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

PATRICK BALL
The World of Irish Storytelling
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. Patrick Ball brings us stories and music from Ireland. He is one of America's premier Irish harp players, and today he will weave for us a tapestry of melody and magic. Please welcome "The World of Irish Storytelling" presented by Patrick Ball!"

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 6' deep minimum
• Portable stages must be sturdy and securely lashed

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

OUTDOOR PERFORMANCES
• Staging area must be shaded, sheltered from wind and away from distractions

EQUIPMENT
• One chair
• Two microphones
• One microphone stand
• Sound system with amplifier and speakers
  • Electrical outlet
  • Glass of water

ARRIVAL
• 15-30 minutes prior to the scheduled start time to prepare and set up

PARKING
• One space

ASSISTANCE
• Please have a school representative ready to welcome the performer 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
PATRICK BALL—The World of Irish Storytelling

ART FORM: Storytelling
STYLE: Traditional
CULTURE: Irish

MEET THE ARTIST:

Patrick Ball, born and raised in California, gave little thought to where his ancestors came from. He was studying to be a lawyer when a required course introduced him to the history of Ireland. This led to graduate study in history and a journey to Ireland. There, he fell in love with the eloquence of the Irish oral tradition and the Celtic harp. The unity of Irish words, music and history became his passion and his profession. Patrick Ball now tours extensively throughout the United States and Canada and is considered one of the premier Celtic harpists (harpers) and storytellers in the world. His recordings have sold over one-half million copies and earned national awards. A review published in California Music Magazine reads, “Patrick’s harp sounds so glorious that it’s quite understandable why it’s reputed to be the instrument of choice among the angels.”

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

This performance is an enchanting collage of storytelling and harp music. Each tale is accompanied and illustrated by a melody by Turlough O’Carolan, Ireland’s foremost harpist (harpers) and composer. As the stories are traditional, so are the renditions of the tunes. Patrick’s collection of tales is large and each audience receives an individually tailored performance. Patrick might tell “The Legend of Knockgrafton” and accompany the tale with “Carolan’s Quarrel with the Landlady” or “Sheebeg Sheemore.” “Far Darrig in Donegal” might be accompanied by "Brian Boru’s March" or "Carolan's Welcome." Each melody is carefully chosen to set the right mood for the story it accompanies.

Patrick will also describe the anatomy and techniques of the harp, grounding the audience in a deeper understanding of this beautiful instrument.

PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:

The history and design of harps goes back to early cultures. Any culture using a hunting bow had a harp-like instrument. Harps are found in Egyptian wall paintings and on Greek vases. The poet Homer is said to have used the Greek harp, or lyre, as accompaniment for his epics.

The harp in Ireland dates back to 460 A.D. when a Papal Music School was founded there. The Irish became known as expert harp players and storytellers, using music to embellish their tales. These artists were known as harpers or bards. Harpers were required to provoke three emotions in their audience: laughter, tears or sleep. For centuries, Ireland was organized into large estates ruled by local chieftains. Chieftains had resident bards who entertained and inspired the assembly. There were also bards who traveled the country telling legends, or the news, in exchange for food and lodging. As the ruling powers of Ireland shifted into English hands, Irish culture, including harp playing, declined.

Turlough O’Carolan (1670-1738) was the last and greatest of the harpists. During his childhood, his father worked on the estate of MacDermott Roe. This chieftain’s wife liked young O’Carolan and paid for his general education. In his late teens, O’Carolan contracted smallpox and became blind. Mrs. McDermott Roe then changed his studies to music and later gave him a harp, horses and a guide to begin his career as an itinerant harper. He enjoyed success as a composer, writing tunes wherever he visited. Many of his tunes are known by the names of the people for whom they were written.

Harp designs follow their history. Early harps were bow-shaped, with no triangular frame. Irish harps were triangularly framed and strung with metal wire. Strings of different lengths in the frame produce the tones of the musical scale. Tones are adjusted by turning a tuning peg at the top of the string with a tuning key. Harps are built of many woods, often maple or walnut. Patrick Ball’s harp is maple and strung in brass wire.

The 1960s saw a revival of Irish harp music. Artists like Patrick Ball have revived the Bardic tradition.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

• Which story from the performance was your favorite? Why?

• Have you heard an Irish harp played before? How would you describe the sound?

• How did the harp music Patrick played relate to the stories that he told? What different moods did the music evoke?

• What character from the stories do you remember most? Describe.

• Would you like to learn to play the harp or another stringed instrument? What do you like best about stringed instruments?

FRAMEWORK FOCUS—LANGUAGE ARTS:

Each traditional culture has its own fairy and folk tale tradition. The bards of Ireland kept tales of leprechauns and "wee folk" alive. Britain has stories of gnomes and pixies. Scandinavia tells of trolls and Hawaii of menehunes.

Make a list of the cultures represented by students in your classroom. Investigate the folk tale traditions of the various cultures. What characters are the equivalent of the "wee people", fairies, trolls, etc.?

Have students choose a favorite character from these "fairy folk" and write their own original tale.

ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

★ Get a piece of fishing line, string or wire. Tie one end to a heavy object. Stretch the string tight until you can pluck it and make a sound. Keep changing the length of the stretched span of string. A shorter length will produce higher tones, a longer length will produce a lower tone. Strings of different lengths are held in a triangular frame to produce a variety of tones and make a basic harp. Experiment with different lengths to create different pitches (higher and lower sounds).

■ Find the island of Ireland on a map. The land mass is divided into thirty-two counties. Six counties form Northern Ireland, which is governed by Great Britain. Identify them. The other counties form an independent country called the Republic of Ireland. Dublin is the capital of the Republic and Belfast is the capital of Northern Ireland. How many cities or towns can you find that were mentioned in the stories told?

◆ Select a fairy or folk tale which you think could be enhanced by the addition of music. Choose two or three short pieces of music that express the mood or culture of the tale. Tell or read the story, inserting the music where you think it embellishes the telling. Another idea is to begin with the music, setting a mood.

◆ Another type of harp frequently heard is the orchestra harp. This harp is larger than its Celtic relative and is strung in gut, rather than wire, as are many other stringed instruments. Not only is an orchestra harp tuned with a key, but it uses seven, foot pedals to raise or lower tones while it is being played, producing all the notes of a full chromatic scale.

Play a recording of classical harp music. Two famous pieces often played on a harp are "Clair de Lune" by Debussy and "The Swan" from Carnival of the Animals by Saint-Saens. Compare and contrast the sounds of the Celtic and orchestra harps. Which sound do you prefer? Why? What types of music seem more suited to which type of harp?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:


AND THE MUSIC CENTER ANNOUNCE

PATRICK BALL TO PERFORM ON ______________________

____________________ and The Music Center today announced the upcoming Patrick Ball 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 Patrick Ball. 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.

An acclaimed storyteller who tours extensively throughout the United States and Canada, Patrick Ball is also one of the premier Celtic harp players in the world today. His rare artistry is evident as he plays the ancient, legendary brass-strung harp of Ireland with its crystalline, bell-like voice, and shares legends filled with wit and enchantment. An illustration of the marvelous unity of Irish words, music and history, each performance carries the listener to another place and time, back when stories were an everyday occurrence in the life of a child. He transports his audience to a time when listening was as important as watching, when tales were told from one heart to another and when the sharing of stories and legends kindled imaginations and dreams. Ball brings to the performance stories fiery and tender, funny and magical that are a feast for the mind, the ears and the heart.

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.
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