

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

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

# **THE ALLEY CATS**

The Do Re Mi's of Doo Wop

# 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.

This performance features *The Alley Cats*, 'America's premier doo-wop group.' They will sing some of the greatest hits of the 1950s and 60s in four part harmony. They also will share with us elements of performance and make sure we have a lot of fun! Please welcome *The Alley Cats!*"



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

- 15' wide x 15' deep minimum
- Portable stages must be sturdy, level and securely lashed

## SURFACE

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

## OUTDOOR PERFORMANCE

If the performance must be held outdoors, the following conditions must be met:

- Shaded – no direct sunlight
- Protected from wind and excess traffic or playground noise
- Electrical power source is required

## EQUIPMENT

- Electrical outlets
- Bottled water (or a pitcher of water and cups) for 4 people

## ARRIVAL

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

## PARKING

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

## THE ALLEY CATS—The Do Re Mi's of Doo Wop

**ART FORM:** Music

**STYLE:** 50s Era A Cappella Vocals

**CULTURE:** American

### MEET THE ARTIST:

The four members of The Alley Cats are a perfect blend both vocally and personally. Their easy, playful familiarity makes their camaraderie and vocal expressions radiate from the stage. The Alley Cats formed in 1987 at Fullerton College in Orange County and began their musical journey with Disney's "Blast to the Past" salute. The group have appeared at numerous fairs and festivals around the country and have been the featured performers on stages at Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, and at the White House. Most recently, The Alley Cats took second place in the 2017 Moscow International A Cappella Festival. The competition featured 227 groups from 22 countries.

### ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

By bringing their own contemporary style to the tunes from the 50s and 60s, The Alley Cats present a fun, interactive and informative assembly. Students will learn about the unique American musical form called doo-wop when they hear "At The Hop." The audience hears four-part harmony and learns about each vocal part and its job in the total sound of the music produced. Members of The Alley Cats discuss and demonstrate pitch, tempo and rhythm and how these musical elements are manipulated to create a particular effect in a song. "Rockin Robin" demonstrates rhythm, while the song, "In the Still of the Night" is sung to emphasize the impact of tempo. The Alley Cats combine various musical elements in "The Lion Sleeps Tonight," and then perform the popular standard, "Blue Moon." Tight harmonies, humor and dynamic a cappella energy make The Alley Cats one of America's premier doo-wop groups.



### PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:

A cappella, the oldest form of music, means singing without musical accompaniment. Tribal chants, Gregorian chants, gospel, jazz, barbershop, *doo-wop*, and contemporary music all trace their roots to a cappella. During the 1950s, young men and women began forming singing groups in their neighborhoods. Their street corner singing soon became the hits of the day and *doo-wop* was born. *Doo-wop* is a type of 'rhythm and blues' style that was popular in the 1950s and 60s. Nonsense syllables are combined in intricate, harmonic arrangements. Classic examples of this style are "Earth Angel" by The Penguins, and "Sh-Boom" by The Chords. The collective power of these popular groups eventually helped establish the Motown recording label.

The first real 'boy bands', before The Jonas Brothers, and BTS were *doo-wop* groups like Del Vikings, Dion and The Belmonts and in the Motown era, The Temptations, Four Tops and The Miracles. These groups laid the foundation for the music we hear today.

The 50s, overall were a happy time in America; World War II was over, and "I Like Ike" was the phrase of the time. The majority of people felt safe and secure. Today, *doo-wop* is more widely known as 'oldies' and is rarely heard in the a cappella form. Now, instrumentation is added. However, this collection of music is truly timeless and continues to be enjoyed by many generations of people around the world.

