

**The Music Center  
Performing Artists  
in Schools and  
Neighborhoods**

**Exciting  
Dance  
Music  
Theatre  
Storytelling  
Performances  
Come To You**

# **WILL & COMPANY**

## **A Midsummer Night's Dream**

# 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 host 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, notify The 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.

## **YOUR FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS**

After the performance, you'll receive an invoice via email. 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 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.

## **PRESS RELEASE AND POSTER**

A template press release is included should you wish to publicize the event. If you wish to use it, simply copy the text into a word document and fill in the blanks with the appropriate information. A premade poster is also included to let your community know about the upcoming event.

## **CURRICULUM CONNECTION FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS**

These pre- and post-event classroom activities are designed to deepen the understanding and engagement 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.

## **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.

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.

## Performance Introduction



"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 Shakespeare's play, "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

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 X, Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok at @MusicCenterLA and we might repost your photos!

## 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

## AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

- This performance provides a unique opportunity for a few audience members to be performers in each show
- Please select 6 young people to participate for each show (can be different participants for each show or the same participants for each show)
- Participants should report to the performance space 30 minutes prior to the performance. (If performance schedule is tight and includes multiple shows, all participants 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 representative ready to welcome the performers and to stay and help as needed

## START TIME

- Please prepare to start the program on time
- Audiences 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 Department of Arts and Culture, and recognition for “Excellence in Theatre” award by the State of California. This unique company performs exciting adaptations of some of the world’s greatest classic literature, including; Shakespeare’s *Romeo & Juliet*, Homer’s *The Odyssey*, and Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*. Under the Artistic Direction of founder Colin Cox, the troupe presents 40-minute original adaptations of a number of classical works that include physical humor and dazzling swordplay. Also, critically acclaimed nationally for touring original works highlighting diversity and social justice issues, Will & Company is the recipient of two NAACP Awards, and was nominated for a GLAAD Award.

### ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

“A Midsummer Night’s Dream” takes place in a mythical Athens where Theseus, the reigning Duke, is preparing to wed his love, Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons. When the play opens, Theseus has been asked to judge a dispute between Egeus and his daughter Hermia. Egeus wishes Hermia to marry Demetrius, but her heart is set upon Lysander. Hermia decides to disobey her father and resolves to elope with Lysander. They plan to meet in the woods near the city the following night. The woods become the major setting for the play as the action unfolds with two pair of lovers (Lysander/Hermia and Helena/Demetrius); the King and Queen of the fairies and their train; and a group of rustics -- laborers from Athens who are rehearsing a play to perform at the royal wedding. Mischief and magic take place in abundance, but all is set right in the end at a joyous triple wedding celebration.



### PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:

William Shakespeare was baptized in his home town of Stratford-upon-Avon, England, on April 26, 1564, thought to be three days after he was born. He was born in the same year as Galileo and Christopher Marlowe; it was also the year Michelangelo died. Queen Elizabeth I had been on the throne for five years, and the country was in a state of unrest with the threat of Catholic rebellions. But in the rural market town of Stratford-upon-Avon, life went on in a tranquil fashion.

William’s father, John was a tanner and glover who went on to become an alderman and mayor in the town; his mother, Mary Arden, had come from a prosperous farming family. William was the third child of eight, but his two elder sisters died as babies, making him the eldest child. He had two younger sisters and three brothers. When Shakespeare was a boy, he attended the local grammar school where his studies included Latin and a thorough grounding in rhetoric (written or spoken language that is intended to influence people and that may not be honest or reasonable). At age 18 William married Anne Hathaway, who was eight years older and pregnant with his child. The baby was born six months later and named Susanna. On February 2, 1585 Shakespeare’s wife gave birth to twins, Hamnet and Judith. Hamnet would unfortunately die in 1596 at the young age of 11.

What happened to William Shakespeare between 1585 and 1592 is not really known, and they are referred to as “the seven lost years.” Some people believe he joined the army; some say he went to sea; some think that he became an actor; most believe that he became a school teacher. By 1592, however, we know that Shakespeare was an established actor in London and had written a number of plays.

