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

WILL & COMPANY
A Christmas Carol
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 name of this company of actors is Will and Company. They will be presenting scenes from Charles Dickens’ classic novel, "A Christmas Carol. "Please welcome Will and Company!"

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
- 15' wide x 10' deep minimum (some flexibility available)
  - Must be clean and lighted

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

DRESSING AREA
- One clean, secured dressing area will be needed

STUDENT PARTICIPATION
- This performance provides a unique opportunity for a few students from your school to be performers in each show
- Please select 6 students to participate for each show (can be different students each show or the same students for each show)
- Students should report to the performance space 30 minutes prior to the performance. (If performance schedule is tight and includes multiple shows, all students should arrive 30 prior to the first performance)

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

PARKING
- Two spaces, one 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
WILL & COMPANY—A Christmas Carol

ART FORM: Theatre
STYLE: Classical
CULTURE: Western European

MEET THE ARTIST:
Will & Company is a multicultural theatre ensemble with a "Professional Designation in Arts Education" award from the Los Angeles County Arts Commission. This unique company performs exciting adaptations of some of the world's greatest classic literature. Under the artistic direction of Colin Cox, they present major scenes from plays, interspersed with narration and background information. Some plays performed by Will & Company include physical humor and dazzling swordplay. The troupe performs Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliette," as well as adaptations of other great works, such as Homer's "The Odyssey," and Charles Dickens' novella, "A Christmas Carol." Will & Company has performed locally at The Geffen Playhouse, The Los Angeles Theatre Center, and El Capitan. They also tour nationally, presenting both classic works and original plays highlighting diversity. In 2005, Will & Company was nominated for a GLADD award for their production of "A Pebble in My Shoe."

PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:
About the Author: Victorian novelist Charles Dickens (1812-1870) is one of the most popular writers of all time, with credits including "Oliver Twist," "A Tale of Two Cities" and "Great Expectations." He became known for his rich characters and vivid prose. Dickens' mother forced him to work in a shoe-polish factory starting at age twelve, driving him to incorporate the woes of the working class into his writing. He also covered such diverse social topics as the economy, Victorian bureaucracy and rigid social stratification. He was known for his evocative descriptions of London.

About the Novella: Dickens wrote five Christmas novellas, of which "A Christmas Carol" (1843) is the first and most famous. This ghost story tackles the problems of poverty and social injustice. It was written as a potboiler (a book written for profit and lacks literary strength) in order to pay off his mounting debt. Despite this inauspicious genesis, the novella proved that not all potboilers lack artistic merit. "A Christmas Carol" not only provided Dickens with needed money, it quickly became one of the most iconic Christmas tales ever written. His story is also credited with reinvigorating Christmas traditions, at a time when they were in decline. The original printing included illustrations created by noted English caricaturist, John Leech, a man of sharp wit who was of like mind with Dickens when it came to social injustice and poverty.

Synopsis: The main character, Ebenezer Scrooge, is a mean and miserly man. He believes that Christmas is just an excuse for otherwise productive members of society to miss work and for the poor to expect handouts. He doesn't believe in the good cheer and charity that the season promotes. On Christmas Eve, Scrooge is working in his counting house with his clerk, Bob Cratchit. After visits from his wealthy nephew Fred (who is dismissed by Scrooge with the famous "Bah! Humbug") and two solicitors seeking money for the poor (who are similarly rebuffed), Scrooge lets Cratchit go home to his poor family. That night, Scrooge is visited by the ghost of his former business associate, Jacob Marley -- a man who was as greedy and cold as Scrooge. Marley warns Scrooge that if he continues to live so selfishly, he will spend eternity wearing the chains that his greed has forged. Three ghosts visit Scrooge that night: the Ghost of Christmas Past, the Ghost of Christmas Present, and the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come. In different ways, they show Scrooge the error in valuing money over people. Scrooge is frightened by the bleak picture of his life and promises to change his ways. He awakens, on Christmas morning, a changed man. He becomes jolly and charitable, and transforms into the man he promised the ghosts he would become. He carries the spirit of Christmas with him all year round.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

• If you were to retell the story of “A Christmas Carol” in two or three sentences, what would you say?
• Which characters did you identify with most? Why? Which characters did you identify with least? Why?
• Describe Scrooge when he was young. What occurred that hardened his spirit, turning him into a callous and selfish miser?
• What things did you learn from this story?
• What are the characteristics of the holiday season that are portrayed in the story?
• Did Will & Company’s performance stir your interest in the books of Charles Dickens? In what way?
• Have you ever heard, read, or seen a film, play or other presentation of “A Christmas Carol?” If so, how was this performance different?

FRAMEWORK FOCUS—LANGUAGE ARTS:

As a class, think about “A Christmas Carol” and follow these steps to dramatize a class version:

Outline and record the key scenes on the blackboard.

List the main characters and choose three words that describe their personalities or physical characteristics.

Discuss the setting of the story. How many different locales and time periods are depicted? Ask the class how theseplaces and times are represented.

Refer to your plot outline; divide the scenes into three parts -- beginning, middle and end.

Cast the scenes. (By dividing the story into three parts, different students get a chance to portray the main characters.)

Perform the story, improvising the dialogue and action, or have different narrators tell the beginning, middle and end, while others act out or mime the parts.

After the performance, discuss the scenes, emphasizing positive things students did. During discussions, refer to character names instead of names of students who played the parts.

ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

• Charles Dickens wrote “A Christmas Carol” as if it were a carol in prose.” Christmas carols were often written to tell stories of the Christmas season. Take a favorite Christmas carol and use it as a musical structure to tell part of the Dickens’ story. (i.e, “Good King Wenceslas.”)

• Party games were very much a part of a traditional Victorian Christmas. Notice that there is no mention of the giving of gifts throughout A Christmas Carol. Instead, this was a holiday for gathering with friends and family over good food and good company. The Cratchits sit by the fire after their meal and sing songs or tell stories, while at Fred’s house the revelers provide us with examples of the popularity of games such as “Blind Man’s Bluff” and “Questions.” Make a list of the special traditions (games, songs, foods, visits, etc.) your family and friends use to celebrate Christmas or other winter holidays.

• This story concerns the reversal of fortune for a rich miser. It has a pattern similar to many popular stories: the poor and deserving people end up doing well, and the villainous miser ends up a changed man, or is ruined. How many other stories can you compare with this one? Consider another popular Christmas story, “How The Grinch Stole Christmas.” Make a list of other stories whose lessons revolve around too much, or too little wealth, greed or misplaced values.

• How is listening to a story a valuable experience? How does it compare to reading it or watching a film or video of a book?

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:


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**LEGEND**

**VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS CONTENT STANDARD STRANDS**

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

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AND THE MUSIC CENTER ANNOUNCE

WILL & COMPANY TO PERFORM ON ___________

and The Music Center today announced the upcoming Will & Company 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 Will & Company. 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.

Will & Company’s founder/director Colin Cox and a touring group of artists, much like the troupes who traversed the provinces in Shakespeare’s day, make ageless classics more accessible to young audiences. Celebrate the timeless language and classic theatre of Shakespeare’s work by selecting a tragedy or a comedy for students to enjoy. Each performance features narration of the story of the play, a presentation of several major scenes, and information about the history and background of the play. These dynamic performances are a great way to intrigue, entrance and educate students about the captivating work of William Shakespeare.

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

WILL & COMPANY

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: