

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

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

WILL & COMPANY

The Odyssey

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. The name of this company of actors is Will and Company. They will be presenting scenes from the Homers' classic tale, "The Odyssey." Please welcome Will and Company!"



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

- 15' wide x 10' deep minimum (some flexibility available)
 - Must be clean and lighted

SURFACE

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

DRESSING AREA

- One clean, secured dressing area will be needed

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

- This performance provides a unique opportunity for a few audience members to be performers in each show
- Please select young 6 people to participate for each show (can be different participants for each show or the same participants for each show)
- Participants should report to the performance space 30 minutes prior to the performance. (If performance schedule is tight and includes multiple shows, all participants should arrive 30 prior to the first performance)

ARRIVAL

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

PARKING

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

WILL & COMPANY—The Odyssey

ART FORM: Theatre

STYLE: Classical

CULTURE: Western European

MEET THE ARTIST:

Will & Company is a multicultural theatre ensemble with a “Professional Designation in Arts Education” award from the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture, and recognition for “Excellence in Theatre” award by the State of California. This unique company performs exciting adaptations of some of the world's greatest classic literature, including; Shakespeare’s *Romeo & Juliet*, Homer’s *The Odyssey*, and Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*. Under the Artistic Direction of founder Colin Cox, the troupe presents 40-minute original adaptations of a number of classical works that include physical humor and dazzling swordplay. Also, critically acclaimed nationally for touring original works highlighting diversity and social justice issues, Will & Company is the recipient of two NAACP Awards, and was nominated for a GLAAD Award.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

Homer, a major Greek poet (between 12th and 8th centuries B.C.), wrote a literary epic called, “*The Odyssey*.” This story is about an ancient heroic king, called Odysseus, and his struggle to return home after fighting in the bloody ten-year Trojan War. It is staged in an adventurous, theatrical style and includes innovative use of puppets, mime and choreographed swordplay. A narrator describes the plot as it unfolds, while the company performs major scenes featuring key characters, supported by a Greek chorus.

The scenes include:

- Odysseus Sets Sail
- The Battle with the Ciconians
- Encountering the Cyclopes
- Odysseus and His Men in the Land of Circe
- Odysseus Travels to the Underworld
- The Island of the Sirens
- Charybdis the Whirlpool and Scylla the Monster
- Athena Gives Odysseus a Disguise
- Odysseus Strings the Bow.

PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:

Odysseus, king of Ithaca, sails with his army to take part in the mighty Achaean expedition led by the mythical Agamemnon whose wife Helen was stolen by a man named Paris. Agamemnon and his armies rage against the city of Troy to restore his wife to him. After ten years of bloody warfare, the city is sacked and the Achaean heroes sail for home. When “*The Odyssey*” begins, an additional decade has passed since Troy fell; Odysseus still has not returned home. All the other chieftains have either died or have safely arrived back in their native lands. However, there is no news of the ruler of Ithaca. In his absence, the noblemen of Ithaca, and the surrounding states, have converged upon his palace hoping to win the hand of Penelope, Odysseus’ wife. She remains faithful to her husband's memory and will not remarry, although the noblemen stay at the palace - trying to change her mind. The persistent suitors grossly waste the wealth of Odysseus’ estate for their own pleasure and corrupt many of his servants. However, the son of Odysseus, Telemachus, visits various Achaean lords as soon as he is old enough. His hope is to learn whether his father still lives.

