

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

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

DIANE FERLATTE

We Were There

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. Diane Ferlatte with Erik Pearson present "We Were There", a collection of stories about ordinary African Americans who did extraordinary things. Please welcome Diane Ferlatte and Erik Pearson!"



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

- 6' wide x 9' deep minimum
- Portable stages must be sturdy, level and securely lashed with steps leading up to the stage
- NO OUTDOOR PERFORMANCES

SURFACE

- A clean and safe freshly mopped (not waxed) floor for performing
 - Irregularities covered with tape
 - Extraneous clutter removed

EQUIPMENT

- One armless chair
- One waist-high stool
- Two microphones on stands required
- Bottled water (room temperature, no ice)

ARRIVAL

- 15-30 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
- Audience should be in the venue, seated and ready to begin at the listed times

DIANE FERLATTE— We Were There

ART FORM: Storytelling

STYLE: Traditional

CULTURE: North American

MEET THE ARTIST:

A native of New Orleans, storyteller Diane Ferlatte recalls with fondness her childhood years of sitting on the porch of her grandparents' home, captivated by the oral stories of family generations past. She now carries on that tradition with tales filled with spirit, journeys and fantasy. Diane offers three different performances: Have I Got a Story to Tell, a solo show of stories from Africa and the American South; We Were There, that brings to life the stories of African Americans in history; and Aesop, Alive and Well, featuring the fables of Aesop and the music of Erik Pearson. Diane views the art of storytelling as an effective way of stirring the imagination to promote reading readiness and literacy. Diane has toured in Austria and New Zealand, and has been a featured teller at the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and the Hollywood Bowl. She was honored by the mayor of Oakland for her role as co-director of the city's National Storytelling Festival.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

In *We Were There*, Diane Ferlatte presents the historical stories of ordinary African Americans who did extraordinary things. Using music, songs, factual and mythical tales, Diane shows how everyday people (both real and fictional) participated in the founding and building of America. During periods of slavery, Revolution, Civil War, Westward expansion and the building of the railroads, African Americans actively contributed to the events that shaped our country. Unknown and unsung in most history books, these abolitionists, slaves, rebels, soldiers, pioneers and cowboys were there -- fighting the battles, taming the prairie, freeing the slaves and building the railroads. Through Diane's telling of these tales, students will increase their understanding of the vital part played by African Americans in the creation and building of our nation.



PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:

The accuracy of historical records is dependent on the people who write them, the cultures and societies they represent, and the era during which the histories are written. Unfortunately, this means that some stories go untold, particularly if the stories are about a segment of the population whose history is ignored, devalued or even misrepresented.

The role of African Americans in the shaping of the United States was absent in school texts for many years. Fortunately, in recent years there has been increasing recognition and awareness of the importance of the contributions made by African Americans in the founding and history of our country. The stories that are being uncovered and shared should be a source of enlightenment and pride for all Americans.

As fascinating as they are numerous, these stories tell of individuals whose courage, honor and vision helped them rise above enormous obstacles. Chained in slavery, owning nothing but their beliefs and ideals, they each traveled a hero's journey. Robert Smalls escaped slavery by commandeering a Confederate ship and sailing it straight into the Union navy blockade, where he, the ship and its cannons were welcomed. He went on to fight for the Union as a captain of the ship he commandeered. Mary Fields, freed at the end of the Civil War, traveled west, worked for employers as diverse as a group of nuns and the Pony Express, and was instrumental in the development of much of central Montana. John Henry, often thought to be a legend, could have been any of the railroad workers whose hammers, steel spikes and dynamite blasted holes through the mountains of West Virginia and Alabama, moving mountains so that railroads could travel across America. Matching his strength against the power of a machine, he gave everything to succeed. In the story of a young Black girl whose actions saved George Washington, we see not only courage, but tolerance and charity. What is amazing is that these stories do not stand alone -- there are many other histories to be explored. The internet is a useful source of information today, and is bursting with websites documenting the stories of other African Americans -- most of them everyday people who helped their country grow to become what it is today. They were there!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- Think about the stories you heard in the performance. Which was your favorite? Why?
- All of the stories told about ordinary people doing extraordinary things. Have you ever done or do you know someone who has done something "extraordinary?"
- What tools did Diane Ferlatte use during her performance to tell the stories? (voice, face, movement, body)
- All of the individuals whose stories were shared were slaves. Do you think their being slaves affected their actions? In what way?

