

# *Mechanics Hall*

*Worcester County Mechanics Association*

## **PRESS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release

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### **“Many Voices: Mechanics Hall Youth Singers” performs spring concert on Sunday, April 2**

*Non-audition youth chorus is open to all Worcester 5th and 6th graders*

Worcester, MA — March 22, 2023 — “Cover Me in Sunshine,” featuring songs of hope, resiliency, and optimism, is the theme for the Many Voices: Mechanics Hall Youth Singers spring concert—the group’s second performance since it was formed last fall. Held on Sunday, April 2, at 4:00 p.m. at Mechanics Hall, 321 Main Street in Worcester, the concert is free and open to the public. Doors open at 3:30 p.m. Many Voices, made up of 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students from throughout Worcester, is directed by Reagan G. Paras, Director of Music Education & Choral Activities for Anna Maria College and Associate Professor at Berklee College of Music. More information about the concert and Many Voices can be found at [mechanicshall.org](http://mechanicshall.org).

As this event coincides with International Children’s Book Day, attendees are encouraged to bring in a new book for children in grades Pre-K to 8, as part of the [Worcester Reads](http://Worcester Reads) Children’s Book Drive. All donated books will be given to Worcester Public School students prior to summer school vacation to promote early reading and literacy.

“Last fall’s debut of Many Voices was one of the most moving events we have had at Mechanics Hall. To see and hear so many of our city’s youth on the Great Hall stage using their voices to celebrate their community was tremendously uplifting,” said Kathleen Gagne, Executive Director of Mechanics Hall. “We are very excited to present the chorus’ second concert and hope to have a full house to hear their special musical performance.”



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The accessible entrance to Mechanics Hall is located on Waldo Street. Elevators are available in the ground-floor Waldo lobby and provide access to the second and third floors. There is no elevator access to the balcony. The concert will take place in the Great Hall on the third level. Those who need assistance can contact the Mechanics Hall Ticket Office, Monday through Friday from 9:30am to 4:30pm, by calling 508-752-5608.

Many Voices is a Mechanics Hall initiative offering Worcester youth a non-audition, no-cost choral opportunity. Fifth and sixth grade students from across the city—representing its rich cultural and ethnic fabric—develop new skills and gain performance experience in one of the nation's finest and most beloved concert halls. With a festival-style format, the chorus have three intensive rehearsals prior to the public performance. Rehearsals are held at the Worcester Area Mission Society (WAMS), 6 Institute Road in Worcester, with transportation provided for chorus members.

## **About Many Voices: Mechanics Hall Youth Singers**

Many Voices is the anchor youth program at Mechanics Hall, a recognition that Worcester's children are the heart and soul of our richly multicultural city. The program goal is to present music from around the world—contemporary and classic—selected with the cultures and music of the chorus participants in mind.

Open to fifth and sixth graders from every Worcester neighborhood, this non-audition, free chorus gives children of all backgrounds the opportunity to perform at Mechanics Hall—their own "home" concert hall. Under professional direction, children will learn to sing a variety of music, build friendships, and work toward excellence—together and in harmony. There is no cost to participate in the chorus. Any fifth or sixth grader living in Worcester or attending school in Worcester is encouraged to participate. Contact Mechanics Hall at 508-752-5608 to learn more.

The artistic director for Many Voices is Reagan G. Paras, who serves as the Director of Music Education & Choral Activities for Anna Maria College and as part-time Associate Professor at Berklee College of Music. Paras is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in Music Education at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. He currently conducts the Nashua Choral Society and is a guest conductor for music festivals across the United States.



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Managing director for the chorus is Christon Carney, who serves as education and outreach coordinator for Mechanis Hall. A native of Nashville, TN, Carney received his M.Mus. in Vocal Performance from the New England Conservatory, and his B.Mus. in Music Education from Lipscomb University. He debuted as Giuseppe in Nashville Opera's production of La Traviata, and performs with the Boston Lyric Opera. He has been a concert soloist with the Rhode Island Civic Chorale and Orchestra, Nashville Symphony, the Heimermann Chorale, and has extensive choral experience.

## **About Mechanics Hall**

Built in 1857 by WCMA, Mechanics Hall is internationally regarded as one of the world's great concert halls for its superb acoustics and 19<sup>th</sup>-century elegance. Regionally, it is widely considered to be Worcester's finest meeting place. The world's most renowned orchestras and performers—from the London Philharmonic to Yo-Yo Ma and Ella Fitzgerald to Linda Rondstat—have taken the Hall's stage. Among the many luminaries who have spoken at Mechanics Hall are Charles Dickens, Susan B. Anthony, Frederick Douglass, and Mark Twain. In addition to serving as a premiere venue and recording site, Mechanics Hall offers inspiring cultural experiences for diverse audiences through a variety of creative initiatives—including free concerts, community events, a youth chorus, and collaborative programs with local colleges and non-profit organizations.

A non-profit organization, Mechanics Hall is owned and operated by the Worcester County Mechanics Association (est. 1842). It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Learn more at [mechanicshall.org](http://mechanicshall.org).

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