During these ten years Odysseus has wandered throughout the world, undergoing an unbelievable series of adventures and torments caused by the malice of Poseidon, god of the sea. All his ships and brave men have been lost; eventually only Odysseus survives. Finally, with the aid of the king of the Phaeacians and the goddess Athena, Odysseus sails to Ithaca. He punishes his wife’s suitors and re-establishes himself as king. Reunited with his wife, son and father, he averts a potential civil war on Ithaca with the intercession of the gods.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- If you were to describe the story of "The Odyssey" in two or three sentences, what would you say?
- Is Odysseus a hero? Why or why not? Are all of his actions admirable?
- If you had one hour to spend with one of the characters in the play, which character would you choose? Why? What would you talk about?
- Which characters did you identify with most? Which characters did you identify with least? Why?
- What were some of the obstacles that Odysseus had to overcome in order to return home to Ithaca?
- How do the various gods and goddesses intervene and/or interact with the characters in the story? Describe.
- Did Will & Company's performance stir your interest about Greek literature? Would you like to read some of the stories? Would you like to see a Greek play?

FRAMEWORK FOCUS—SOCIAL STUDIES/HISTORY:

The jugs, cooking pots and containers used in the households of ancient Greek society were made of pottery decorated with patterns and scenes of people and animals. The Greeks had special methods for painting pottery called "black-figure" and "red-figure" painting. Black-figure vases have their decoration painted in black and the background is left the color of the clay -- an orange-red. With red-figure vases it is the other way around -- the background is painted black and the figures and decoration are left the color of clay. Look at pictures of Greek vases in books or take a field trip to the J. Paul Getty Museum to see actual examples in the antiquities collection there. When students' research is completed, have them do a rendering of a vase of their own design using black markers and orange construction paper.

ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

Re Read some Greek myths about *Zeus*, the king of the gods, and his family. Examples are: *Aphrodite*, *Athena*, *Poseidon*, *Apollo*, *Hermes*, *Persephone* and *Demeter*. Other Greek stories such as "Theseus and the Minotaur" or "The Golden Fleece" will also engage students' imaginations.

Cr Theatre was an important part of life in ancient Greece. In a Greek play there was a chorus and a few actors who would play all the individual parts. The actors wore masks that conveyed the personality of the characters: some tragic, some comic, some young, some old, some heroes and heroines, some warriors, monsters, etc. Have students create a mask of a character he/she would like to play. Use a paper bag, paper plate or tag-board for the face and decorate it with color, feathers, glitter, yarn, etc. Look at pictures of masks for to help conceptualize: classic Greek, Native American and African masks.

Cr The ancient Greeks had many different gods and goddesses. Each had his or her own attributes or special symbols. *Athena* was a warrior goddess, wearing a helmet and carrying a spear and shield. The patron goddess of Athens, her symbol was the owl. *Zeus* was father of the gods. He carried a thunderbolt and scepter and often had an eagle with him. Have students choose a god or goddess and draw a portrait using both historical sources and their imaginations.

Re Have students read a review of a theatrical production in the "New York Times" or the "Los Angeles Times." Have them develop a list of criteria to evaluate the "The Odyssey" performance.

Pr Prepare reenactments of scenes from the performance. Divide the class into groups of 6 to 8 students. Appoint a director in each group. Have the group select a scene and list the action which took place. Put these into a correct sequence. Cast the play, with one student as the narrator, providing key information as the scene unfolds. Rehearse; then share the scenes with the class in sequence.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

Lowe, Cheryl. *D'Aulaires' Greek Myths, Student Guide*. Memoria Press, 2006.

Pugliano-Martin, Carp;. *Greek Myth Plays—10 Reader Theatre scripts based on Greek Myths*. Scholastic Teaching Resources, 2008.

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
WILL AND COMPANY TO PERFORM ON _____

_____ and The Music Center today announced the upcoming performance of Will and Company on campus. 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.

Will & Company's founder/director Colin Cox and a touring group of artists, much like the troupes who traversed the provinces in Shakespeare's day, make ageless classics more accessible to young audiences. Celebrate the timeless language and classic theatre of Shakespeare's work by selecting a tragedy or a comedy for students to enjoy. Each performance features narration of the story of the play, a presentation of several major scenes, and information about the history and background of the play. These dynamic performances are a great way to intrigue, entrance and educate students about the captivating work of William Shakespeare.

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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Exciting
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Performances
Come To You

WILL & COMPANY



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