

JANUARY 15, 2026

The Blue Ribbon Children's Festival Creates a Day of Discovery at The Music Center for More Than 13,000 Local Students

Beginning March 4, 2026, Fifth Graders from Over 180 L.A. County Schools Will Experience World-Class Dance through Observation and Participation

LOS ANGELES (January 15, 2026) - For three unforgettable days, **March 4-6, 2026**, **The Music Center** will burst with the energy, imagination and movement of more than 13,000 local fifth-grade students as they participate in the 56th annual **Blue Ribbon Children's Festival**, California's longest-continuing free arts learning initiative. Stepping into The Music Center's iconic Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, many of these students will experience the thrill of live performance for the very first time. Their journey begins with an electrifying performance by **Hubbard Street Dance Chicago**, a pioneering force in contemporary dance.



"The Blue Ribbon Children's Festival reflects the transformative power of the performing arts in sparking curiosity, building confidence and inspiring young people to see themselves as creators and performers," said **Rachel S. Moore**, **president and CEO of The Music Center**. "For many of these students, this will be their first visit to a world-class performing arts center and, for some, their first time visiting Downtown L.A., where the arts thrive. Experiencing extraordinary artistry on our stages helps young people see the arts as something they can engage with, enjoy and carry with them throughout their lives."

On each of the three festival days, more than 4,000 students will enjoy Hubbard Street Dance Chicago's four compelling works, created by some of the world's most acclaimed contemporary dance choreographers: *Blue Soup #1 and #2* (2025) by Aszure Barton; *As the Wind Blows* (2022) by Amy Hall Garner; *Sweet Gwen Suite* (2021) by Bob Fosse and Gwen Verdon; and *Echoes of Our Ancestors* (2024) by Maria Torres.

The students' experience continues beyond The Music Center stage. Following Hubbard Street Dance Chicago's performances, the students will gather on **Jerry Moss Plaza** at The Music Center to participate in a joyful, shared dance performance with their peers, featuring choreography created especially for them by Music Center Teaching Artist **Tara Cook Davis**. Inspired by *Echoes of Our Ancestors*, the dance will transform Jerry Moss Plaza into a communal performance space where every student becomes a performer.

"For more than five decades, *The Blue Ribbon Children's Festival* has been about giving young people the chance to experience the performing arts as well as see themselves as part of it," said **Mary Ann Hunt-Jacobsen**, president of The Blue Ribbon. "Watching thousands of students come together and dance together at The Music Center--many for the first time--is a profound reminder of why access to the arts matters and how deeply it can impact a child's life."

Each participating student will also receive *My Journey Through The Music Center*, a 26-page illustrated book introducing The Music Center's four theatres and the many art forms presented on its stages. The book is made possible by a generous \$1 million gift from Blue Ribbon member **Maxine Dunitz**, ensuring in perpetuity that every participating student receives a copy. The publication includes performer and backstage profiles, performing arts vocabulary and fun facts that extend learning well beyond the festival day.

Founded in 1970, the ***Blue Ribbon Children's Festival*** is led by **The Blue Ribbon**, The Music Center's premier women's support organization. Blue Ribbon members are dedicated advocates for the performing arts, advancing arts education through volunteerism, leadership and philanthropic support for L.A.'s performing arts center.

For more information about the *Blue Ribbon Children's Festival*, visit **musiccenter.org/brcf**.

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