are visible and fully integrated into the action.

Sweeney teamed up with puppeteer/musician Dolph Amick to compose the music for **Old MacDonald's Farm**. Sweeney and Amick also collaborated in 2014 on the Center's **Theater for the Very Young** production of **Shake a Tale Feather with Mother Goose**. Puppeteers for the show are Chelsea Brown and Seth Langer.

Jon Ludwig, Artistic Director for the Center, says he believes Theater for the Very Young is "among the purest forms of theater because there are no boundaries or barriers between the performers and the audience. Everyone is completely in the moment so each show is a unique experience."

As part of the Center's Autism Spectrum Disorder initiative, a sensory-friendly performance of **Old MacDonald's Farm** will be presented on **Sunday, August 14 at 1 p.m.** Sensory stimuli will also be reduced in Museum Exhibits from 12 p.m.-1 p.m. and in Create-A-Puppet Workshops™ from 1:45 p.m.-2:30 p.m. This special afternoon will allow guests with Autism Spectrum Disorder to experience programming in a comfortable and safe setting with staff members who have been trained in interactions with patrons with ASD. Along with a quiet zone in the lobby, several performance alterations will be employed, including: theater lights dimmed down (but not out); consistent sound levels and lower volume of show soundtrack; freedom for children to talk during the show and leave their seats, if necessary; and permission to bring quiet, contained snacks and beverages. Create-A-Puppet

Workshop™ classrooms will be brighter, quieter and feature less-messy puppet building materials and slightly simplified puppet designs. In the Museum Exhibits, lighting will be adjusted and specialized educational activities (such as touch tables and guided storytelling) will be integrated. Fidget toys and sound-reducing headphones will also be available.

Recommended for ages 2 and up, **Old MacDonald's Farm** will be performed in the **Downstairs Theater, August 2-September 11**. Discounted seats are available for preview days, **August 2 and 3** at 10 and 11:30 a.m.

Regular show times are as follows:

- Tuesday-Friday: 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.
- Saturday: 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.
- Sunday: 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.

Tickets are available for **\$10.25 (Members)** and **\$20.50 (Nonmembers)** and include admission to the show, the *Worlds of Puppetry* Museum (with the largest collection of Jim Henson puppets and artifacts in the world as well as a Global Collection), and entrance to the Create-A-Puppet Workshop™, where guests can make and decorate their own **Cheerful Chicken** rod puppet and perform with it on our classroom stage. Tickets can be purchased online at www.puppet.org or by calling the ticket sales office at **404.873.3391**.

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The Center for Puppetry Arts is supported in part by: Fulton County Arts Council • City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs • Georgia Council for the Arts • Zeist Foundation • The Wish Foundation Fund of the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta • PNC • The Coca-Cola Foundation • Regency Suites Hotel • WSB-TV Family 2 Family Project • YP

For a complete list of the Center's major supporters, visit www.puppet.org/about/sponsors.

Center for Puppetry Arts® is a unique cultural treasure — a magical place where children and adults are educated, enlightened, and entertained. Since 1978, the Center has introduced millions of visitors to the wonder and art of puppetry and has touched the lives of many through enchanting performances, curriculum-based workshops, and the hands-on Museum as well as Distance Learning and Outreach programs. Center for Puppetry Arts is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization and is supported in part by contributions from corporations, foundations, government agencies, and individuals. Major funding is provided by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners and the City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs. These programs are also supported in part by the Georgia Council for the Arts through the appropriations of the Georgia General Assembly. GCA is a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. The Center is a member of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre and Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA/USA/ASSITEJ). The Center also serves as headquarters of UNIMA-USA, the American branch of Union Internationale de la Marionette, the international puppetry organization.