FRAMEWORK FOCUS—LANGUAGE ARTS:

People have always shared stories to entertain, enlighten and inspire. The histories of real people and actual events are the most exciting, since we know that the events really happened. Everyone has a story where they or someone they know moved past the mundane and stepped into events where life and death matters had to be faced and dealt with. These events might include the death of a loved one, an accident, a family crisis, a vacation adventure, an exciting job or life change. Sometimes telling stories from one's own experience is difficult. If privacy is an issue, stories dealing with real people may be altered to provide anonymity and privacy. The events may even change slightly, as long as the meaning and message behind the story remains the same.

Discuss what events in an everyday life might make a good story. Point out to students that good storytellers create pictures in the minds of their listeners by the way they describe the place where the story happens (setting); how people (characters) in the story look and what they believe in; the things the characters say (dialogue); and the things the characters do (action).

Put students in pairs and encourage them to share a story with their partner. Afterwards, share the stories with the class.

ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

Cr Discuss how the performance painted pictures in your mind with words, music and actions. Select one of those mental pictures and draw it, using colors to help express the feelings the story created. Use the drawing of your image to retell what happened in that part of the story, what you remember about it and why.

Cn History books tell about events and the "famous" people involved in them. In *We Were There*, audiences see how ordinary people can be involved in and affect major historical events. Select an event from the performance or from your history or social studies book. Read the information, and then imagine what the world would be like today if the hero or heroine in the story had not taken action. (For example, if the young slave girl had not saved George Washington, what would America be like today?) Write a paragraph about how our lives would be affected. Read your paragraph to the class and discuss.

Cn All of the people in these stories were slaves. Slavery existed, and still exists, in many parts of the world. Find out more about slavery by researching a specific country's history, the ways people became enslaved and if or how slaves from that country were able to gain their freedom.

Cn Discuss why telling stories is a good way to educate and teach an audience. If an audience enjoys hearing a story, are they more likely to empathize with the characters and remember the details?

Cn Diane Ferlatte uses tools to tell her stories:

Voice -- She changes her voice to fit the story's actions or the character's emotions (inflection and pitch.) She may also speak loud or soft (dynamic), and fast or slow (tempo).

Face -- Diane changes her facial expressions to match the different feelings in each story.

Movement -- She moves her body and hands to help listeners picture the characters and the actions of the story.

Music -- Diane Ferlatte sings some parts of the stories, and Erik Pearson plays the music to help audiences imagine what is happening.

Looking at the tools of the storyteller listed above, try to think of what other professions might use some of these tools, and why? (Teachers, politicians, ministers, policemen?)

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Berlin, Ira. *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America*. Belknap Press, 1998.

Macdonald, Margaret Read. *Shake-It-Up Tales! Stories to Sing, Dance, Drum and Act Out*. August House Publishers, 2000.

The Internet African American History Challenge, Bright Moments, www.brightmoments.com/blackhistory/.

California Arts Standards: Artistic Processes

Cr	Creating
Pr	Performing/Producing/Presenting
Re	Responding
Cn	Connecting

Learn more at:

Contact Name: _____

Phone: _____

**AND THE MUSIC CENTER ANNOUNCE DIANE FERLATTE
TO PERFORM ON _____**

_____ and The Music Center today announced the upcoming performance of Diane Ferlatte. 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.

Style and wit, New Orleans charm and world-wide travels have made Diane Ferlatte an internationally renowned storyteller. She has wowed audiences on six continents as she brings her performances to life through stories, songs, sign language, humor, and audience participation with a repertoire of folktales, myths, legend, fables, as well as personal and historical stories. While many of her stories & songs have African-American roots, she loves to tell any story that holds truths touching upon our common humanity while inspiring students as she passes on values, history, and culture. Awards for her recordings include a Grammy nomination, multiple Parents' Choice, American Library Association, iParenting Media, Storytelling World, & National Parenting Publications awards. Additional national awards include the NSN's Circle of Excellence Award, NABS' Zora Neale Hurston Award, & the California Arts Council's Highest Ranking.

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 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.

The Music Center
Performing Artists
in Schools and
Neighborhoods

Exciting
Dance
Music
Theatre
Storytelling
Performances
Come To You

DIANE FERLATTE



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