

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

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

# **DAVID PRATHER**

## Prather's Poetry Jam

# 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 "David Prather's Poetry Jam", and it features actor and storyteller David Prather. Mr. Prather will share many different poems with us – even poems about ice cream, baseball and the United States of America! 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 — David Prather's Poetry Jam

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:

"David Prather's Poetry Jam" is a high-energy performance for young audiences, designed to stimulate an interest in poetry and language. Drawing on a diverse array of poets from Shel Silverstein and Jack Prelutsky to A.A. Milne, and including such American classics as "Casey at the Bat" and "This Land is Your Land," the show serves as an overview and introduction to poetry, metaphor, imagery and meter. This fast-paced show features audience participation, humor, pratfalls, and props, making it a language "jam." From an entrance on a razor scooter to the donning of a sandwich board, from jumping rope to juggling boxes, the audience is engaged as David Prather demonstrates the rhythm and rhyme of poetry. There is definitely "joy in Mudville," with this home run performance!

### PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:

Poetry is more than rhyming words, linked together in a particular format with a specific meter (rhythm patterns that can be identified and measured). Through imagination and imagery, through figures of speech such as *metaphor*, *assonance*, *alliteration* and *onomatopoeia*, poetry takes ordinary words and shapes them into a message that goes beyond the literal meaning of the words. The verbal art of poetry aims straight for the heart of the listeners, providing them with an emotional experience that isn't always evoked from a simple prose narrative.

Verse is a constant in everyday life, from commercial jingles and children's rhymes to our own inadvertent speeches (i.e., "We're going to the store. Out the door!") Poetry probably originated in early civilizations as a tool used to convey oral histories and stories, and as ritualistic language for rites of passage. Many modern classroom teachers continue to use poetry to help students remember lessons; they find that rhythm and rhyme provide valuable memory triggers for younger listeners.

Poems performed in "Poetry Jam" are mainly contemporary poems that use modern language to speak about everyday experiences—and, using unusual twists. A visit to an ice cream store, watching television, and going to a baseball game all show how poems can present images that resonate long after the experience ends. Poets represented in this show include: *Shel Silverstein* (1932-1999) and *Jack Prelutsky* (1940-), two contemporary American poets; *Alan Alexander Milne* (1882-1956), an English writer best known for "*Winnie the Pooh*;" and other American poets including *Woodrow Wilson "Woody" Guthrie* (1912-1967), a songwriter and folk poet whose words and songs spoke for the working class and the unions during The Great Depression; *Ernest Lawrence Thayer* (1863-1940), whose "Casey at the Bat" a humor piece in the *San Francisco Examiner*; and *Carl Sandburg* (1878-1967), a Pulitzer-prize winning poet who created new poetic forms as he wrote about life and living in America.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What is a poem? What elements turn a simple sentence or statement into a poem? (rhythm, rhyme, imagery)
- Have you ever written a poem? Can you remember what it was about? What rhyming words did you use?
- What was your favorite poem in this performance? Why? Do you remember the poet's name? Have you read any other poems written by that poet?
- List some of your favorite poems. Do you share the same favorites with classmates? Can you recite any parts of the poems you like the best?
- Discuss various contexts you have with poetry during the day - on television, on the playground, in class, during bedtime stories, etc. How many different situations can you remember?

## FRAMEWORK FOCUS—LANGUAGE ARTS:

A *metaphor* is a figure of speech in which a word that represents one thing is used to describe another. A *simile* is a figure of speech which uses "like" or "as" to compare one thing to another. Both are used often in poetry and literary writing to help create mental images that convey the written message through strong visual concepts. Here are some examples of *simile* and *metaphors*. Ask students to identify which are *simile* and which are *metaphors*. Ask students to create their own *metaphors* or *simile*.

### From "Casey at the Bat:"

*From the benches, black with people, there went up a muffled roar,*

*Like the beating of the storm-waves on a stern and distant shore;*

### From "This Land is Your Land:"

*As I was walking that ribbon of highway*

### From Shel Silverstein's "The Dragon of Grindly Grun:"

*I breathe fire as hot as the sun;*

### From A.A. Milne's "The Mirror:"

*Between the woods the afternoon*

*Is fallen in a golden swoon.*

## ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

**Cr** Help students define and understand the following figures of speech:

*assonance*: repetition of the same vowel sound

Example: How now, brown cow.

*alliteration*: repetition of the same consonant sound

Example: Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.

Then have them try to find or develop one or two lines of poetry that use one of these figures of speech.

**Pr** Ask students to select a favorite poem to read or present to the class. They should be able to name the title, poet and country of origin, as well as the time period in which it was written. Students should concentrate on identifying and expressing the emotional tone of the poem, paying attention to interpretive aspects such as irony or sarcasm, etc.

**Re** After students recite their poem to the class, help students evaluate the meanings in each poem, and what importance it might have for the students. Be sure to point out and discuss any phrases that create images or emotions in the minds and hearts of the students.

**Re** Poetry often reflects the historical era in which it was written, and can often shine light on the styles, values, challenges and ideas of that time. Select a poem that was written during a specific time period (drawn from classroom curriculum) and examine it to see what it says about any political or cultural issues of the time. For instance, "This Land is Your Land," written by Woody Guthrie in the 1930s, reflected the fight of the working class and their struggle to claim their own piece of the American dream through the establishment of worker's unions.

## SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Gardney, Martin. *The Annotated Casey At the Bat: A collection of ballads about the Mighty Casey*. Courier Corp, 1995.

Prelutsky, Jack, *Be Glad Your Nose Is on Your Face: And Other Poems: Some of the Best of Jack Prelutsky*. Greenwillow Books, 2013.

Silverstein, Shel, *A Light in The Attic, Special Edition*. Harper Collins, 2014.

Silverstein, Shel, *Where the Sidewalk Ends, Special Edition*. Harper Collins, 2014.

### 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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## DAVID PRATHER



**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TIME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LOCATION:** \_\_\_\_\_



[musiccenter.org/performingartists](https://musiccenter.org/performingartists)  
[@MusicCenterLA](https://www.instagram.com/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)