

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

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

# **BOXTALES**

Leyendas de Duende

# 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**

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 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. Boxtales is a storytelling theatre company which uses masks, movement, storytelling and live music to present myths and folklore from around the world. Performers Matt Tavianini, David Guerra, and Michael Andrews combine their diverse talents to create this interactive and high-energy theatrical experience.

Please welcome Boxtales!"



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!

## SPACE

- 15' wide x 20' deep minimum, 20' x 20' preferred
- Artist prefers a performance area that is near to the audience
- Outdoor performances are determined on a case by case basis

## SURFACE

- Wood is preferred but any surface is okay
  - Freshly mopped (not waxed)
  - Irregularities covered with tape
  - Extraneous clutter removed

## DRESSING AREA

- One private, secured dressing area close to the stage or two dressing rooms

## EQUIPMENT

- 100-watt PA system with one microphone stand
  - Water for three people

## ARRIVAL

- Artists will arrive one hour prior to the scheduled start time to prepare and set up

## PARKING

- One space near 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

## BOXTALES—Leyendas de Duende

**ART FORM:** Theatre

**STYLE:** Contemporary

**CULTURE:** Mexican and Puerto Rican

### MEET THE ARTIST:

Boxtales is a storytelling theatre company which uses masks, movement, storytelling and live music to present myths and folklore from around the world. Performers Matt Taviani, David Guerra and Michael Andrews combine their diverse talents to create a professional, high energy, interactive theatrical experience for young audiences. The Spanish term duende comes from within, as a physical/emotional response to art. Like art itself, it has aspects that are both appealing and dangerous. The Spanish poet, Federico Garcia Lorca, says, "These dark sounds are the mystery, the roots thrusting into the fertile loam known to all of us, ignored by all of us, but from which we get what is real in art..." The Boxtales philosophy is that duende is there to challenge us to keep our ears open to the 'dark sounds,' to keep our touch with the earth and with the ghosts of those who have come before. We should never refuse the struggle which is needed to keep the forces of life working on the side of truth.

### ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

This production, directed by renowned Mexican theatre artist Sigfrido Aguilar, explores the rich indigenous and Hispanic folklore and mythology of Latin America. The stories include "La Calavera," from Mexico, and "Paco and the Witch," from Puerto Rico. The program also includes an Afro/Cuban rhythmic composition and song, sung during ceremonies of Santeria. Masks, designed by Ann Chevrefils, are worn by the actors to enhance the qualities and expressions of the characters they portray. The production, created in Guanajuato, Mexico, is performed in both English and Spanish.



### PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:

Myths help us better understand the values and references of a specific culture. These stories, found in civilizations throughout the world, have been passed from one generation to the next through the 'oral tradition.' Many are older than the art of theatre and have themes that are universal to the human experience.

#### Summary of the featured stories:

##### **La Calavera - Mexican folk tale**

This wonderfully scary ghost story from Mexico is a classically eclectic mix of themes, motifs and characters from Spanish and indigenous traditions. In keeping with the Dia de los Muertos\* celebrations, this story follows a young healer who tries to outsmart godmother - Death. Death gives him great healing power, but always lets him know who's boss. Some very interesting characters cross paths with the healer's father as he tries to choose a god-parent for his young son. The characters include: Senor Diablo, Coatlicue - the Aztec goddess of earth and fire, mother of the gods and of the stars in the southern sky; and Chaac - the Mayan god of rain who is associated with creation and life.

\*A traditional Mexican celebration, held on November 1-2, when the dead are remembered.

##### **Paco and the Witch - Puerto Rican folk tale**

Paco is a good boy who likes to help his mom; however, when he goes to town to run an errand for her, he has to pass through the dark forest where legend has it that a bruja (witch) is waiting to snatch little boys and girls. He is taken by the bruja who puts Paco to work preparing her stew. She casts a spell on him that can only be broken by his guessing her nombre (name). While at the riverbank, Paco meets un cangrejo (a crab) who teaches him a song to remember el nombre (the name) de la bruja. The bruja is angry that she was betrayed and Paco is set free.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Select either the story of "La Calavera" or "Paco and the Witch." In two or three sentences what would you say to give the 'big idea'?
- Who are the characters who helped Paco? How did each help? What might have happened without their support?
- If you had 15 minutes to spend with one of the characters in either of the stories, which character would you choose? Why? What would you talk about? What questions would you ask of them?
- Choose one of the stories. Then, name the specific character with which you most identified. Give reasons for your choice. Which character did you find the scariest? Why?
- What were some of the obstacles that Paco faced on his journey? How were these challenges resolved?
- Can you identify any lessons learned in "La Calavera?" Discuss what you thought was important and give reasons to support your answer.
- Discuss Dia de los Muertos and its traditional meaning. Ask students who celebrate this important holiday to share their family traditions.

