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

DIANE FERLATTE
We Were There
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. Diane Ferlatte with Erik Pearson present “We Were There”, a collection of stories about ordinary African Americans who did extraordinary things. Please welcome Diane Ferlatte and Erik Pearson!"

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

• 6’ wide x 9’ deep minimum
• Portable stages must be sturdy, level and securely lashed

SURFACE

• A clean and safe freshly mopped (not waxed) floor for performing
• Irregularities covered with tape
• Extraneous clutter removed

OUTDOOR PERFORMANCES

If the performance must be held outdoors, the following conditions must be met:

• Shaded performance area
• Protected from wind, excess traffic and playground noise

EQUIPMENT

• One armless chair
• Two microphones on stands required
• Drinking water (room temperature, no ice) and cup

ARRIVAL

• 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start time to prepare and set up

PARKING

• One space near the venue for loading and unloading

ASSISTANCE

• Please have a school representative ready to welcome the performers and to stay and help as needed

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
DIANE FERLATTE—Aesop Alive and Well

ART FORM: Storytelling
STYLE: Traditional
CULTURE: Greek

MEET THE ARTIST:

A native of New Orleans, storyteller Diane Ferlatte recalls with fondness her childhood years of sitting on the porch of her grandparents’ home, captivated by the oral stories of family generations past. She now carries on that tradition with tales filled with spirit, journeys and fantasy. Diane offers three different performances: Have I Got a Story to Tell, a solo show of stories from Africa and the American South; We Were There, that brings to life the stories of African Americans in history; and Aesop, Alive and Well, featuring the fables of Aesop and the music of Erik Pearson. Diane views the art of storytelling as an effective way of stirring the imagination to promote reading readiness and literacy. Diane has toured in Austria and New Zealand, and has been a featured teller at the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and the Hollywood Bowl. She was honored by the mayor of Oakland for her role as co-director of the city’s National Storytelling Festival.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

In We Were There, Diane Ferlatte presents the historical stories of ordinary African Americans who did extraordinary things. Using music, songs, factual and mythical tales, Diane shows how everyday people participated in the founding and building of America. During periods of slavery, Revolution, Civil War, Westward expansion and the building of the railroads, African Americans actively contributed to the events that shaped our country. Unknown and unsung in most history books, these abolitionists, slaves, rebels, soldiers, pioneers and cowboys were there -- fighting the battles, taming the prairie, freeing the slaves and building the railroads.

Through Diane’s telling of these tales, students will increase their understanding of the vital part played by African Americans in the creation and building of our nation.

PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:

The accuracy of historical records is dependent on the people who write them, the cultures and societies they represent, and the era during which the histories are written. Unfortunately, this means that some stories go untold, particularly if the stories are about a segment of the population whose history is ignored, devalued or even misrepresented.

The role of African Americans in the shaping of the United States was absent in school texts for many years. Fortunately, in recent years there has been increasing recognition and awareness of the importance of the contributions made by African Americans in the founding and history of our country. The stories that are being uncovered and shared should be a source of enlightenment and pride for all Americans.

As fascinating as they are numerous, these stories tell of individuals whose courage, honor and vision helped them rise above enormous obstacles. Chained in slavery, owning nothing but their beliefs and ideals, they each traveled a hero’s journey. Robert Small escaped slavery by commandeering a Confederate ship and sailing it straight into the Union navy blockade, where he, the ship and its cannons were welcomed. He went on to fight for the Union as a captain of the ship he commandeered.

Mary Fields, freed at the end of the Civil War, traveled west, worked for employers as diverse as a group of nuns and the Pony Express, and was instrumental in the development of much of central Montana. John Henry, often thought to be a legend, could have been any of the railroad workers whose hammers, steel spikes and dynamite blasted holes through the mountains of West Virginia and Alabama, moving mountains so that railroads could travel across America. Matching his strength against the power of a machine, he gave everything to succeed. In the story of a young Black girl whose actions saved George Washington, we see not only courage, but tolerance and charity. What is amazing is that these stories do not stand alone -- there are many other histories to be explored. The internet is a useful source of information today, and is bursting with websites documenting the stories of other African Americans -- most of them everyday people who helped their country grow to become what it is today. They were there!
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

• Think about the stories you heard in the performance. Which was your favorite? Why?

