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

MOSCOW NIGHTS
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. Moscow Nights is an exciting trio of award-winning musicians that plays Russian folk music on traditional Russian instruments. Please welcome Moscow Nights!"

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 15’ deep minimum
• Portable stages must be sturdy and securely lashed, with steps leading up to the stage

SURFACE
• Freshly mopped (not waxed)
• Irregularities covered with tape
• Extraneous clutter removed

DRESSING AREA
• One dressing room will be needed

EQUIPMENT
• 4 armless chairs
• 1 small table (2’ x 3’ maximum)
• 1 electrical outlet (with extension cord if necessary)

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

PARKING
• One space close to the venue for loading and unloading

ASSISTANCE
• Please have a school representative ready to welcome the performers and assist 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
MOSCOW NIGHTS

ART FORM: Music
STYLE: Traditional
CULTURE: Russia

MEET THE ARTIST:

Moscow Nights is a versatile ensemble of world recognized, prize-winning musicians from Russia. They have established themselves as one of the fastest rising folk groups in the United States. Led by Vitaliy Bezrodnov (Bayan Accordion), the group includes Yuri Shishkin, (prima balalaikist), and Sergei Ruksha (contra-bass balalaika). The group was initially formed in Kaluga, Russia in the late 1980’s where Mr. Bezrodnov attended Kaluga Music Conservatory. After completing his conservatory studies, he successfully reorganized the group in the United States in 1996. Initially touring the Western states and the Hawaiian Islands, the ensemble met with great acclaim due to their considerable talents and natural exuberance. Their venues have been as varied as First Night New Year’s Eve Celebrations to the Denver Center for the Performing Arts. They also initiated a charity program entitled “Music in Mission” and Rotary Children’s Fund, which raises money for Russian orphans.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

Russia is a large and culturally diverse country with many ethnic groups, each with their own form of folk music. The program of Moscow Nights is centered on musical masterpieces of Russian folklore and represents the diversity of the culture, ranging from humorous songs and elaborate lyrical suites, to pulsating dance numbers. It includes such well-known songs as “Kalinka” and “Volga Boatman” but focuses on pieces lesser known to Western audiences including Cosack war melodies and Siberian love chants. Russian folk music expresses the national character – outwardly reserved and cool but brimming with vigor, mischievousness and vibrancy inside. The concerts have the aura of a spontaneous impromptu performance, as if they just happened to have come together to make music. This is one of the hallmarks of folk music. But don’t be fooled by the apparent ease – these musicians work hard behind the scenes, researching, rehearsing and arranging music in order to preserve the rich traditions of a culture that was almost lost. Moscow Night’s lively program presents an authentic picture of selected Russian folk traditions and culture.

PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:

The music of Moscow Nights is predominantly authentic, traditional Russian folk music. During his conservatory years, Mr. Bezrodnov spent considerable time traveling deep into the Russian countryside, interviewing the eldest members of each village in an effort to preserve and resurrect pre-revolution Russian culture. Their current program incorporates obscure folk instruments such as unusual percussion and birch bark whistles, in addition to the more common balalaika and bayan. Thus, Moscow Nights is able to bring a unique program featuring a culture that had almost lost its original identity.

The balalaika is a 3- to 6-string guitar-like instrument with a triangular body. These were played by peasants and skomorokhs (medieval Russian troubadours). There are many theories about the origin of this strikingly shaped instrument. One is that the three sides and strings of the balalaika are supposed to represent the Holy Trinity. Peasants made balalaikas out of a pumpkin. If you quarter a pumpkin, you are left with a balalaika shape. Another theory is that before Tsar Peter The Great, instruments were not allowed in Russia. So, when Peter allowed them, only the boat builders knew how to work with wood. The balalaika looks like the prow of a boat, if held horizontally. Balalaikas are made in many sizes: from the tiny piccolo and the slightly larger prima, to the massive contra bass (see picture).

The bayan is a type of chromatic button accordion that was developed in Russia. There are some differences in construction from other accordions that give the bayan a deeper bass sound, large pitch range and consistent tone color. For this reason, bayans are often the instrument of choice for accordion virtuosi (be they Russian or not) who perform classical and contemporary art music.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:


- What are some of the historical or cultural facts that you remember?

- Think of the costumes and describe them. What colors, patterns or other details did you notice?

