

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

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

**DAVID PRATHER**  
The World of Myths

# 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.

"I would like to introduce today's performance which is presented by The Music Center of Los Angeles County. This performance is titled "World of Myths" and it features David Prather. He is going to introduce, and explore with you, tales based on ancient myths, fables and folk stories. Please welcome David Prather!"



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

- 10' wide x 10' deep minimum
- Portable stages must be sturdy and securely lashed, with steps leading up to the stage

## SURFACE

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

## OUTDOOR PERFORMANCES

- Shaded
- Protected from wind, traffic and playground noise
  - Good acoustics
- Sound system with one microphone stand is required

## EQUIPMENT

- One microphone with a stand
  - Sound system
- One 4-6 foot table

## ARRIVAL

- Artist will arrive thirty minutes 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

## DAVID PRATHER— The World of Myths

ART FORM: Theatre/Storytelling

STYLE: Contemporary

CULTURE: American/European

### MEET THE ARTIST:

David Prather, a charismatic actor and author, has earned a Princeton education, as well as receiving training at the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco, California. Combining all that he learned, he has utilized his experience and knowledge to create original works for young audiences. Whether performing his school assembly programs in multi purpose rooms, or sharing the stage with Julie Andrews at Walt Disney Concert Hall, Mr. Prather uses improvisatory humor and wit to engage and entertain his audience. As “Cap’n Dave,” he delighted thousands over many years as the host of “Summer Sounds” at the Hollywood Bowl. He has performed with the Pacific and San Francisco Symphonies, as well as at the Getty Center, the Skirball Cultural Center and other arts institutions. At The Music Center, he has performed Shakespeare at the Mark Taper and hosted concerts with the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

### ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

In *The World of Myths*, David Prather tells tales based on ancient legends and stories from different civilizations of times past. The program is designed to encourage students to use their imaginations, to wonder, and to ask questions about the world around them, as well as space and its celestial bodies. Myths and stories from several countries and cultures are selected from the following repertoire: China - “Panku,” Guatemala - “The Corn People,” Greece—“*Orpheus in the Underworld*,” India—“*Where Did People Come From?*,” and “*Ganesha’s Fight with the Moon*,” as well as, “*Where Do the Stars Come From?*” from New Guinea.



### PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:

Long, long ago there was no earth, no sun, no moon. No stars shone in the heavens. There was only the darkness of space. From that time to this, the overwhelming question for mankind has always been, “How did all this come to be?”

People have always asked questions about the world around them, about the sun, moon, and stars in the sky, and about themselves. Before there were scientists, teachers, libraries or schools, people had to create their own answers to their questions. Looking carefully, listening intently, and using their imaginations, early people created answers in the form of beautiful stories. These stories are called *myths*.

The creation of myths provided mankind with a way of explaining a world full of mysterious and threatening phenomena. Thunder and lightning, the sea, earthquakes, clouds, the sun, moon and stars -- all were given human qualities, or were said to be ruled by gods with human sensibilities. Through ritual, the acting out of myth, men felt they could placate the gods and gain power over the elements. Hence, myth became an important and essential part of people’s lives.

Then in Greece, about 2,500 years ago, a new point of view dawned in the minds of men. A scientific method evolved which changed the way the world was viewed. Suddenly, there were people who believed that all things were made of atoms; that the Earth was actually a planet going around the Sun, not a sentient being. The Greeks were great thinkers and had a passion for knowledge, something that is evident even in their language. Our word for ‘school’ comes from the Greek word for ‘leisure,’ since they believed that given leisure, man would surely use it in thinking and finding out about things.