In all, they total 38 plays, four long poems and 154 sonnets. “A Midsummer Night’s Dream,” a comedy, was written in 1594 in celebration of the wedding of a patron’s mother. Written mostly in rhyme, the tale tells a magical story of love lost and gained. Shakespeare died in 1616 at age 52. In 1623, the First Folio edition of his plays was published in which his great contemporary and rival, Ben Johnson, called him the “Sweet Swan of Avon.”

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- If you were to describe the story of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in two or three sentences, what would you say?
- 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 did you like, or not like, about the characters of the fairy kingdom? Were the fairies like those you may have imagined? If not, how were they different from your ideas and images?
- When the relationships between the pairs of lovers got mixed up, did you think they would be sorted out in the right way eventually? Why or why not?
- Was the play performed by the rustics (laborers from Athens who are rehearsing a play to perform at the royal wedding) a comedy or a tragedy? Why?
- Did Will & Company's performance stir your interest about the plays of William Shakespeare? Would you like to read some? Would you like to see more of them? Why or why not?

## FRAMEWORK FOCUS—SCIENCE:

Over 3,000 references to some 180 different species of animals - both real and imaginary - have been identified in Shakespeare's plays. A descendant of farming stock, Shakespeare was steeped in rural tradition and has frequent reference in his works to nature, both flora (plants) and Fauna (animals).

Using "A Midsummer Night's Dream," make a list of all the animals, insects and plants mentioned in the play. Examples: lion, ox, horse, cat, bear, boar, hedgehog, owl, finch, sparrow, lark, spider, beetle, worm, snail, snake, moth, squash, mustard seed, musk-rose, etc. Have students research and bring in pictures of the various species on their list. Plant and animal life inspired much art as well, including embroideries, tapestries, engravings and botanical illustrations. Encourage students to find examples from both visual art and scientific sources.

## ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

**Re** Many lines from Shakespeare's plays are quoted in contemporary literature, newspaper articles, speeches, television and film. Have students research, evaluate and bring in to class two often-used Shakespeare quotations, such as:

*"The course of true love never did run smooth."*

Lysander, A Midsummer Night's Dream

*"This above all: to thine own self be true."*

Polonius, Hamlet

**Pr** Play a class game called "Dost Thou Know Me?" in which students take on the characters from the Will & Company performance. Using body movement, facial expression and pantomime, have them take turns presenting the essence of a character's personality and motivations, while the rest of the class tries to guess who they are.

**Cr** Make a drawing or model of the Globe Theatre where many of Shakespeare's plays were performed during Elizabethan times. Label and define the various areas when conceptualizing: the stage, the "heavens," the courtyard, the galleries, and the tiring-house (actors' dressing room).

**Cr** Develop and make a mask for one of the fairies in A Midsummer Night's Dream." (*Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth and Mustardseed*) or one of your own creation. Use a variety of materials: clay, cardboard, fabric, glitter, herbs, flowers, shells, etc.

**Re** Have students read a review of a theatrical production in the "New York Times" or the "Los Angeles Times." Then have them develop a list of criteria to use to evaluate Will & Company's production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

**Pr** Have students work together on a group story theatre presentation based on a children's book or poem. Have them create the dialogue and action through group improvisations. Then add the use of simple props and costume pieces. Present the dramatization for another class.

## SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Negri, Paul, Editor *Shakespeare: A Book of Quotations*. Dover Thrift Editions, 1998.

Nesbit, Edith. *Beautiful Stories from Shakespeare* (suitable for children). Wilder Publications, 2009.

### California Arts Standards: Artistic Processes

- Cr** Creating
- Pr** Performing/Producing/Presenting
- Re** Responding
- Cn** Connecting

Learn more at:

<https://tinyurl.com/ArtsStandardsCA>

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**\_\_\_\_\_ AND THE MUSIC CENTER ANNOUNCE**  
**WILL AND COMPANY TO PERFORM ON \_\_\_\_\_**

\_\_\_\_\_ and The Music Center today announced the upcoming performance of Will and Company on campus. The performance is presented by The Music Center's education department, part of TMC Arts, 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.