• All of the stories told about ordinary people doing extraordinary things. Have you ever done or do you know someone who has done something "extraordinary?"

• What tools did Diane Ferlatte use during her performance to tell the stories? (voice, face, movement, body)

• All of the individuals whose stories were shared were slaves. Do you think their being slaves affected their actions? In what way?

FRAMEWORK FOCUS—LANGUAGE ARTS:

People have always shared stories to entertain, enlighten and inspire. The histories of real people and actual events are the most exciting, since we know that the events really happened. Everyone has a story where they or someone they know moved past the mundane and stepped into events where life and death matters had to be faced and dealt with. These events might include the death of a loved one, an accident, a family crisis, a vacation adventure, an exciting job or life change. Sometimes telling stories from one’s own experience is difficult. If privacy is an issue, stories dealing with real people may be altered to provide anonymity and privacy. The events may even change slightly, as long as the meaning and message behind the story remains the same.

Discuss what events in an everyday life might make a good story. Point out to students that good storytellers create pictures in the minds of their listeners by the way they describe the place where the story happens (setting); how people (characters) in the story look and what they believe in; the things the characters say (dialogue); and the things the characters do (action).

Put students in pairs and encourage them to share a story with their partner. Afterwards, share the stories with the class.

ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

★ Discuss how the performance painted pictures in your mind with words, music and actions. Select one of those mental pictures and draw it, using colors to help express the feelings the story created. Use the drawing of your image to retell what happened in that part of the story, what you remember about it and why.

● History books tell about events and the "famous" people involved in them. In We Were There, audiences see how ordinary people can be involved in and affect major historical events. Select an event from the performance or from your history or social studies book. Read the information, and then imagine what the world would be like today if the hero or heroine in the story had not taken action. (For example, if the young slave girl had not saved George Washington, what would America be like today?) Write a paragraph about how our lives would be affected. Read your paragraph to the class and discuss.

■ All of the people in these stories were slaves. Slavery existed, and still exists, in many parts of the world. Find out more about slavery by researching a specific country’s history, the ways people became enslaved and if or how slaves from that country were able to gain their freedom.

◆ Discuss why telling stories is a good way to educate and teach an audience. If an audience enjoys hearing a story, are they more likely to remember details?

◆ Diane Ferlatte uses a storytellers "tools" to tell tales: She changes her voice to fit the story’s actions or the character’s emotions; she changes her face to match the feelings in each story; she uses movement of her body and hands to help listeners picture the characters and the actions of the story; finally, Diane Ferlatte sings parts of the stories. Eric Pearson plays music to help audiences visualize what is happening.

Looking at the tools of the storyteller listed above, try to think of what other professions might use some of these tools, and why? (Teachers, politicians, ministers?)

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:


School Contact Name: __________________________
Phone: __________________________

_________________________ AND THE MUSIC CENTER ANNOUNCE

DIANE FERLATTE TO PERFORM ON ____________

_________________________ and The Music Center today announced the upcoming Diane Ferlatte 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 Diane Ferlatte. 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.

Style and wit, New Orleans charm and world-wide travels have made Diane Ferlatte an internationally renowned storyteller. She has wowed audiences on six continents as she brings her performances to life through stories, songs, sign language, humor, and audience participation with a repertoire of folktales, myths, legend, fables, as well as personal and historical stories. While many of her stories & songs have African-American roots, she loves to tell any story that holds truths touching upon our common humanity while inspiring students as she passes on values, history, and culture. Awards for her recordings include a Grammy nomination, multiple Parents’ Choice, American Library Association, iParenting Media, Storytelling World, & National Parenting Publications awards. Additional national awards include the NSN’s Circle of Excellence Award, NABS’ Zora Neale Hurston Award, & the California Arts Council’s Highest Ranking.

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 exquisite 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, Gloria 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

DIANE FERLATTE

DATE: ______________________ TIME: ______________________

SCHOOL: ____________________
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, Symphonic Campus Tours, Grand Park