

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

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

ROCHEL GARNER COLEMAN

Shadow Ball: The Story of Black Baseball

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. Rochel Coleman is an actor and storyteller who is going to bring to life the story of baseball player James Thomas Bell, also known as 'Cool Papa Bell.' James Thomas Bell, the fastest man ever to play baseball, was a player in the Negro Leagues, which were founded in 1920. Mr. Coleman will re-create the life and times of the baseball players of the Negro Leagues. Please welcome Rochel Coleman in Shadow Ball: The Story of Black Baseball!"



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

- 10' wide x 10' deep minimum
- Portable stages must be sturdy and securely lashed

SURFACE

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

EQUIPMENT

- Sound system
- Electrical outlet
- Small table or child's desk (about 3' across) or a backless stool (to hold a saddle)
 - Glass or bottle of water
 - One piano bench

AUDIENCE SEATING

- Center or side aisles through the audience to the stage

ARRIVAL

- 35-40 minutes prior to the scheduled start time to prepare and set up

PARKING

- One space 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

ROCHEL GARNER COLEMAN—Shadow Ball: The Story of Black Baseball

ART FORM: Theatre

STYLE: Contemporary

CULTURE: African American

MEET THE ARTIST:

Rochel Garner Coleman is an actor, singer and storyteller whose career began at the age of nine. Singing professionally with the Berkshire Boys' Choir, he distinguished himself as a soloist performing with Pablo Casals and the Boston Symphony at Tanglewood, Massachusetts. His first theatre experience was as a cast member in Leonard Bernstein's "Mass," a production which opened the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. and later traveled to Lincoln Center in New York City. At Indiana University and Colorado College, Rochel studied music and theatre, continuing professional studies at Trinity Repertory Conservatory in Providence, R.I. A talented and charismatic performer, Rochel created the historical portrait of black cowboy Nat Love, as well as other theatre pieces portraying the African American cadets known as the Tuskegee Airmen and the slain civil rights champion, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

Shadow Ball tells the story of James Thomas Bell, known as "Cool Papa Bell," the fastest man ever to play baseball. In this one man show, Rochel Coleman recreates the life and times of the players of the Negro Leagues from the early 1920's, through the Great Depression, to the breaking of the color barrier by Jackie Robinson's signing with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. Dressed in reproductions of actual Negro League uniforms, Mr. Coleman uses pantomime and movement to convey the action of the game. Compellingly told with humor and music, this authentic production is truly a home run.



PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:

The term 'shadow ball' referred to the pre-game warm-up in pantomime that the barnstorming black teams of the Negro Leagues liked to do. They threw an invisible ball around the infield, hit and fielded imaginary fly balls, making close plays and diving catches. To the fans in the stands, it all looked real.

The first documentation of African Americans playing baseball comes from the collected papers of a slave brought to the front lines of the Civil War by his owner. He learned the game from soldiers he watched playing the sport. Baseball was played in American colleges by 1880 and team pictures suggest that integrated teams were relatively common. As Jim Crow segregation spread across state boundaries North and South, Negroes were prevented from playing on the same teams with white athletes.

Rube Foster, the father of Black baseball, founded the Negro League in 1920. He organized teams around the country into a body governed by a council of owners. Pennant races developed strong rivalries as the teams traveled from town to town by train, car or bus.

The Negro Leagues flourished during the 1920's but were hit hard by the Great Depression, when the price of admission, fifty cents a game, became a luxury. The election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his "New Deal" politics paved the way for the integration of baseball.

Jackie Robinson's signing with the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947 and Satchel Paige's signing with the Cleveland Indians in 1949 were landmark moves that brought top black players to the major league teams. By 1960, only four Negro teams existed and the League folded. Some of the great players included: Ernie Banks, Hank Aaron, Willie Mays, Roy Campanella and James Thomas ("Cool Papa") Bell. In 1974, on the same day as Whitey Ford and Mickey Mantle, James Thomas Bell was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Prior to the performance, were you aware that there was a time in our country's history when African Americans could not play in major league baseball?
- Discuss some of the challenges that black ballplayers faced in the 1920's-1940's. How were their experiences different from those of black ballplayers today?
- Do you think that working as a baseball player was a good job for James Thomas Bell?
- What does the term "shadow ball" mean?
- How did Rochel Coleman use his body and voice during the performance to convey the actions of a real baseball game?

FRAMEWORK FOCUS—MATHMATICS:

Identify the geometric shapes one would find on a baseball field (diamond - infield; circle - pitcher's mound; square - bases; rectangle - dug-out.)

Figure out a player's batting average by dividing the number of "hits" (single, double, triple, home run) by the number of "at bats." A walk or "base on balls" is not counted as a hit.

Example: $180 \text{ hits} \div 467 \text{ at bats} = .385 \text{ average}$

Compute a pitcher's ERA or "earned run average." Earned run average is the average number of earned runs scored on a pitcher per game. It is calculated by taking the number of earned runs scored on a pitcher

(excluding men on base as a result of errors), and dividing it by one-ninth, the total number of innings pitched.

