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**Skirball Cultural Center launches distance-learning initiative
inspired by its landmark children's and family destination**

NOAH'S ARK AT THE SKIRBALL: THE ART OF IMAGINATION

LOS ANGELES—The Skirball Cultural Center announces Noah's Ark at the Skirball™: The Art of Imagination, a suite of FREE educational resources and programming developed for Pre-K through Grade 5 distance learning. Based on the artistry and storytelling of the children's and family destination Noah's Ark at the Skirball—which remains closed to the public in accordance with Los Angeles County public-health orders—the initiative is designed to support students and teachers amid ongoing school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It includes streaming videos and interactive lesson plans, virtual field trips facilitated by Noah's Ark educators, and online professional development courses focused on arts integration. Launching this week, with additional programming to be announced, Noah's Ark at the Skirball: The Art of Imagination will remain available even when schools resume in-person instruction and the Skirball is permitted to reopen. Information can be found [here](#).

“School districts across the country are coping with a learning crisis made worse by the challenges of remote instruction, so it was imperative to rethink our engagement strategies and find new ways to serve school communities during these unprecedented times,” said Jessie Kornberg, Skirball President and CEO. “Even as we look forward to hosting field trips on site again when it is safe and responsible to do so, we hope that this digital content will enrich the virtual classroom environment and bring the messages and meaning of Noah's Ark into homes nationwide.”

“Since opening to the public in 2007, Noah's Ark at the Skirball has welcomed hundreds of thousands of school-age children to take part in a play-based, interactive gallery experience centered around themes of resilience and hope,” remarked Rachel Stark, Skirball Director of Education. “Through this vibrant new content, we look forward to continuing to engage school and family audiences in imaginative, learner-centered ways and share the Noah's Ark story of weathering storms, fostering community, and building a better world.”

Curriculum Overview

Developed in consultation with the Skirball Teacher Advisory Council (STAC)—a volunteer group of LA teachers convened by the Skirball in response to school shutdowns last spring—Noah's Ark at the Skirball: The Art of Imagination comprises the following:

- A “Welcome to Noah's Ark” video that showcases the artistry of the Noah's Ark galleries and introduces viewers to the core message of the Skirball's retelling of the ancient flood tale: that

everyone, including the youngest members of the community, can make a difference in the world. This orientation is available in both English and Spanish on the Skirball's YouTube channel.

- View [Welcome to Noah's Ark at the Skirball™](#).
- View [Bienvenidos a Noah's Ark at the Skirball™](#).
- Videos featuring storytelling, in which Noah's Ark educators share original adaptations of flood narratives told by the Maasai, a group of people from Kenya and Tanzania; and by the Lenape, an indigenous people of the northeastern woodlands of Canada and the United States. Stark explained, "As our Noah's Ark visitors have come to know and love, live storytelling lies at the heart of the on-site experience. We are pleased to capture, for a wide online audience, just two of the many stories from around the world that speak to how individuals and communities can work together to overcome challenges—a message that seems at once timeless and timely in the current moment."
 - View [A Maasai Flood Story](#).
 - View [A Lenape Flood Story](#).
- Videos featuring mindfulness, in which Noah's Ark educators guide students through a "Mindful Moment" of intentional movement, breathing, and listening. These videos were developed upon the recommendation of STAC members, who sought tools for increasing well-being and focus in students given the stresses of distance learning.
 - View [Mindful Moment: Storm](#).
 - View [Mindful Moment: Rainbow](#).
- Language Arts and Visual Arts lesson plans to complement each video and which teachers can adapt and integrate into their curricula as needed. These materials emphasize the key values of Noah's Ark—welcoming the stranger, taking care of the world and one another, and learning how to serve the community—and center the lived experiences and unique stories of students.
 - Download [Noah's Ark curriculum FREE lesson plans](#).
- Virtual field trips, during which Noah's Ark educators join classrooms via Zoom to lead participatory storytelling, engage students in close-looking exercises, and guide creative-writing and art-making activities. Available to Pre-K through Grade 5 classes, subject to availability.
 - Register for [Noah's Ark Flood Stories](#).
 - Register for [Noah's Ark from Head to Tale](#).
- A lineup of virtual teacher training workshops, to be led by Noah's Ark educators and specialists in the field. The first of these—Teaching Through Storytelling: Storytelling and Movement in the Virtual Classroom—will be offered twice: on Tuesday, February 9, at 4:00–5:00 pm (PT) and Tuesday, February 16, at 4:00–5:00 pm (PT). During each FREE Zoom session, Pre-K through Grade 12 teachers will connect with their peers, receive a toolkit of lesson plans, and learn modalities to boost students' self-esteem, sense of community, and problem-solving skills. It will be taught by Charlotte Perebinosoff, an arts-integration coach and teaching artist with a specialty in dance and visual arts. Additional workshops to be announced.
 - Register for [Teaching Through Storytelling: Storytelling and Movement in the Virtual Classroom](#).

About Noah's Ark at the Skirball

Hailed by the *New York Times* as “Extraordinary... A celebration of play, inspiring fascination, reviving wonder,” Noah's Ark at the Skirball is the institution's signature destination for children and families. Occupying an 8,000-foot gallery, it features a floor-to-ceiling wooden ark and more than 300 fancifully designed, life-sized animal puppets and sculptures—all handcrafted from recycled materials and everyday objects, including bottle caps, bicycle parts, baseball mitts, mop heads, and sofa springs.

Aboard the Ark, visitors of all generations are immersed in the ancient flood tale, which has parallels in hundreds of cultures around the world. Children and grown-ups alike can “conduct” a storm, construct the Ark, load up animals two by two, climb the rafters, and imagine cooking meals for the journey, cleaning up the vessel, or engaging in a range of imaginative play. Central to the Noah's Ark experience are impromptu happenings, surprise interactions, and drop-in activities, such as drum circles, sing-alongs, story time, art making, and dance jams.

Designed by Olson Kundig Architects, with contributions by Brooklyn-based artist and puppeteer Chris Green, the Noah's Ark galleries and related programming have earned awards from the American Alliance of Museums, the California Association of Museums, the Themed Entertainment Association, and the American Institute of Architects. To date Noah's Ark has welcomed more than one million visitors of all ages.

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The school programs of the Skirball Cultural Center are generously funded by Roslyn and Abner Goldstine, along with many other philanthropic supporters.

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For the complete list of donors, visit skirball.org/education.

About the Skirball

The Skirball Cultural Center is a place of meeting guided by the Jewish tradition of welcoming the stranger and inspired by the American democratic ideals of freedom and equality. We welcome people of all communities and generations to participate in cultural experiences that celebrate discovery and hope, foster human connections, and call upon us to help build a more just society.

Visiting the Skirball

The Skirball Cultural Center is located at 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90049. As of January 26, 2021, it remains temporarily closed in support of efforts to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and in accordance with California's closure of indoor museum operations.