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

LEELA DANCE COLLECTIVE IMAGINE INDIA
LET'S GET STARTED!

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 Leela (Lee–Lah) Dance Collective brings you the rapid-fire footwork, swift pirouettes, complex rhythms, dramatic storytelling and rich music that is Kathak, a classical dance from Northern India. Please welcome the Leela Dance Collective!"

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!
SPACE
• 25’ wide x 15’ minimum

SURFACE
• Hard wood surface that is smooth and clean.
• It is important that the surfaces not be waxed and that any irregularities are covered with strong tape.
• Portable stages must be sturdy, level and securely lashed with steps leading up to the stage.

DRESSING AREA
One dressing room able to comfortably accommodate 3-5 people

EQUIPMENT
• Basic sound system with at least four channels, one microphone on a stand placed upstage right
• If possible, 3 additional microphones placed on boom stands
• One electrical outlet

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

PARKING
• Three spaces, one as close to the venue as possible 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 auditorium, seated and ready to begin at the listed times
LEELA DANCE COLLECTIVE

ART FORM: Dance  
STYLE: Traditional  
CULTURE: Indian

MEET THE ARTIST:

The Leela Dance Collective features Northern Indian dance and music from the Kathak cultural tradition. The group are disciples of legendary Kathak master Pandit Chitresh Das, along with leading Kathak performers Rina Mehta, Sarah Morelli and Shefali Jain. It is the only company of its kind that focuses on Indian-American dance that brings together leading Kathak artists from around the world. These artists represent a multitude of voices to articulate a unique vision for Kathak. The group is distinguished by an artistic practice that centers around collaboration, collective creativity and a body of work that is both grounded in tradition and boldly innovative. Past performance highlights include appearances at The Broad Stage, the Green Music Center and the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts.

PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:

Modern India is currently the world’s largest democracy and a rising economic force in our global economy. The nation is known for its mastery of computer technology and its famed spiritual traditions. But India is also the world’s most ancient surviving civilization with unbroken continuity into prehistory. Like other great civilizations such as Greece or Egypt, it has experienced several glorious golden ages in arts and culture over the millennia. Its great thinkers and religious leaders have had significant global impact even as it has faced and survived successive invasions from Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan, Timur, and the British Empire.

It is home to an extraordinary spectrum of music, dance and literature with eight styles of classical dance, three main genres of classical music and countless folk dances. These art forms embody the history and philosophical underpinnings of Indian culture. As such, they serve as a compelling window into India and its people.

The tradition of Kathak dance and music began in ancient times when the “kathakas” (a nomadic community of dancers) would travel from village to village telling stories of Indian epics through dance, music and mime. During medieval (5th to 15th century) times in India, dance and music moved out of the temples and into the lavish courts of the Moghul Emperors. It became a form of entertainment for the royals and the courtiers. It was during medieval times that two distinct schools of Kathak dance emerged. In the lavish courts of Lucknow (located in Northeast India) Kathak developed a stylized grace and nuance; in the courts of Jaipur (located in Northwest India) Kathak developed a stylized power. On these stages, in city-states across the subcontinent, the art form developed a new level of speed and complexity as well as a more dynamic and diverse movement vocabulary.

The traditional musical instruments used to create music for Kathak include: tabla (drum); sitar (plucked string instrument); flute; sarangi (a bowed, short-necked string instrument); harmonium (a keyboard instrument in which the notes are produced by air driven through metal reeds by foot or hand operated bellows); and tanpura (a long-necked plucked string instrument).

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

Leela Dance Collective’s show Imagine India begins with a traditional invocation to evoke courage and strength. This focuses the dancers to perform their opening dynamic and rhythmic dance called “Malkauns Tarana.” Students then have the opportunity to learn hand gestures (mudras) through the telling of a traditional story of how a young boy named Krishna cleverly defeated the evil creature Kalia Daman. “Thaat,” a classic piece from India’s medieval era, demonstrates the distinctions and characteristics of the northwestern and northeastern styles of Kathak. From medieval India, the performance progresses to modern India where dance and music moved from the courts onto performance areas in front of an audience. “Kathak Yoga” is a 20th century composition that highlights the thrilling dynamics of classical dance and music of Northern India. The final piece features a sawaal-jawaab (call and response) between the dancers and the musicians. Throughout the performance, students learn about other traditions, such as dress, ghungroos (ankle bells worn by dancers), footwork patterns, hand gestures and facial expressions (abhinaya).
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

• What are some of the things you learned about the country of India and its contributions to the world?
• Describe how hand gestures and facial expressions were utilized to tell a story in the kathak style.
• List the musical instruments you saw and heard. Categorize the instruments as string, woodwind, percussion and describe the sounds each instrument made.
• Describe how hand gestures and facial expressions were used to tell a story in the art form.
• Name the primary techniques used in North Indian classical dance (rhythmic footwork, types and number of pirouettes, etc.)

