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

ROCHEL GARNER COLEMAN

Shadow Ball: The Story of Black Baseball
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. Rochel Coleman is an actor and storyteller who is going to bring to life the story of baseball player James Thomas Bell, also known as ‘Cool Papa Bell.’ James Thomas Bell, the fastest man ever to play baseball, was a player in the Negro Leagues, which were founded in 1920. Mr. Coleman will re-create the life and times of the baseball players of the Negro Leagues. Please welcome Rochel Coleman in Shadow Ball: The Story of Black Baseball!”
TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

SPACE
- 10’ wide x 10’ deep minimum
- Portable stages must be sturdy and securely lashed

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

EQUIPMENT
- One Electrical outlet
- One or two Stools
  - One Table
  - One Bench

AUDIENCE SEATING
- Center or side aisles through the audience to the stage

ARRIVAL
- 45-60 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 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
ROCHEL GARNER COLEMAN—Shadow Ball: The Story of Black Baseball

ART FORM: Theatre
STYLE: Contemporary
CULTURE: African American

MEET THE ARTIST:

Rochel Garner Coleman is an actor, singer and storyteller whose career began at the age of nine. Singing professionally with the Berkshire Boys’ Choir, he distinguished himself as a soloist performing with Pablo Casals and the Boston Symphony at Tanglewood, Massachusetts. His first theatre experience was as a cast member in Leonard Bernstein’s “Mass,” a production which opened the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. and later traveled to Lincoln Center in New York City. At Indiana University and Colorado College, Rochel studied music and theatre, continuing professional studies at Trinity Repertory Conservatory in Providence, R.I. A talented and charismatic performer, Rochel created the historical portrait of black cowboy Nat Love, as well as other theatre pieces portraying the African American cadets known as the Tuskegee Airmen and the slain civil rights champion, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

Shadow Ball tells the story of James Thomas Bell, known as “Cool Papa Bell,” the fastest man ever to play baseball. In this one man show, Rochel Coleman recreates the life and times of the players of the Negro Leagues from the early 1920’s, through the Great Depression, to the breaking of the color barrier by Jackie Robinson’s signing with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. Dressed in reproductions of actual Negro League uniforms, Mr. Coleman uses pantomime and movement to convey the action of the game. Compellingly told with humor and music, this authentic production is truly a home run.

PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:

The term ‘shadow ball’ referred to the pre-game warm-up in pantomime that the barnstorming black teams of the Negro Leagues liked to do. They threw an invisible ball around the infield, hit and fielded imaginary fly balls, making close plays and diving catches. To the fans in the stands, it all looked real.

The first documentation of African Americans playing baseball comes from the collected papers of a slave brought to the front lines of the Civil War by his owner. He learned the game from soldiers he watched playing the sport. Baseball was played in American colleges by 1880 and team pictures suggest that integrated teams were relatively common. As Jim Crow segregation spread across state boundaries North and South, Negroes were prevented from playing on the same teams with white athletes.

Rube Foster, the father of Black baseball, founded the Negro League in 1920. He organized teams around the country into a body governed by a council of owners. Pennant races developed strong rivalries as the teams traveled from town to town by train, car or bus. The Negro Leagues flourished during the 1920’s but were hit hard by the Great Depression, when the price of admission, fifty cents a game, became a luxury. The election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his “New Deal” politics paved the way for the integration of baseball. Jackie Robinson’s signing with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947 and Satchel Paige’s signing with the Cleveland Indians in 1949 were landmark moves that brought top black players to the major league teams. By 1960, only four Negro teams existed and the League folded.

Some of the great players included: Ernie Banks, Hank Aaron, Willie Mays, Roy Campanella and James Thomas (“Cool Papa”) Bell. In 1974, on the same day as Whitey Ford and Mickey Mantle, James Thomas Bell was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Prior to the performance, were you aware that there was a time in our country’s history when African Americans could not play in major league baseball?
- Discuss some of the challenges that black ballplayers faced in the 1920’s-1940’s. How were their experiences different from those of black ballplayers today?
- Do you think that working as a baseball player was a good job for James Thomas Bell?
- What does the term “shadow ball” mean?
- How did Rochel Coleman use his body and voice during the performance to convey the actions of a real baseball game?

ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

- Use pantomime and creative movement to create a “shadow ball” routine with fielding, batting and pitching elements.
- Music from different eras is used in the performance of Shadow Ball to convey a sense of the time periods. Listen to recordings that were popular during the 1920’s to the 1940’s, from the Jazz Age (1920’s), the Depression (1930’s) and World War II (1940’s).
- Role-play a scene in which a Negro Leagues’ team comes in contact with Jim Crow segregation laws. Possible settings: a hotel, a restaurant, a store.
- Write a radio broadcaster’s play-by-play description of part of a baseball game using some of baseball’s unique vocabulary:
  Can of Corn - a fly ball that can be easily caught.
  Chin Music - a ball pitched close to a batter’s chin.
  Ducks on the Pond - runners on the base.
  Lumber - a bat.
  Tweener - a ball hit between two outfielders.
  Shoestring Catch - a catch made by an outfielder just before the ball touches the ground.

- Shadow Ball reveals the struggles that players like James Thomas Bell endured during the course of their careers. Describe the scenes in the play that were turning points for him. Make a connection between “Cool Papa” Bell’s experiences in the play and challenges you may have faced in your life. Write about the meanings or lessons learned from the theatrical presentation.

FRAMEWORK FOCUS—MATHEMATICS:

Identify the geometric shapes one would find on a baseball field (diamond - infield; circle - pitcher’s mound; square - bases; rectangle - dug-out.)

Figure out a player’s batting average by dividing the number of “hits” (single, double, triple, home run) by the number of “at bats.” A walk or “base on balls” is not counted as a hit.

Example: 180 hits +467 at bats = .385 average

Compute a pitcher’s ERA or “earned run average.” Earned run average is the average number of earned runs scored on a pitcher per game. It is calculated by taking the number of earned runs scored on a pitcher (excluding men on base as a result of errors), and dividing it by one-ninth, the total number of innings pitched.

ERA= Earned runs/(innings pitched/9)

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:


AND THE MUSIC CENTER ANNOUNCE
ROCHEL GARNER COLEMAN TO PERFORM ON __________________

and The Music Center today announced the upcoming Rochel Garner Coleman 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 Rochel Garner Coleman. 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.

Rochel Garner Coleman is an actor, singer and storyteller whose career began at the age of nine. Singing professionally with the Berkshire Boys’ Choir, he distinguished himself as a soloist performing with Pablo Casals and the Boston Symphony at Tanglewood, Massachusetts. His first theatre experience was as a cast member in Leonard Bernstein’s “Mass,” a production which opened the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. and later traveled to Lincoln Center in New York City. At Indiana University and Colorado College, Rochel studied music and theatre, continuing professional studies at Trinity Repertory Conservatory in Providence, R.I. A talented and charismatic performer, Rochel created the historical portrait of black cowboy Nat Love, as well as other theatre pieces portraying the African American cadets known as the Tuskegee Airmen and the slain civil rights champion, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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

ROCHEL GARNER COLEMAN

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

PROGRAM SUPPORT PROVIDED BY: