

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



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

# MELODY OF CHINA

# 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. This performance features Melody of China, whose musicians will entertain us with the classical, folk and contemporary music of China. Founded in 1993 and directed by Yangqin Zhao, Melody of China consists of professional musicians from some of the most prestigious music conservatories in China. We will see and hear traditional instruments including the Chinese fiddle, the Chinese hammer dulcimer, the table harp, the Chinese bamboo flute and many others. Please welcome Melody of China!"



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 pho-

## SPACE

- 18' wide x 12' deep minimum

## SURFACE

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

## DRESSING AREA

- One dressing room will be needed

## EQUIPMENT

- 4 armless chairs
- 1 stand-up microphone, and 2 microphones on boom stands for 2 musicians to speak while sitting down.
  - Sound system/speakers
    - Electrical outlet(s)
    - Extension cord
- Water and cups for four artists

## ARRIVAL

- 30 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 assist 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

## MELODY OF CHINA

**ART FORM:** Music

**STYLE:** Traditional

**CULTURE:** Chinese

### MEET THE ARTIST:

The mission of Melody of China is to promote classical and modern Chinese music, as well as to provide quality entertainment that connects these ancient cultural traditions with the youthful, diverse culture of America. Founded in 1993 by Hong Wang and Yangqin Zhao, the group features members trained at some of the most prestigious music conservatories in China. Ganqin Zhao, a multi-instrumentalist plays percussion and guzheng (21-strings table harp), among many other instruments. Thomas Lee plays the erhu (2-string stick fiddle), gaohu (two-stringed Chinese fiddle), and Strauss Shi plays the flute and erhu.

### ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

Melody of China leads students on a fascinating trek through the music and unique, traditional instruments of China. Narrated by Straus Shi, instruments such as the ruan (moon guitar) are featured as the ensemble plays evocative music like "Oceans of Happiness," "Purple Bamboo Melody," "Tumbling Walnuts," and "Joyful Xin Jiang People." Students are encouraged to listen for images behind the notes as they listen to "Horse Racing," and "Squabbling Ducks." Basic elements of music like harmony, and various playing techniques are also introduced. A brief question and answer session allows students to explore specific areas of interest. Selected students are invited onstage to participate in the final musical presentation.



### PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:

Chinese music performed today can provide two delightful gifts for an audience. This is partially in thanks to the teachings of the ancient philosopher, Confucius. He taught that the sole purpose of listening to music was to calm the passions and clarify the thoughts. Thus, the traditional gift given by performers of music was tranquility for the mind and the soul.

The second gift available to modern audiences is enjoyment. Musicians can provide an increased awareness of ancient Chinese musical traditions, enlightenment about Chinese life and music, and pure enjoyment as listeners experience this special style of music. An ancient Chinese belief states that sound can have profound influence on all of us, and can shift the balance of the universe. If this is so, listening to the instruments and sounds of Melody of China is sure to be an uplifting experience for all.

Because the ancient purpose of music was to purify and calm, great attention is still paid to the playing of individual notes. The music is articulated carefully to evoke as much feeling and emphasis as possible. Primarily using the pentatonic (five-note scale), the heptatonic (seven-note scale) may also be used.

The instruments used to play the music of China are ancient, some over 2,000 years old. Following is a list of instruments you may see in the performance:

*ruan*, or moon guitar, has 4 metal strings

*guzheng*, or table harp, has 21 strings

*yangqin*, or butterfly harp, a dulcimer that is over 600 years old, has over 150 metal strings.

*erhu*, or two-stringed stick fiddle played with a horse-hair bow, an ancient instrument over 2,000 years old

*xiao*, a very long, vertical flute  
*sheng*, or pipe mouth organ made with 36 bamboo pipes.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What do you remember from the performance? Select one song you remember and describe your reaction to the music and the instruments used to play the song.
- Is this style of music new to you? Where have you heard music like this before?
- Several times the musicians asked if you heard specific "life sounds" such as horse hoofs, ducks quacking, etc. played by the instruments. Did you hear the sounds? Did they make you laugh? Why?
- If you were going to learn to play one of the instruments you saw today, which one would you want to study? Why?
- Traditional Chinese music was meant to calm and clarify the mind. Why do you listen to music today? Do you use it to help you work? Go to sleep? Calm you down? Wake you up? What are some other reasons you use music?