## FRAMEWORK FOCUS—SOCIAL STUDIES/HISTORY:

A Message in a Bottle Project: Students will write a tale about an imaginary adventure that leaves them stranded on an island off the coast of Mexico, South America or the Caribbean. Students can work alone, in pairs or small groups. Direct them as you do for creative writing assignments, incorporating research.

### What you need:

Maps of Mexico, Central and South America

Plastic bottles with caps (one per story)

A basin or glass tank of water or basket/box

### Write the story:

Study the maps; then select a starting place and destination. Locate an island where they will be stranded. Using place names, create a journey map.

Decide who they are, the type of transportation they use and the events that lead to being stranded. Describe in terms of size, weather, plants, animals, etc. Make a map of the location; draw the island. Write the story.

### Share:

All tales will be rolled into bottles, then place bottles in the water or basket. Different students select a bottle, other than their own, and read the tale. Discuss the story. Design a rescue plan.

#### California Arts Standards: Artistic Processes

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

Learn more at:

<https://tinyurl.com/ArtsStandardsCA>

## ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

**Re** Review the key elements of a story, *Who? What? Where? When? and How?* Select one of the stories from the performance and answer each of the above questions. Did this process help you better interpret the story and its meaning? If so, explain how or why. What new understanding did you gain?

**Cr** In order to fully enjoy a story, a person must be able to imagine the characters, places, time period and actions. The better the imagination, the more vibrant and interesting the story. Here is an exercise to sharpen your ability to envision the details of specific images. Using this description of the Puerto Rican parrot, draw your impression: *The parrot is a large, bright green bird with a red forehead, blue primary wing feathers, and flesh-colored bill and feet. It feeds on wild fruits, flowers and tender shoots.*

**Re** Most cultural stories were passed on orally. As they were told over and over, sometimes they also changed in different ways. Although many of these stories are now written down, students can learn to tell one of these stories in the oral tradition. It is also all right to add a few new ideas in the telling. Divide students into storytelling teams. Using books or the internet, have students research stories and then select one to learn and tell. The story should reflect the culture from which it comes. Students should think of the beginning, middle and end, as well as the key characters, main problem, resolution and sequence.

**Re** Write the title of each story on the board with two large, overlapping circles (Venn Diagram). Ask the class to compare and contrast each one. Write the things unique to each in the open part of each circle and similarities in the overlapping space. Evaluate these.

**Re** In the story, "La Calavera," there are symbols that represent ideas or objects. For example, when *La Calavera* appeared at the foot of a sick person's bed, it meant that the person would get better. At the end of the story, the candles in the cave represent people's lives. Working in pairs, select three ideas from the story and select an object, symbol or person as a representation for each one. Give your reasons. Share with class.

## SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Bierhorst, *John Latin American Folk Tales*. Pantheon Books, 2002.

Gomez, Salvadore. *Day of the Dead Folk Tales: Cuentos De El Dia de Los Muertos*. Folk Art Gallery, 1997.

Pitre, Feliz, *Paco and the Witch: A Puerto Rican Folktale*. Lodestar Books, 1995.

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

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

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## \_\_\_\_\_ AND THE MUSIC CENTER ANNOUNCE BOXTALES TO PERFORM ON \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ and The Music Center today announced the upcoming performance of Boxtales 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.

Boxtales is a storytelling theatre company which uses masks, movement, storytelling and live music to present myths and folklore from around the world. This production, directed by renowned Mexican theatre artist Sigfrido Aguilar, explores the rich indigenous and Hispanic folklore and mythology of Latin America. The stories include La Calavera, from Mexico, and Paco and the Witch, from Puerto Rico. The program also includes an Afro/Cuban rhythmic composition and song, sung during ceremonies of Santeria. Masks, designed by Ann Chevrefils, are worn by the actors to enhance the qualities and expressions of the characters they portray. The production, created in Guanajuato, Mexico, is performed in both English and Spanish. 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 20<sup>th</sup> century America.

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 Twitter @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.*

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Exciting  
Dance  
Music  
Theatre  
Storytelling  
Performances  
Come To You

# BOXTALES



**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, work-force 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)