FRAMEWORK FOCUS-GEOGRAPHY:

Look on a map and find the country of India, also known as the Republic of India. It is the seventh largest country by area and has more than 1.3 billion people making it the most populous democracy in the world. Identify the following oceans, seas and countries that border it:

• Which Ocean? (Indian Ocean on the south)
• Which Sea? (Arabian Sea on the southwest)
• Which Bay? (Bay of Bengal on the southeast)
• On west side, which countries share its borders? (Pakistan)
• On the northeast, which countries share its borders? (China, Nepal and Bhutan)
• On the east, which countries share its borders? (Bangladesh and Myanmar)

In the Indian Ocean, India is in the vicinity of Sri Lanka and the Maldives, while its Andaman and Nicobar Islands share a maritime border with Thailand and Indonesia.

The names of these countries and bodies of water are often mentioned in the news. Research recent news articles or stories that feature any of the above. Share all results.

ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

• Pick a partner and think of your favorite short story. Use only hand gestures and facial expressions to tell the story to your partner. See if your partner can tell you, using words, what the story was about. Change roles. An extension of this is to have one partner tell the story using words while the other uses hand gestures and facial expressions. Take turns performing for the class.

• Pick a partner and do your own “sawaal-jawaab” or “Call & Response.” You can use your hands to clap the rhythms, or your feet to stomp the rhythms. Use some of the rhythms you heard during the performance or make up your own rhythms. Switch roles. You can choose to mirror the phrase exactly or add your own variation. After several rounds, try to make it more like a conversation in which one person says something rhythmically using their feet and their partner answers with a new rhythm. Go back and forth several times, with different rhythms each time.

• Oral tradition is a form of human communication wherein knowledge, art, ideas and cultural material is received, preserved and transmitted orally from one generation to another. Why is oral tradition central to artistic traditions such as North Indian classical dance and music? What have you learned from your own oral traditions? (family stories, traditions, etc.)

★ Kathak dance and music relate to the musical elements of tempo (speed); rhythmic pattern; dynamics (loud and soft—varying levels of volume). Have a leader create a short rhythmic pattern, echoed by the group. Each time it is repeated by the leader, change the tempo, and/or the dynamics.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:


Klauss, Anja Illustrated Stories from India. Usborne Pub, 2015.
AND THE MUSIC CENTER ANNOUNCE
LEELA DANCE COLLECTIVE TO PERFORM ON

and The Music Center today announced the upcoming Leela Dance Collective 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 The Leela Dance Collective. 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.

The Leela Dance Collective was founded in 2016 by Rina Mehta, Rachna Nivas and Sebi Lee, senior disciples of legendary kathak master Pandit Chitresh Das, along with leading kathak performers Sarah Morelli and Shefali Jain. It is the only one of its kind Indian-American dance company that brings together leading kathak artists from around the world representing a multitude of voices to articulate a clairvoyant vision for kathak. The collective is distinguished by an artistic practice that centers around collaboration and collective creativity and a body of work that is at once grounded in tradition and boldly innovative. In its two year history, the collective has already begun to make an indelible mark on the field of kathak and world dance with its rigorous technique, dynamic choreography, fashion-forward costuming, and sophisticated musical scores. With home season performances in San Francisco and Los Angeles along with national and international touring, the collective performs for more than 10,000 people annually. Past highlights include appearances at The Broad Stage, the Green Music Center and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. The collective’s productions and performances have been supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council, the Zellerbach Family Fund, the Esper Petersen Foundation and New Music USA.

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, 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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THE MUSIC CENTER PRESENTS

LEELA DANCE COLLECTIVE

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, Symphonian Campus Tours, Grand Park