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

LULA WASHINGTON
DANCE THEATRE
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. This performance features the internationally recognized Lula Washington Dance Theatre. This vibrant dance company is known for its unique blend of modern dance, ballet, jazz, African, Afro-Caribbean, and street-dance techniques to tell stories of African-American history and culture. Please welcome the Lula Washington Dance Theatre!"

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

- 20' wide x 20' deep MINIMUM, no exceptions
- Portable stages must be sturdy, level and securely lashed

SURFACE

- Wood or linoleum over wood is preferred
  - Freshly mopped (not waxed)
  - Irregularities covered with tape
  - Extraneous clutter removed
- Dance area must not have splinters, holes or nails

DRESSING AREA

- One private, secured dressing area close to the stage

EQUIPMENT

- One microphone with long cable (for narrator to move around stage) or a wireless microphone, in good working order
- Electrical outlets on or near stage
  - CD player
- Amplification sufficient to reach both stage and audience spaces
  - One table
- Water and cups (bottled water preferred)

ARRIVAL

- 60 minutes prior to the scheduled start time to prepare and set up

PARKING

- Six space 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.

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
LULA WASHINGTON DANCE THEATRE

ART FORM: Dance
STYLE: Traditional
CULTURE: African American

MEET THE ARTIST:
The Lula Washington Dance Theatre communicates the vitality of the human spirit and gives voice to the emotions and experiences of African Americans. However, Artistic Director Lula Washington didn’t start to dance until she was in her 20s and had a child. One day, walking through a park in Los Angeles with her daughter Tamica, she stopped to watch a dance class. The instructor invited her to join in—and, she was hooked! Then, her junior college dance teacher took her to see a campus performance of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre. Inspired, she changed her focus from pursuing a nursing career to seriously studying dance. Applying to UCLA, she was turned down but, with the help of her husband Erwin, she appealed and was accepted. Fulfilling her dream, she received her degree, became a dancer and choreographer, and established The Lula Washington Dance Theatre. They perform diverse styles that range from West African, Afro-Caribbean and street-dance forms to abstract modern pieces. Lula is committed to telling about African American history, feelings, everyday occurrences and social issues through dance. Her career also includes choreography for film and musicals, including “The Lion King.”

PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:
The New York Times stated, “Washington is a gifted original, who offers an elegant and smoothly blended mix of styles.” Although the company performs in a variety of styles, their dances are rooted in traditional African and modern dance. The history of African American culture began when Africans were forcibly brought to this country and sold as slaves. Their history of oppression was mixed with hope, courage, and spiritual strength. There were many social and political struggles to cope with during this long evolution and many of these issues became the focal point of expression for black artists. From the early part of the 20th century, social reform collided with the traditional attitudes of the dominant culture. As a result, African Americans were often cast into roles that prevented them from participating in society as equal citizens. Black artists addressed these themes during the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s. In the Los Angeles Museum of Modern Art Magazine it states, “This was also the era in which the African American community liberated itself by creating art that affirmed its pride and identity...” In the 1960s when segregation was challenged, issues such as violence and inequality and roles of the victim and aggressor were often explored by black artists. Out of difficult times, many unique forms of artistic expression have been born, such as the music and dance styles featured in this program.