ERA= $\text{Earned runs}/(\text{innings pitched}/9)$

ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

Pr Use pantomime and creative movement to prepare a "shadow ball" routine with fielding, batting and pitching elements.

Cn Music from different eras is used in the performance of Shadow Ball to convey a sense of the time periods. Listen to recordings that were popular during the 1920's to the 1940's, from the Jazz Age (1920's), the Depression (1930's) and World War II (1940's).

Pr Role-play a scene in which a Negro Leagues' team comes in contact with Jim Crow segregation laws. Possible settings: a hotel, a restaurant, a store.

Cr Develop a radio broadcaster's play-by-play description of part of a baseball game using some of baseball's unique vocabulary:

Can of Corn - a fly ball that can be easily caught.

Chin Music - a ball pitched close to a batter's chin.

Ducks on the Pond - runners on the base.

Lumber - a bat.

Tweener - a ball hit between two outfielders.

Shoestring Catch - a catch made by an outfielder just before the ball touches the ground.

Cn Shadow Ball reveals the struggles that players like James Thomas Bell endured during the course of their careers. Describe the scenes in the play that were turning points for him. Interrelate the connections between "Cool Papa" Bell's experiences in the play and challenges you may have faced in your life. Write about the meanings or lessons learned from the theatrical presentation.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

McKissack, Patricia C. and Fredrick, Jr., *Black Diamond*. Scholastic Inc., 1994.

Peterson, Robert W., *Only the Ball Was White*. Prentice Hall, Inc., 1970.

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**
ROCHEL GARNER COLEMAN TO PERFORM ON _____

_____ and The Music Center today announced the upcoming performance of Rochel Garner Coleman 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.

Rochel Garner Coleman is an actor, singer and storyteller whose career began at the age of nine. Singing professionally with the Berkshire Boys' Choir, he distinguished himself as a soloist performing with Pablo Casals and the Boston Symphony at Tanglewood, Massachusetts. His first theatre experience was as a cast member in Leonard Bernstein's "Mass," a production which opened the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. and later traveled to Lincoln Center in New York City. At Indiana University and Colorado College, Rochel studied music and theatre, continuing professional studies at Trinity Repertory Conservatory in Providence, R.I. A talented and charismatic performer, Rochel created the historical portrait of black cowboy Nat Love, as well as other theatre pieces portraying the African American cadets known as the Tuskegee Airmen and the slain civil rights champion, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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 Glorya 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. Follow The Music Center on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @MusicCenterLA.

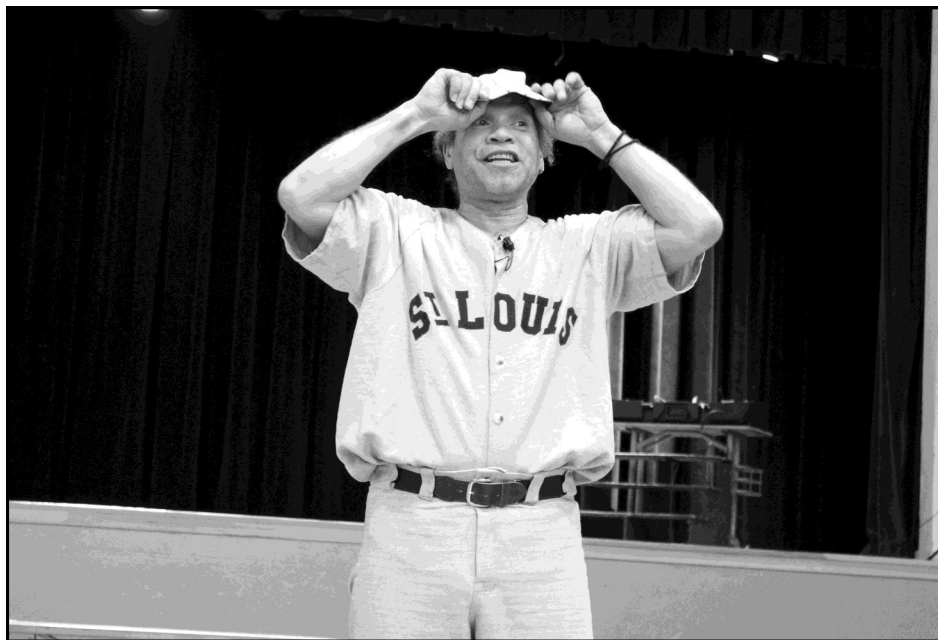
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For more information, please contact The Music Center at 213-972-3332. Members of the media are welcome to cover this performance. Please contact The Music Center prior to sending a reporter or photographer to the school.

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Exciting
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Performances
Come To You

ROCHEL GARNER COLEMAN



DATE: _____

TIME: _____

LOCATION: _____



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