

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

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

DAVID PRATHER

Yankee Doodle Poetry

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 Yankee Doodle Poetry, and it features actor and author David Prather. Mr. Prather will perform great historical American poems that reflect the ideals of our nation - life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

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 — Yankee Doodle Poetry

ART FORM: Theatre/Storytelling

STYLE: Contemporary

CULTURE: North American

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:

Yankee Doodle Poetry is a lively, interactive performance featuring historical poems that reflect our nation’s foundational ideals. These poems include: “The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere,” “The Defense of Fort McHenry” and “The New Colossus.” Against the backdrop of a reproduction of the Great Garrison Flag, actor David Prather portrays several key historical American figures and symbols. These include: Uncle Sam, the Statue of Liberty, Francis Scott Key and Paul Revere. The show employs humor throughout and engages students both on stage, and in the audience. He cleverly turns historical events that inspired poems into theatre that brings the backstory and people of these events to life. The concepts of the promise of “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” are explored, taking on more meaning and understanding as his performance unfolds.



PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:

At the beginning of the performance, David appears as Uncle Sam - a popular symbol of the United States government in American culture and a manifestation of patriotic emotion since the early 19th century. Uncle Sam is mythological, rather than an actual person, but in this show he serves to introduce the overarching theme of the show which is the promise of “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

The centerpiece of the show is Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s epic narrative poem “The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere.” After giving a cursory background of the situation in Boston in 1775, students are employed in the performance as barking dogs, twittering birds, chiming clocks, horse’s hooves as well as Revere’s accomplice, Robert Newman. The entire poem comes to life with Mr. Prather in the saddle as Paul Revere making his stirring ride to wake up the minutemen at the start of the American Revolution. Literary devices such as alliteration, personification, and figurative language are discussed.

Next we see Francis Scott Key wanting to know if “that star-spangled banner yet waves” after a night of “bombs bursting in air” from his poem “The Defense of Fort McHenry.” The seldom-noted second stanza of the poem reveals the answer and gives the rest of the story. A conversation about the War of 1812, and the hand-made flag with fifteen stars and stripes gives context to the creation of the song that continues to inspire our nation.

Later in the show, Mr. Prather appears as the Statue of Liberty in a humorous, but heartfelt, presentation of Lady Liberty. The statue was a gift from the French to honor the American centenary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. With torch aloft, he performs the inspiring words of the Emma Lazarus sonnet, “The New Colossus” which includes the iconic lines: *‘Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breath free...’*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- The US flag, Uncle Sam and the Statue of Liberty are symbols of our country. What ideals do they represent?
- Who is Uncle Sam? What do you know about him?
- What is another name for the Statue of Liberty? (Lady Liberty)
- What is the difference between a narrative poem and a non-narrative poem?
- Why do we sing “The Star Spangled Banner” at sporting events?
- What places do you see the US flag flying every day?
- What does it mean to you to be an American?

FRAMEWORK FOCUS—HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES:

There is a plaque that is attached to the base of The Statue of Liberty that has the words of a poem, called “The New Colossus” by Emma Lazarus. The following is an excerpt of that poem

"Give me your tired, your poor,

Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,

The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.

Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,

I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Read this excerpt as a class, then break into small groups to discuss. Make sure that the class identifies all of the words that they don't understand. Look these words up and then discuss what the ideas in the poem mean. Share thoughts, building on each other's ideas. Ask the class if they think that the poem is still true today—why or why not?

ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

Cn The second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence states: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Historically, they were declaring their freedom from The King of England and British control. Think about the disadvantages of being under the rule of an established country and why people under this rule would want to declare independence. Discuss and share ideas.

Pr David Prather presented the famous poem, “The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere,” by Henry Longfellow. One of the techniques used by the poet is to create a rhythmic word pattern that gives a feeling of a galloping horse. Read the last stanza of the poem to the students, then have a student, do a “call and response” for each line. Have the class repeat an alternating clapping pattern on the thighs to create a steady underlying rhythmic beat as the poem is performed. There will be a natural pause at the end of each line.

Cn *Patriot*, noun: a person who vigorously supports their country and is prepared to defend it against enemies or detractors. Think about what it means to be a patriot. Think of a situation where you would need to speak out or take unusual actions to support or defend your country. What might you say or do?

Re Carefully observe the US flag in your classroom. Look at it in terms of its artistic design. Describe it in terms of its patterns, colors and their significance, and material. Give reasons why you think these choices were made. Research how the earlier US flags varied from the one we have today. What changed? What remained the same? Think about other things in life you can think of that are worth fighting for.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Edwards, Roberta. *Who Was Paul Revere?* Penguin Workshop, 2011.

Maestro, Betsy. *Liberty or Death: The American Revolution: 1763-1783*. HarperCollins, 2005

“Statue Of Liberty Facts For Kids.” Facts For Kids, www.factsforkids.net/statue-of-liberty-facts-for-kids/

(This website has history, photos and additional facts to interest young people)

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

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. 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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DAVID PRATHER



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, 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