Slowly, *myth* began to play a lesser part in people’s lives. Still, like the ancients, we continue to seek answers about our infinite universe. Perhaps this is why we can listen to the old myths with interest and appreciation. We can see how far we’ve come in our quest for answers, but we can also see how far we have to go in our search for the meaning of life and our universe.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What is a *myth*? (an imaginative way of exploring natural, observable phenomena or human nature)
- How is a *myth* different from a fairy tale?
- What was your favorite *myth*? Why?
- How many students have heard a storyteller (someone who tells a story, not someone who reads stories)? What is the difference between listening to a storyteller and watching TV or film?
- Define 'imagination.' Look at the root word, 'image,' and talk about how one can listen with one's imagination.
- How did students feel about being seen, or seeing other classmates, on stage? Did the students on stage need to be good listeners to be able to perform their task? What other skills does someone need to be a storyteller?

## FRAMEWORK FOCUS—HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES:

Storytelling can be a wonderful link to many aspects of science, including the study of astronomy. Astronomers and physicists today ask the same questions that ancient man asked: How did the world come to be? Where does space end and time begin?

In China, Polaris - the North Star, was said to be the emperor of heaven, who sat upon an immovable throne while all the other stars paid him homage. This myth transforms accurate observations into metaphor and poetry.

Ask students to choose a natural phenomenon, such as a constellation, the sun, the patterns of an animal or bird, or a specific type of storm like a tornado. Ask them to write a paragraph that imagines how the animal got its shape or pattern, how the tornado became a storm element or how the sun or constellation came to shine from the sky. They may want to turn their selected phenomenon into a character, or may wish to create mythical characters that influenced the behavior of their selected phenomenon. Ask

students to present their "myths" to the class. An example might be: "How did the peacock get eyes on its tail?"

## ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

**Cn** Discuss the use of listening as a way of discovering things about the world around us. Sit quietly for 1-2 minutes; listen for sounds you hear in and outside of your classroom. Name sounds that tell us things: sirens, school bells, car brakes, etc. Discuss tone (quality) and its meaning. How does your mother say your name when she is angry with you, pleased, worried? You might have students hold a conversation in gibberish where meaning is understood only through tone.

**Cn** Ask students to imagine that they are the first people on earth. Everything is new; nothing is named. Have them close their eyes and walk through a forest looking at things in detail. What do they see? What do they hear? (light and shadow, trees moving, the sound of the wind, leaves falling, etc.) Have them open their eyes and write or tell about what they saw or experienced, and what they discovered.

**Cr** Remind your students that long ago people used to look at the sky at night just as we might watch TV.

Ancient people saw the picture of a bear, an archer, a centaur, or a swan in groups of stars they studied. The names of these groups of stars (constellations) were given long ago, but are still used by us today. Encourage your students to look at the night sky and write down what they observe (bright stars or planets, twinkling stars, phases of the moon, etc.). If constellations had not been named until the 21st century, what might some of the names be? (e.g., the refrigerator, the bicycle, etc.) Have them name a new constellation and develop a story about how it came to be named.

**Re** Find and read a myth to your class. Ask students what questions it answers. Define myth as an imaginative way of explaining natural, observable phenomena, or exploring the realities and mysteries of nature through images.

## SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Campbell, Joseph, *The Power of Myth*. Doubleday, 1988.

Editor, *Myths and Legends from Ancient Greece and Around the World*. Prentice Hall, 2000.

Randall, Ronnie *The Children's Book of Myths & Legends*. Armadillo Publishing, 2012

### 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: \_\_\_\_\_

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**AND THE MUSIC CENTER ANNOUNCE**

**DAVID PRATHER TO PERFORM ON \_\_\_\_\_**

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

Dubbed the "Maker of Merry" by the L.A. Times, actor David Prather has shared his lively blend of improvisation, verbal wit and physical comedy with audiences from schools to concert halls across California. Whether appearing with Julie Andrews at Disney Hall as host of the L.A. Phil's Holiday Sing Along, or engaging an assembly of rapt students in a multi-purpose room, Prather makes it his mission to entertain and enlighten. He has delighted audiences at the Hollywood Bowl (where he appeared for ten seasons as 'Cap'n Dave' of Summer Sounds) and in family programs at the Getty, Skirball, and Autry Museums. Mr. Prather is a graduate of Princeton University and the American Conservatory Theatre.

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.

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*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  
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## DAVID PRATHER



**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)