- Which piece most gave you the spirit of Russian culture? Explain what it was that gave you this idea or feeling.

- What are some of the historical or cultural facts that you remember?

- Why do you think people created, and continue to create, folk music? What purpose does it serve in a community?

ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

- Be a news reporter and give a report on the concert. Divide students into pairs. Write questions out ahead of time. One asks the questions and the other gives information about the concert. This also can be changed to writing a report of the concert for their families.

- Learn one of the most well-known Russia folk songs, "Volga Boatman." Then, using basic percussion instruments, create one or two rhythm patterns that can accompany the song as it is sung. You may also work with a recording.

- Russia is the largest country in the world in terms of landmass, or area. However, much of it is not populated because it lacks proper soil or climate (too hot or too cold). Find Russia on a map or globe. Notice which continents it is on (Europe and Asia) They are joined (Eurasia), but the artificial boundary between the continents of Europe and Asia lies along the Ural Mountains, south to the Ural River and the Caspian Sea and along the Caucasus Mountains to the Black Sea. See if you can identify all of these landmarks.

- Think about the traditions in your family. What traditions are American? What traditions are from another culture that represents your family? What are these traditions associated with: celebrations (wedding, birthday, etc.), religious holidays, eating, dress, beliefs or legends? Discuss the advantages of having traditions that are passed on in your family. Are there any disadvantages? If so, discuss them as well.

- Select a specific folk song from any culture you know, are learning about, or find interesting. Learn the song in English or another language. Find a recording of the song, if possible, and learn to sing it with the correct rhythm, pronunciation, dynamics (loud and soft), and in the correct tempo (fast or slow). Determine the mood of the song. Does it express strength, protest, romance, fun, sorrow, happiness or worship? Perhaps it is a hero’s tale. Sing the song the way it was intended. Then sing it again exaggerating elements of music (tempo—faster, slower; dynamics – louder, softer, etc.) to make the mood even more obvious.

FRAMEWORK FOCUS—SOCIAL STUDIES/HISTORY:

Today we connect through the internet, movies, and digital media, traditional cultures are impacted by modern influences. For example, rock ‘n’ roll has made its way to all parts of the globe. Composers in every country are creating popular music in this style, often abandoning their own musical traditions. Sometimes the music becomes a fusion of traditional and popular music. However, Moscow Nights centers their performance on the purer forms of traditional Russian music. The early ancestors of the Russians were Pagan East Slavic tribes. Among these groups were bards who composed poetic lyrical songs about heroes and their brave deeds. Peasants also composed and sung a large number of folk songs, passing them on through the oral tradition. Define the word “Hero” and list some of the traits. Then, as a class, identify modern-day heroes or heroines and a specific thing they are known for. Working in small groups, select one hero or heroine to discuss. Write a four to eight line poem or rap that captures their traits and story. Then, practice together to perform the poem or rap, rhythmically and in unison. Share as a class, giving background on your hero before performing the poem or rap. Discuss choices and poems.

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**LEGEND**

**VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS CONTENT STANDARD STRANDS**

- ★ Artistic perception
- ● Creative expression
- ■ Historical & cultural context
- ● Aesthetic valuing
- ● Connections, Relations, Applications

**SUGGESTED RESOURCES:**


Authors: Susan Cambigue-Tracey & Mike de Hilster. © The Music Center of Los Angeles County www.musiccenter.org/ontour @MusicCenterLA
AND THE MUSIC CENTER ANNOUNCE

MOSCOW NIGHTS TO PERFORM ON

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and The Music Center today announced the upcoming Moscow Nights 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 by Moscow Nights. 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.

Moscow Nights is a versatile ensemble of world-recognized, prize-winning musicians from Russia. Led by Vitaliy Bezrodnov (Bayan Accordion), the group includes Yuri Shishkin, (prima balalaikist), and Sergei Ruksa (contra-bass balalaika). The group was initially formed in Kaluga, Russia in the late 1980’s where Mr. Bezrodnov attended Kaluga Music Conservatory. Initially touring the Western states and the Hawaiian Islands, the ensemble met with great acclaim due to their considerable talents and natural exuberance. They also initiated a charity program entitled Music in Mission and Rotary Children’s Fund, which raises money for the orphans of Russia.

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

MOSCOW NIGHTS

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, Symphonia1 Campus Tours, Grand Park