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

WILL & COMPANY
The Odyssey
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 the Homers’ classic tale, "The Odyssey." 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:

Odysseus, king of Ithaca, sails with his army to take part in the mighty Achaeans expedition led by the mythical Agamemnon whose wife Helen was stolen by a man named Paris. Agamemnon and his armies rage against the city of Troy to restore his wife to him. After ten years of bloody warfare, the city is sacked and the Achaeans heroes sail for home. When "The Odyssey" begins, an additional decade has passed since Troy fell; Odysseus still has not returned home. All the other chieftains have either died or have safely arrived back in their native lands. However, there is no news of the ruler of Ithaca. In his absence, the noblemen of Ithaca, and the surrounding states, have converged upon his palace hoping to win the hand of Penelope, Odysseus’ wife. She remains faithful to her husband's memory and will not remarry, although the noblemen stay at the palace - trying to change her mind. The persistent suitors grossly waste the wealth of Odysseus’ estate for their own pleasure and corrupt many of his servants. However, the son of Odysseus, Telemachus, visits various Achaeans lords as soon as he is old enough. His hope is to learn whether his father still lives.

During these ten years Odysseus has wandered throughout the world, undergoing an unbelievable series of adventures and torments caused by the malice of Poseidon, god of the sea. All his ships and brave men have been lost; eventually only Odysseus survives. Finally, with the aid of the king of the Phaeacians and the goddess Athena, Odysseus sails to Ithaca. He punishes his wife's suitors and re-establishes himself as king. Reunited with his wife, son and father, he averts a potential civil war on Ithaca with the intercession of the gods.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

Homer, a major Greek poet (between 12th and 8th centuries B.C.), wrote a literary epic called, "The Odyssey." This story is about an ancient heroic king, called Odysseus, and his struggle to return home after fighting in the bloody ten-year Trojan War. It is staged in an adventurous, theatrical style and includes innovative use of puppets, mime and choreographed swordplay. A narrator describes the plot as it unfolds, while the company performs major scenes featuring key characters, supported by a Greek chorus.

The scenes include:

• Odysseus Sets Sail
• The Battle with the Ciconians
• Encountering the Cyclopes
• Odysseus and His Men in the Land of Circe
• Odysseus Travels to the Underworld
• The Island of the Sirens
• Charybdis the Whirlpool and Scylla the Monster
• Athena Gives Odysseus a Disguise
• Odysseus Strings the Bow.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

• If you were to describe the story of “The Odyssey” in two or three sentences, what would you say?
• Is Odysseus a hero? Why or why not? Are all of his actions admirable?
• If you had one hour to spend with one of the characters in the play, which character would you choose? Why? What would you talk about?
• Which characters did you identify with most? Which characters did you identify with least? Why?
• What were some of the obstacles that Odysseus had to overcome in order to return home to Ithaca?
• How do the various gods and goddesses intervene and/or interact with the characters in the story? Describe.
• Did Will & Company’s performance stir your interest about Greek literature? Would you like to read some of the stories? Would you like to see a Greek play?

FRAMEWORK FOCUS—SOCIAL STUDIES/HISTORY:

The jugs, cooking pots and containers used in the households of ancient Greek society were made of pottery decorated with patterns and scenes of people and animals. The Greeks had special methods for painting pottery called "black-figure" and "red-figure" painting. Black-figure vases have their decoration painted in black and the background is left the color of the clay -- an orange-red. With red-figure vases it is the other way around -- the background is painted black and the figures and decoration are left the color of clay. Look at pictures of Greek vases in books or take a field trip to the J. Paul Getty Museum to see actual examples in the antiquities collection there. When students’ research is completed, have them do a rendering of a vase of their own design using black markers and orange construction paper.

LEGEND

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

ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

★ Read some Greek myths about Zeus, the king of the gods, and his family. Examples are: Aphrodite, Athena, Poseidon, Apollo, Hermes, Persephone and Demeter. Other Greek stories such as "Theseus and the Minotaur" or "The Golden Fleece" will also engage students' imaginations.

● Theatre was an important part of life in ancient Greece. In a Greek play there was a chorus and a few actors who would play all the individual parts. The actors wore masks that conveyed the personality of the characters: some tragic, some comic, some young, some old, some heroes and heroines, some warriors, monsters, etc. Have students create a mask of a character he/she would like to play. Use a paper bag, paper plate or tagboard for the face and decorate it with color, feathers, glitter, yarn, etc. Look at pictures of masks for inspiration: classic Greek, Native American and African masks.

◆ The ancient Greeks had many different gods and goddesses. Each had his or her own attributes or special symbols. Athena was a warrior goddess, wearing a helmet and carrying a spear and shield. The patron goddess of Athens, her symbol was the owl. Zeus was father of the gods. He carried a thunderbolt and scepter and often had an eagle with him. Have students choose a god or goddess and draw a portrait using both historical sources and their imaginations.

◆ Have students read a review of a theatrical production in the "New York Times" or the "Los Angeles Times." Have them develop a list of criteria to use to write a review of "The Odyssey" performance.

♦ Re-enact scenes from the performance. Divide the class into groups of 6 to 8 students. Appoint a director in each group. Have the group select a scene and list the action which took place. Put these into a correct sequence. Cast the play, with one student as the narrator, providing key information as the scene unfolds. Rehearse; then share the scenes with the class in sequence.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:


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.
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