For more than 40 years, The Music Center Performing Artists in Schools and Neighborhoods have been the premier resource for high-quality educational performances, offering one of the most compelling and diverse artistic rosters. The Music Center's incredible artists bring the magic of live performance to audiences throughout Los Angeles County, with an emphasis on programs that are an excellent fit for educational and neighborhood settings. All Music Center Performing Artists in Schools and Neighborhoods performances include standards-based curriculum materials that feature background information on the artists and their performance, as well as related classroom activities with connections to multiple curricular disciplines. Schools can choose from more than 60 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**

The Music Center convenes artists, communities and ideas with the goal of deepening the cultural lives of every resident in Los Angeles County. The \$70 million non-profit performing arts organization has two divisions: TMC Arts and TMC Ops. TMC Arts, The Music Center's programming engine, provides year-round programming inside The Music Center's four theatres, on Jerry Moss Plaza, outside at Grand Park—a 12-acre adjacent green space—in schools and other locations all over Los Angeles County and on a digital platform called The Music Center Offstage. TMC Arts presents world-class dance with Gloria Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center, free and low-cost public concerts and events, as well as live and digital K–12 arts education programs, workshops, performances, interactive experiences and special events. TMC Ops manages the theatres, the Plaza and Grand Park, which comprise \$2 billion in county assets, on behalf of the County of Los Angeles. The Music Center is also home to four renowned resident companies—Center Theatre Group, Los Angeles Master Chorale, LA Opera and LA Phil. For more information, visit [musiccenter.org](http://musiccenter.org). Follow The Music Center on Facebook, Instagram and X @MusicCenterLA.

###

*For more information, please contact The Music Center at 213-972-3332. 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  
Performing Artists  
in Schools and  
Neighborhoods

Exciting  
Dance  
Music  
Theatre  
Storytelling  
Performances  
Come To You

# WILL & COMPANY



**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TIME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LOCATION:** \_\_\_\_\_



[musiccenter.org/performingartists](https://musiccenter.org/performingartists)  
@MusicCenterLA

THE  
MUSIC  
CENTER  
A TMC Arts Program



## ARTS INTEGRATION PARTNERSHIPS

Music Center teaching artists work in classrooms to empower student creativity and develop their artistic, workforce and life skills. The program deepens learning across the curriculum in collaboration with classroom teachers by combining dance, music, theatre, visual and media arts with content areas including English Language Arts, history, science and social emotional learning for students of all ages and abilities.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Music Center's professional development programs bring educators together to participate in an experiential and immersive approach to integrating dance, music, theatre, visual and media arts into their classrooms. The focus is on meeting educators where they are and building their capacity over time and in depth — both at school sites and at The Music Center. As but one example, each year The Music Center's Arts Integration Symposium engages participants in all grade levels, art forms and content areas.

## DANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS

*Glorya Kaufman Presents Dance at The Music Center* offers Student Matinee performances during each season featuring world-class dance performances that celebrate the diversity of L.A. communities; invited rehearsals that provide young people with an inside look at the creative process of dance companies in residence; master classes focused on technique, choreography and dialogue with professional dancers; and creative residencies where local youth engage with visiting dance companies for multiple days, including the Ailey school residency program.

## STUDENT FESTIVALS

The Very Special Arts Festival engages students of all abilities as artistic creators and contributors. At the Blue Ribbon Children's Festival, fifth graders across the county experience live performances and dance together as a community.

## SPOTLIGHT YOUNG ARTISTS PROGRAM

A nationally acclaimed, free arts training and scholarship program that develops the creative capacity of high school performing artists in Southern California.

## ARTS GROWN LA

A new platform for artistic expression already thriving in communities throughout Los Angeles County. From performances at parks, community centers, libraries, senior centers and civic events, to Hip Hop dance parties and youth lessons, Arts Grown L.A. collaborates with community partners and neighborhoods to uplift artists and creativity, complementing existing local programs.

## 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*, Grand Park, Dance DTLA, L.A. County Holiday Celebration, Plaza Concerts, and Symphonian Campus Tours, among other activities

For all our offerings, please visit us at [www.musiccenter.org](http://www.musiccenter.org)