THE EXCITEMENT OF DANCE, MUSIC, THEATRE AND STORYTELLING COMES TO YOU!

DANCING STORYTELLERS
Indian Mythology and Me
Enclosed is a packet of information about the scheduled program. Please review all of the documents carefully, as they are the materials you will need to sponsor a successful program.

**THE DAILY SCHEDULE**

It is important that the daily schedule be maintained as specified on the confirmation document. If special circumstances occur once the project has begun, notify Music Center staff as soon as possible. Changes may be accommodated pending artist availability (which can be limited). We request that all participants be seated in the performance area and ready to begin at the scheduled times.

**STUDENT SUPERVISION AT SCHOOL SITES**

In accordance with California law, The Music Center requires that a classroom teacher be present with students at all times. It is expected that teachers will attend events with their class and actively participate in the learning experience.

**YOUR FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS**

About a week after the performance, you’ll receive an invoice in the mail. You have 30 days to pay upon receipt of the invoice. We do ask that you wait until you receive the invoice before sending payment.

**ARTIST INTRODUCTION & STAGING REQUIREMENTS**

Please introduce the artist with the enclosed introduction. There is also specific information you will need to prepare for the arrival of each artist. Please give the tech sheet to the school personnel in charge of setting up the performance area well in advance of the scheduled dates. Be sure to have ready any equipment which may be required.

**CURRICULUM CONNECTION FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS**

These pre- and post-event classroom activities are designed to enhance the understanding and enjoyment of the program. Please duplicate this preparation material and distribute to all teachers whose students will be attending the event to allow them to fully prepare the students.

**PRESS RELEASE AND POSTER**

A pre-made press release is available should you wish to publicize the event. A premade poster is also included so that your school community can be aware of the upcoming event.

We applaud your commitment to arts education and look forward to working with you.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to call us at 213-972-4310.
"I would like to introduce today's performance which is presented by the Music Center of Los Angeles County. The Dancing Storytellers will perform a selection of delightful stories from East Indian mythology using dance rhythms, hand gestures and facial expressions. Presenting Indian Mythology and Me, please welcome, the Dancing Storytellers!"

Feel free to encourage the adult members of your audience to share the experience on social media! Tag us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram at @MusicCenterLA and we might repost your photos!
**TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS**

**SPACE**
- 15' wide x 20' deep minimum
- Portable stages must be sturdy, level and securely lashed

**SURFACE**
- A clean and safe freshly mopped (not waxed) floor for performing in bare feet
  - Irregularities covered with tape
  - Extraneous clutter removed

**OUTDOOR PERFORMANCE**
- Outdoor performance space acceptable only if lavalier microphones are provided.
- A splinter free wood surface preferred
  - No concrete or blacktop
  - Tile and carpet are acceptable

**DRESSING AREA**
- One private dressing area near the stage with access to an adult bathroom
  - Access to drinking water

**EQUIPMENT**
- A CD player or 1/8th" connection to sound system
- 2 Lavalier microphones preferred but not required

**AUDIENCE SEATING**
- If there are no front stairs to the stage there should be a cleared passage from the audience to the side stage stairs (ideally on both sides) as the performers bring students onto the stage

**ARRIVAL**
- 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start time to prepare and set up

**PARKING**
- Two spaces close to the venue for loading and unloading

**ASSISTANCE**
- Please have a school representative ready to welcome the performers and to stay and help as needed with lighting and sound cues

**START TIME**
- Please prepare to start the program on time
- Students should be in the venue, seated and ready to begin at the listed times
DANCING STORYTELLERS—Indian Mythology and Me

ART FORM: Dance and Storytelling/Theater
STYLE: Contemporary
CULTURE: Indian

MEET THE ARTIST:
Dancing Storytellers Sheetal Gandhi, Shyamala Moorty and Ulka Simone Mohanty have come together to forge a creative collaboration out of a shared commitment to artistic innovation, personal transformation and social change. Sheetal Gandhi is a multi-talented artist: choreographer, singer, dancer, actor, and percussionist, formerly with Cirque du Soleil. She now tours her one-woman show and collaborates with local and international artists. Shyamala Moorty specializes in integrating contemporary Indian dance, theatre, multimedia, and community engagement in her solo and ensemble works with TeAda productions, as well as in her multi-national collaborative work with the Post Natyam Collective. Ulka Simone Mohanty is an actor, dancer and choreographer who has performed internationally and has choreographed multiple shows for Disney’s Animal Kingdom. She also voices the role of Dr. Kapur on the kids’ animation show Nina’s World, on Sprout TV.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:
This entertaining and sophisticated show weaves rhythm, song, gesture and facial expression into a dynamic presentation of Indian mythology, showing its relevance to the modern world. During the show Sheetal and Shyamala interact directly with the audience, inviting some to the stage where they are playfully integrated into the performance. The Dancing Storytellers offer innovative and contemporary interpretations of traditional texts that reinforce human compassion and celebrate our differences. The stories include The Mice That Set Elephants Free from the Panchatantra Folktales of India, and Durga and Mahishasura a mythological Indian story connected to the festival of Navratri. The program also includes contemporary dance movement combined with the classical north and south Indian dances of Kathak and Bharatanatyam. Audiences will be entertained and enlightened as they experience first-hand the power of expressive story-telling through dance and theater.

PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:
There are several forms of Indian Classical Dance and two of these forms are highlighted in this production: Bharata Natyam and Kathak. Both dance styles were traditionally solo dance forms performed by women, either within the temple precincts as a part of the daily ritual or in courts as entertainment for kings and courtiers.

The roots of the word Bharata in "Bharata Natyam" are bhavam, which means expression and ragam, meaning music, Thalam means rhythm and natyam means dance. The name "Kathak" is derived from the Sanskrit word katha meaning story, and kathak means "he who tells a story," or "to do with stories." Both dance forms have two main components: Nritta, or "pure dance" and Nritya, or "expressive dance." The coming together of both the technical aspects of dancing (nritta) and the expressive aspects of dancing (nritya) create Natya which is the full performance of dance, theater and music.

In most solo performances, "Bharata Natyam" and "Kathak" involve many split characters that are depicted by the dancer. The dancer will take on numerous characters by switching roles, creating a story-line that can be easily followed by the skill of one individual performer.

"Navratri" means nine nights, and is a festival that celebrates the Goddess Durga. It is associated with one of the stories that tell of Durga’s victory after battling the evil demon king Mahishasura for nine days and nine nights. The festival is celebrated in India from late September through early October. Many Indian communities around the world, including Southern California, also celebrate.

In the Indian state of Gujarat, the festival activities feature two folk dances, "Garba" and "Raas." The dance "Raas" (also called "Dandiya-Raas") imitates the fight between the goddess Durga and the demon Mahishasura, and uses dandiya sticks to represent the sword of Durga. "Garba Raas" is also performed at harvest celebrations, weddings, and dance competitions. Watch for the moment when the dancers in the show use the dandiya sticks in the battle.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

• Name one of the stories and then name the character you identified with most. State why.

• If you could meet one of the characters in either of the stories, which character would you choose? Why? If you could ask them anything, what would it be? What do you think their answer might be?

• What were the external obstacles that the Mouse King was facing? What were the internal obstacles that the Mouse King was facing? Did he overcome those obstacles? How?

• The ability and power of the mouse king was underestimated by the elephant queen because of his small size, and Durga was underestimated by Mahishasura because she was a woman. Have you ever had to prove your worth despite what other people thought?

• How do you use gestures to communicate in your everyday life? Show examples.

• How many different emotions can you portray just in your face?

FRAMEWORK FOCUS—LANGUAGE ARTS:

Have students select a poem they know (or write their own) that has words and images and can be expressed through hand gestures. Then, have them create their own hand-gesture vocabulary to go with the poem. Each student will practice his/her dancing story and perform it for the class.

ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

★ Define “gesture” and then explore everyday hand gestures. Collect these gestures (such as the sign for “okay,” or “thumbs up,” or “stop,” “come here,” or “I don’t know”). Compare these to the gestures you learned in the show. Discuss how the Indian dance mudras (gestures) could also have been created out of everyday gestures and then stylized for performance.

● Explore facial expressions. Put students in teams, and play a game like charades or Pictionary, but using only facial expressions. The class should make a list of all the emotions that they can convey through their face. Each emotion can be written on a different sheet of paper and all put in a box or bowl so students can draw one to show.

■ Most cultural stories were originally passed on through oral tradition. As they were told over and over, they were often changed and embellished. Although many of these stories are now written down, many variations still exist. Divide students into storytelling teams. Using books or the internet, have students research stories and then select one to learn and tell. There are many more animal stories like The Mice That Set Elephants Free in the Panchatantra, a collection of folktales from India, or students can research myths and legends from other cultures. Encourage students to think of the beginning, middle and end, as well as the key characters, main problem, resolution and sequence. They can use the “Four W’s (When? Where? Who? Why?).”

♦ When you pair gesture to language, the memorization (of a poem, text or list) comes more easily. How can gesture be used as a tool to aid in the memorization of other subjects, such as history? Teachers can pick the subject of their choosing, and pull the most pertinent information that they want students to learn and remember. Then, as a class, create and decide upon a gestural language that “narrates” the event, problem, list or fact.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:


Authors: Sheetal Gandhi and Shyamala Maorty, Editors: Monk Turner and Susan Cambigue-Tracey, © The Music Center of Los Angeles County www.musiccenter.org/ontour
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AND THE MUSIC CENTER ANNOUNCE

DANCING STORYTELLERS TO PERFORM ON

and The Music Center today announced the upcoming Dancing Storytellers performance. As part of the school's continuing efforts to enrich its curriculum and its students' educational experience, the school will present a special performance of Dancing Storytellers. The performance is presented by The Music Center’s education department which provides many offerings including live performances, classroom workshops, scholarship and training programs, online arts curriculum, on-campus events and professional development.

Indian Mythology and Me is a dynamic dance and theater performance created by the Dancing Storytellers. This group of artists create uplifting duets that artfully weave rhythm, song, gesture and facial expressions into an interactive exploration of Indian mythology and its connections to our world today. During this performance the artists interact directly with audience members, sometimes inviting them onto the stage where they are playfully integrated into the story. Audiences will be entertained and enlightened as they get to experience first-hand, the power of expression in Indian classical dances. Dancing Storytellers are Sheetal Gandhi, Ulka Mohanty and Shyamala Moorty.

The Music Center on Tour is the premiere resource for high-quality performing arts performances in Los Angeles County. For more than 35 years, schools and communities have benefited from the program's roster of diverse and compelling performing artists who serve as models of artistic excellence, inspire creative thinking and introduce young audiences to the world's diverse cultural traditions. Music Center artists represent and celebrate the finest artistic contribution of the world’s cultures – from the colorful regional dances of Mexico and the exotic music of the China, to the pulsating rhythms of Brazil and the golden harmonies of 20th century America.

Schools can choose from more than 70 performances in music, dance, theatre and storytelling from an internationally acclaimed roster of artists seen across the globe in films, theaters, concert halls, television shows and museums.

About The Music Center
As L.A.’s performing arts destination, The Music Center is L.A.’s home to the world’s greatest artistic programs and events. With four iconic theaters and four renowned resident companies – Center Theatre Group, the LA Master Chorale, the LA Opera and the LA Philharmonic – and recognized for its illustrious dance programming, Glorya Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center, The Music Center is a destination where audiences find inspiration in the very best of live performance, as well as nationally recognized arts education and participatory arts experiences. With The Music Center On Location, the non-profit performing arts organization brings events and activities to locations outside of its Downtown Los Angeles campus. The Music Center also programs and manages Grand Park, a 12-acre adjacent greenspace, with year-round free programming. For more information, visit musiccenter.org Follow The Music Center on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (@MusicCenterLA).

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For more information, please contact The Music Center at 213-972-3338. Members of the media are welcome to cover this performance. Please contact The Music Center prior to sending a reporter or photographer to the school.
THE MUSIC CENTER PRESENTS

DANCING STORYTELLERS

DATE: ___________________________ TIME: ___________________________

SCHOOL: ___________________________

musiccenter.org/ontour
ARTS INTEGRATION PARTNERSHIPS
The Music Center’s teaching artists work in the classroom facilitating student learning and modeling effective instructional strategies for teachers. Essential skills and vocabulary in music, theater, dance, or visual art are connected to universal themes and integrated with other content areas.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Our Professional Development targets arts integration strategies for K-12 teachers in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. Teachers learn creative and effective approaches for integrating the arts into their content areas. Additionally, The Music Center offers the Summer Arts Studio for Educators. This program consists of events tailored for classroom teachers, arts teachers and educators.

STUDENT MATINEE PERFORMANCES
Each year Glorya Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center offers free student matinee dance performances. All performances include a teacher orientation session and curriculum guide for students.

THE BLUE RIBBON CHILDREN’S FESTIVAL
The Blue Ribbon Children’s Festival, designed specifically for fifth grade students, is an annual admission-free program at The Music Center. Students experience a live professional performance at a world-class performing arts center, then gather together to perform a short choreographed dance inspired by the production.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS FESTIVAL
The Very Special Arts Festival is an annual admission-free event celebrating the artistic achievements of students with disabilities and their mainstream peers. The festival features student and professional performances on two stages, visual and performing arts workshops, and a student art exhibit created around a central theme.

SPOTLIGHT
Much more than a competition, Spotlight is a scholarship and training program, which encourages personal and artistic growth, while exploring new possibilities in the arts.

ARTSOURCE®
The Music Center’s Artsource® curriculum is designed to bring the expressive world of the arts into classrooms. The materials are available online free of cost.

OTHER ON CAMPUS MUSIC CENTER OFFERINGS:
Glorya Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center, Dance Downtown, Symphonian Campus Tours, Grand Park