

## **Mechanics Hall**

321 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01608

### **PRESS RELEASE**

#### **For Immediate Release**

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*“Christmas at Mechanics Hall” to highlight a variety of holiday music and performers  
Free noontime concert takes place on Wednesday, December 14*

November 22, 2022 (Worcester, MA) Mechanics Hall, known for its tradition of free lunch time concerts, invites the community to celebrate the holiday season with a special program of Christmas sounds from around the world and across centuries. “Christmas at Mechanics Hall,” organized by the Hall’s Composer-in-Residence Leonardo Ciampa, takes place on Wednesday, December 14, from noon to 1:00 p.m. and is free and open to the public. Cabaret-style seating in the Great Hall is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Attendees are invited to bring their own “brown bag” lunch. Limited concessions will be available for purchase.

This festive musical program will feature a variety of Christmas tunes—from African American spirituals to traditional carols—as well as a selection of new holiday pieces composed just for this concert by Mr. Ciampa. Performers include the a cappella Westborough High School Chamber Singers, directed by Alyson Greer Espinosa; the acclaimed, Boston-based vocal group Ensemble Lyrae; soloists Elizabeth Keusch, soprano; Michelle Deluise, mezzo-soprano; Christon Carney, tenor; and Eliomar Nascimento, bass; and Mr. Ciampa on the Hall's Worcester "Hook" Organ. At the end of the program, the audience will be invited to join the performers in an informal carol sing-a-long.

“We are delighted to partner with the Worcester chapter of the American Guild of Organists to offer this free Christmas concert as a thank you to our community for supporting Mechanics Hall and music in Worcester,” said Kathleen Gagne, Executive Director of Mechanics Hall. “There is much we are grateful for as we successfully end this year—and much we look forward to in the new year to come.”

Mechanics Hall is located at 321 Main Street, Worcester. The accessible entrance is located on Waldo Street. Elevators are located in the ground-floor lobby and provide access to the second and third floors. There is no elevator access to the balcony. 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.

This free noontime concert is presented by Mechanics Hall and the Worcester chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

### **About the Westborough High School Chamber Singers**

The 22 member Westborough High School Chamber Singers is a select co-curricular ensemble for mixed voices in grades 9 - 12. Membership is determined by a selective audition process. The Chamber Singers are passionate about the art of choral singing and are dedicated to expanding their study of repertoire that is exciting, challenging, meaningful, and diverse. Repertoire includes styles from the modern era, popular, classical, baroque, renaissance, and world-music traditions. The students enjoy sharing the passion for choral singing with the community of Westborough and beyond.

### **About Alyson Greer Espinosa, Music Educator and Choral Conductor**

Alyson Greer Espinosa is the director of choral music at Westborough High School, where she conducts three academic choral ensembles: Soprano Alto Chorale, Concert Choir, and Mixed Chorus; a co-curricular advanced ensemble, Chamber Singers; and four contemporary a cappella ensembles. In addition, Ms. Greer serves as a member of the education faculty of Boston's Handel and Haydn (H+H) Society, where she conducts the Chorus of Sopranos & Altos (CSA) and the Chamber Choir. Ms. Greer's 12-year tenure with the H+H Society has included preparing the CSA and the Chamber Choir for performances with English conductor Harry Christophers, and the H+H Chorus and Orchestra for numerous performances, including Bach's St. Matthew's Passion, Handel's Messiah and Saul, Vivaldi's Gloria, Mozart's Requiem, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9. In addition, Ms. Greer has collaborated with many esteemed choral ensembles throughout the Boston area, and as an active choral clinician, has conducted several high school and district choruses and choirs in Massachusetts. Ms. Greer holds a Bachelor of Music degree (magna cum laude) in Vocal Performance and a Master of Music Education degree, both from The Boston Conservatory.

### **About the soloists**

#### **Elizabeth Keusch, soprano**

Elizabeth Keusch has sung internationally and nationally as soprano soloist, including performances at Boston's Symphony Hall, Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, and Walt Disney Concert Hall. She has performed with groups such as the Boston Philharmonic, the National Symphony Orchestra, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society. She has worked extensively with Helmut Rilling at the Oregon Bach Festival and Internationale Bach Akademie Stuttgart. In addition, Ms. Keusch has been featured in performances and recordings of composers Tan Dun, Helmut Lachenmann, Robert Cogan and Shirish Korde. She holds a Master of Music degree and Artist Diploma in Voice Performance from the New England Conservatory of Music and received her Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance and Music Education from the University

of North Texas. Ms. Keusch serves as conductor and alto soloist at Temple Beth Elohim in Wellesley, cantor at St. Leonard Catholic Church in Boston, and minister of music/organist at St. Francis Episcopal Church in Holden.