## FRAMEWORK FOCUS—SOCIAL STUDIES/HISTORY:

Music that mimics the sound of life is common throughout many cultures. Sound effects can also be used to enhance literary drama. Working with a partner or small group, take a favorite story, fairy tale or piece of literature. Make a list of the different sounds that are suggested as the story unfolds. Pay particular attention to doors opening, animal noises, nature noises like wind or rain and human noises like crying or laughing. Select or find instruments, household objects or other items that can be used to create the sounds you have imagined. Decide who will read the story and who will "play" the sounds. Working together, present a reading of the story accompanied by the sounds you have discovered.

### California Arts Standards: Artistic Processes

**Cr** Creating

**Pr** Performing/Producing/Presenting

**Re** Responding

**Cn** Connecting

Learn more at:

## ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

**Re** There is an old saying that, "Music can soothe a savage beast." Select several different types of music: popular, classical, hip hop, jazz, country, etc. After listening to each selection, write a list of adjectives or verbs that describe your reaction to what you heard. Try to describe your reaction in as many different ways as possible: intellectually, emotionally, and physically.

**Cn** Find China on a map. What countries line the borders? What bodies of water surround it or are within the country itself? Compare the size of China to other countries. What kind of resources are available? Approximately one billion, four hundred million people live in China. How does that compare with the rest of the world? With the United States?

**Cr** Think about the performance of *Melody of China*, and choose one song that you remember well, or that you really enjoyed. Remember how the song was performed, what instruments were used, what mood did it convey (sad, happy, funny, etc.) After remembering what you experienced, "illustrate" the song you selected. You can plan and make a drawing of the musicians playing, illustrate part of the song itself, or draw your reactions and impressions. Be careful to select colors, shapes and lines that help to identify and illustrate the song you are trying to recreate. Caption your drawing.

**Cr** Some of the songs played by *Melody of China* have wonderfully descriptive, often humorous titles, such as "Horse Racing," "Squabbling Ducks" and "Tumbling Walnuts." The title of each song helps the audience listen and appreciate the colorful images suggested in the music. Create a list of song titles that produce strong images in your mind, such as "Barking Frogs," "Traffic Jam" or "Elephant Walking." After you have made your list, select your favorite title and write a paragraph describing the instruments, rhythms and pitch you would imagine in your song.

## SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Lau, Frederick. *Music in China* (includes C'Ds). Oxford University Press, 2007.

Xi, Qiang, *Chinese Music and Musical Instruments*. (In English) Shanghai Press Paperback with Flaps Edition. IL, 1999.

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

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

**\_\_\_\_\_ AND THE MUSIC CENTER ANNOUNCE  
MELODY OF CHINA TO PERFORM ON \_\_\_\_\_**

\_\_\_\_\_ and The Music Center today announced the upcoming performance of Melody of China on campus. As part of the school's continuing efforts to supplement its curriculum and its students' educational experience through a live performance, the school will host a special presentation from The Music Center on Tour roster. 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.

Established in 1993 by Hong Wang and Yangqin Zhao to promote Chinese music, this San Francisco-based group is composed of professional musicians from some of the most prestigious music conservatories in China. Melody of China offers fascinating selections that feature a blending of ancient cultural traditions of China and the youthful, multicolored American culture. Audiences are introduced to instruments including the yangqin (Chinese hammered dulcimer), guzheng (Chinese zither), pipa (Chinese lute), and erhu (Chinese violin), along with a variety of wind instruments. Viewers are also treated to a stunning demonstration of unusual percussion instruments. The music of China is incredibly diverse, including folk songs, classical, festival music, opera, popular music and instrumental pieces. The performance by Melody of China offers a wide selection of pieces that show an audience how moving, expressive, and occasionally humorous Chinese music can be.

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 Glorja 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.*

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# MELODY OF CHINA



**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)