Writer Alex Haley, who researched and wrote the historical novel Roots, awakened an interest and need within many African Americans to return to Africa in search of their own roots. In Roots, Haley brought their history to life in the form of specific characters who played a variety of roles and scenarios. In so doing, it became possible to see the great African influence that has deeply touched the culture of blacks, as well as the American culture and others. This influence is often referred to as the “African Diaspora,” which means that wherever black Africans were placed, they brought their living culture. Even when their language, music and dance were suppressed, they didn’t disappear, but rather fused their culture with each new culture with which they came in contact. The Lula Washington Dance Theatre embodies this fusion through different forms of dance.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:
Beauty, power, high energy and emotional expression are the cornerstones of this dynamic troupe. Three dancers immediately engage the interest of the audience by performing “Lift Every Voice and Sing” in which they toss and float brightly colored scarves. Ms. Washington introduces herself as a choreographer and shares highlights of her work as well as dances by other important black choreographers. Although the work is diverse, her dancers will demonstrate classical ballet, modern dance, jazz, tap, hip-hop, African and Caribbean dance forms. The repertoire will vary, but will draw from such works as: “The Movement” (about Rosa Parks and Dr. Martin Luther King); “Reign” by Rennie Harris; and “The Little Rock Nine.” She often draws upon text and historical events.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What most impressed you about the performance? Give reasons.
- If given the chance, what style of dance would you choose? What would you most like to express in a dance?
- What movements or gestures do you remember from the performance? If you are brave enough, show it to the class. Combine a few ideas.
- Did you get any ideas of your own from watching these dances? If so, discuss what these ideas are. What would you like to communicate, or get people to think about? How might a dance achieve this?
- Can you think of a significant historical event that could inspire you to tell a story through dance?

FRAMEWORK FOCUS—LANGUAGE ARTS:

After discussing the performance and reviewing each of the dances, select one that impressed you. Working with a partner, or in a small group, describe the dance as you remember it. Have your partner, or group, retell the story you shared. Then, write a paragraph or two telling the story. Did telling the story first make it easier to write down? Why, or why not?

Select a specific dance from the performance. Then, write the name of the dance in the center of a piece of paper. Next, write all the words and images that come to your mind outside the circle. Make sure to include words that describe some of the movements and/or incorporate words from the vocabulary list. Select one or two of your ideas and develop them into a short written essay. The essay should have a good beginning, middle and end.

When you finish writing your essay, find a partner. Take turns reading your essays to each other. Then give each other positive feedback. Ask each other questions to learn more. If you wish, include the new ideas in your essay.

ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

★ Try to recall one or two of the gestures you remember from the performance. Translate your mental images into body movements and shapes. Show the movement to the best of your ability. Work with a partner and create two original gestures you can perform together. Combine them and share with another set of partners. If you are really ambitious, put all four ideas together, deciding the best sequence.

★ Review the following vocabulary terms related to dance:

- choreographer
- dancer
- choreography
- body parts
- Gospel
- modern dance
- improvisation
- gesture
- tempo

- Make a dance incorporating three or four movement ideas such as a walk, jump, fall or turn. Put your three movements together any way you want. Give your movements a specific emotion (happy, sad, angry, fearful, peaceful, etc.). Be aware of how this changes the way the movement looks and feels. Get into groups of four and share each person’s idea. Take turns trying one or two of the ideas together as a group.

- Using paper and pencils, crayons or pens, draw some of the different positions of the dancers that you can remember. If you like, think about how you are placing the dancers in relationship to each other on the paper.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:


and the Music Center announce
Lula Washington Dance Theatre to perform on ____________

and The Music Center today announced the upcoming Lula Washington Dance Theatre 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 Lula Washington Dance Theatre. 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.

Internationally recognized for its unique blend of African, Afro-Caribbean, modern, street-dance and jazz techniques, the Lula Washington Dance Theatre provides brilliant depictions of African American experiences, past and present. Founded in 1980, the company is one of the premier African American arts institutions on the West Coast. With a home studio and performance space in the Crenshaw district of Los Angeles, Ms. Washington and her company also regularly present at local venues such as UCLA, the John Anson Ford Amphitheatre in Los Angeles and the Cerritos Center for the Arts. National performances include presentations in numerous locations, including the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. An interracial group that reflects a multitude of experiences and backgrounds, under the leadership of Washington this company presents a dynamic, inspirational performance that seeks to build bridges between people of different cultures and ethnic backgrounds, and to inspire and enlighten the children of Los Angeles, California and the nation.

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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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

LULA WASHINGTON
DANCE THEATRE

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