Early on, what we called *doo-wop* music embraced the grand tradition of nonsense lyrics. Taking their cue from musician Dizzy Gillespie's 1947 be-bop song, "Oop Boop Sh'Bam," vocal groups sang "Sh-Boom," "Oop Shoop" and "Bip Bam," all using meaningless sounds to fill the beats and create background chants. But perhaps the most common nonsense syllable was "doo," which has always been useful in popular songs. Over 150 years ago, composer Stephen Foster used "doo-dah, doo-dah" to fill out the verses of his "De Camptown Races" (1850). A hundred years later doo wop made "The Turban's Top 40" hits.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What was your favorite song from the show? Explain why you like it. What stood out for you?
- When did you realize there were no musical instruments, other than voices?
- What differences did you notice between the two performances of "The Lion Sleeps Tonight?"
- This music was popular in the 1950s. What else do you know about that time period?
- Is there anything else you would like to learn about *doo-wop* or *a capella*? Be specific.

## FRAMEWORK FOCUS—HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES:

Take some time to discuss the 1950s era in the United States. Have the students make guesses as to the styles of clothing, types of cars, and activities children did for play. It's important to remember that there were no smart phones, iPads or other electronic devices for playing games. Encourage students to ask family members, who lived during the 50s, what life was like then. Ask them how it was different from life now. Use the following as a possible take-home questionnaire.

- What kind of clothes did you wear?
- What was your favorite song? Can you sing some of it?
- Where did you go for fun?
- What kind of toys did you have? What games did you play?
- Who was president? What years?
- What were some major events that were in the news?
- Do you know what *doo-wop* is?
- What were your favorite dances? Can you show/teach us?
- What were popular types of food?

Make a chart and graph to compare the answers and find trends and popularity of certain answers. Have the children answer the same questions relating to today. Make another chart with their answers. Compare, contrast and discuss their observations.

### California Arts Standards: Artistic Processes

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

Learn more at:

<https://tinyurl.com/ArtsStandardsCA>

## ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

**Pr** Select a song to sing without accompaniment. Remind the students that they are singing *a capella*. When we sing "Happy Birthday" we are singing *a capella* (voices only).

**Pr** Select one line of a song and sing it at different *pitch*-es. Experiment how high and how low students can go using their singing voices. Discuss how it feels to sing very high or very low. Can students identify the right range of *pitch*es for their own voice? Ask everyone to identify which term best suits their own voice range: *bass; baritone; soprano; alto; or tenor*. Who sings lowest? Who sings highest?

**Cn** Look up the following words and their definitions. Share and discuss them and make connections to the 50s and *doo-wop music*. Discuss how understanding these words might help you relate to this period of time in America.

a cappella	rhythm	tempo
harmony	fifties	pitch
baritone	bass	tenor
doo-wop	music	lyrics

**Re** Select a song that is currently at the top of the charts. Ask the students to analyze the song and then compare and contrast this style with a song sung in the *doo-wop* style. Answer such questions as:

- Are instruments, other than the voice, used?
- Which seem most important, the words (lyrics) or the melody? Or, are both equally important?
- What things are similar? Which aspects are different?

## SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Schotter, Roni, and Bryan Collier illustrator. *Doo Wop Pop*. Amistad, 2008.

Javna, John. *The Doo-Wop Sing –Along Songbook*. St. Martins Press, 1986.

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

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

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## \_\_\_\_\_ AND THE MUSIC CENTER ANNOUNCE THE ALLEY CATS TO PERFORM ON \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ and The Music Center today announced the upcoming performance of The Alley Cats 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.

A perfect blend of musical talent and comic timing, The Alley Cats breathe new life into everyone's favorite doo-wop classics as they present their interactive, fun, and informative assemblies. Tight harmonies, humor, interesting stories and an unbelievable amount of a cappella energy enliven the performance as audiences sing along with familiar melodies. Students learn about the unique American musical form called "doo-wop" as they hear the group bring their own contemporary style to the tunes from the 50's and 60's or well-loved holiday classics. Having performed at the White House and as featured entertainers on Disney stages, audiences can be sure that this group is truly the "cat's meow!"

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 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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**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)