Mayumana

Currents

MONDAY, APRIL 15, 2019
11AM | Jackson Hall
Recommended for grades K–12

About Mayumana

Boaz Berman and Eylon Nuphar created the first Mayumana show in 1996. An Israeli, Berman attended the Jerusalem Academy of Music and studied Afro Cuban percussion in New York. Born in the U.S. and raised in Israel, Nuphar studied percussion in Israel and abroad. Their shared love for percussion and music helped create Mayumana’s guiding principle: to “visualize the music” so the audience can see the music and hear the movement.

Berman and Nuphar gathered a small group of gifted performers, each with diverse talents and contrasting backgrounds to form Mayumana. Sparked by their shared passion for rhythm and coordination, and fueled by their unique sense of humor and mischief, their group dynamic on stage was inexhaustible and infectious. Enriched by working with a multicultural cast, they all inspired each other while developing the versatility to master other skills. This befits the name Mayumana which comes from “meyumanat,” the Hebrew word for “skill.”

Having entertained millions of people around the world since their formation, Mayumana has become one of Israel’s leading cultural exports. The power of each Mayumana creation comes from the strong emphasis placed on the unity and synchronization of the group as a whole. At the same time, the talent and beauty of the individual performer is highlighted and celebrated. Mayumana’s playfulness extends beyond the stage, reaching out to engage in interactions with its audiences of all ages and cultures.

About Currents

For Mayumana’s debut performance at the Mondavi Center they will present Currents, inspired by the historic “Battle of the Currents” between inventors Thomas Edison and Nikola Tesla in their quest to find new energy sources for the world. Starting in the late 1880s, Edison developed direct current (DC) that runs continually in a single direction, like in a battery, and was the standard in the U.S. during the early years of electricity. But there was one problem: DC was not easily converted to higher or lower voltages and Tesla believed that alternating current (AC) was the solution. AC reverses direction a certain number of times per second (60 in the U.S.) and can be converted to different voltages relatively easily using a transformer.

Today our electricity is still predominantly powered by AC but computers, LEDs, solar cells and electric vehicles all run on DC power. It appears that the two currents will end up working parallel to each other in a sort of hybrid armistice. And none of that would be possible without the genius of both Tesla and Edison.

On stage, we witness a journey between two troops, each representing a different view of the essence of light and electricity and each inspired by a different aesthetic and artistic approach, all of which are presented as a dialogue, through unique sounds, lights and visual effects. Currents combines custom-made musical instruments, massive video art projections and 11 skilled performers in constant motion, playing on different instruments and musically juggling between different sounds.
Think About It

Dear Students,

1. Describe what you saw (costumes, makeup, lights, props and visual effects). How did these elements enhance the show?

2. Describe what you heard. Did the music, instruments and sound effects make you think of electrical currents?

3. What did you like best about the performance and why? Was it what you expected?

MC Fun Facts:

- The outside walls of the Mondavi Center are made from sandstone from India that is 1.8 billion years old.
- What look like fossils in the sandstone tiles are really iron and manganese crystal dendrites.
- The building sits on 200 pillars to keep the sounds and vibrations of the freeway and trains from being heard or felt inside the theatre.
- The ceiling curtains in Jackson Hall weigh 2,200 pounds each.

What is expected of student audiences at the matinee:

- To facilitate starting the performance on time, get a drink of water and use the restroom before entering the seating area.
- Enter the auditorium quietly and take your seats immediately (note that all matinees have reserved seating).
- Show courtesy to the artists and other guests at all times.
- Demonstrate appreciation for the artists' work by applauding.
- Refrain from making unnecessary noise or movements.
- Please eat lunch before or after the performance. Food is not allowed in the theatre.
- Use information learned from the pre-matinee discussion to enhance the performance experience.
- Please do not photograph or record the artists.

What your students can expect of their experience at the Mondavi Center:

A theatre is a charged space, full of energy and anticipation. When the house lights (the lights that illuminate the audience seating) go down, the excitement level goes up! Theatres are designed so that the voices of the singers and actors and the music of the musicians can be heard. But this also means that any sound in the audience, whispering, speaking and moving about, can be heard by other audience members and by the performers. Distractions like these disrupt everyone’s concentration and can spoil a performance.

The performers on stage show respect for their art form and for the audience by doing their very best work. By watching attentively the audience shows respect for the performers. Appreciation can be shown in many different ways, depending upon the art form and the culture(s) of the people in the audience. For instance, while the audience at a dance performance may sit quietly, other types of performances may invite audience participation.

Applause is the best way for audience members to share their enthusiasm and to show their appreciation for the performers. Applaud at the end of a performance! Sometimes the audience will clap during a performance, as after a featured solo. Audience members may feel like laughing if the action on stage is funny, crying if the action is sad, or sighing if something is seen or heard that is beautiful.

Mondavi Center Arts Education

Arts Education provides CueSheets for all performances in the Mondavi Center 2018–19 School Matinee Series. They are intended to help teachers prepare their students for the school matinee that they will attend at Mondavi Center, UC Davis.

Support provided by