**Michelle Deluise, mezzo-soprano**

Praised for her rich tone, Tennessee native Michelle Deluise made her musical theater debut portraying Alice/ Mrs. Winthrop in *The Secret Garden* with The Longwood Players. She has portrayed the roles of Maurya in *Riders to the Sea*, Suzy in *La Rondine*, Sally in *Die Fledermaus*, Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and The Sorceress in *Dido and Aeneas*. Deluise has performed with the Boston Opera Collaborative, MetroWest Opera, Tanglewood Festival Chorus, American Classics, Boston Russian Choir, MetroWest Choral Artists (MWCA). In addition, she has performed on Longy's SeptemberFest Series as well as with The Old West Organ Society's Summer Series. Deluise holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Dayton, as well as a Master of Music degree in Voice Performance and a Graduate Performance Diploma in Opera Performance with Distinction from Longy School of Music. She has served as director of music and cantor at St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church in Cambridge, MA since 2009.

**Christon Carney, tenor**

Christon Carney, a native of Nashville, Tennessee, debuted as Giuseppe in Nashville Opera's production of Giuseppe Verdi's "La Traviata," and has been a concert soloist with the Rhode Island Civic Chorale and Orchestra, Nashville Symphony, the Heimermann Chorale. The Worcester-based tenor also performs with the Boston Lyric Opera. Carney's honors include the prestigious Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) Diploma in Voice, and finalist in the Alltech Vocal Scholarship Competition. A compelling recitalist with extensive choral experience, Mr. Carney's performances include the Music at Trinity Music School and Mechanics Hall's Concerts Plus series, and he has sung as lead tenor at many religious organizations, including Worcester's All Saints Church. He is currently education and outreach coordinator at Mechanics Hall and a vocal instructor at the Pakachoag Music School of Greater Worcester. Mr. Carney received a Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance from the New England Conservatory, and a Bachelor of Music degree in Music Education from Lipscomb University.

**Eliomar Nascimento, baritone**

Eliomar Nascimento began his career studying piano in his native Brazil and later changed his focus to opera. Fluent in English, Portuguese, Spanish, and Italian, Mr. Nascimento has performed as Figaro in Mozart's "Le Nozze di Figaro," Don Alfonso in Mozart's "Così fan tutte," and Don Basilio in Rossini's "Barber of Seville." He has also appeared in "La Traviata," "Lo Schiavo," "I Pagliacci," "Elektra," "Salome," "La Clemenza di Tito," "Magic Flute," "Bluebeard's Castle" and many other operas with companies such as Opera Aperta, Real Time Opera, Connecticut Lyric Opera, and Boston Lyric Opera. Mr. Nascimento brings this musical experience to his role as a faculty member for the Young Artists Vocal Program at the Boston

University Tanglewood Institute in Lenox, MA. In addition, he teaches voice and piano at Performing Arts Center of MetroWest (PAC) and is music director for PAC summer musical theater workshops. Mr. Nascimento earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Piano Performance from the Brazilian Conservatory of Music, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Voice and Opera from Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, and a Master of Fine Arts degree in Vocal Performance and Certificate Diploma from the Opera Institute at Boston University.

### **About Ensemble Lyrae**

Inspired by the natural beauty and brilliance of the constellation Lyra, Boston-based Ensemble Lyrae brings together four uniquely and highly talented musicians. While each shines as a soloist, together these women form deep connections in performing duets and trios. The pianist and four vocalists of Ensemble Lyrae seek to illuminate musical works often unknown or underplayed. They also premiere cutting-edge pieces written specifically for the Ensemble and their remarkable sound.

### **About Leonardo Ciampa**

Boston native Leonardo Ciampa has established an international reputation as a composer, organist, and pianist. As an organ recitalist, Mr. Ciampa has made a dozen European tours encompassing Italy, Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. He is particularly admired in Italy, where he has played in numerous international festivals, including Festival Perosiano, Festival Biellese, Organi Storici della Valsesia, Le Voci della Città, Festival Organistico Lauretano, Organi Vespera, Reate Festival, and more. He has given organ recitals at cathedrals in Vienna, New York City, Boston, Lucca, Altenberg, Brandenburg, Tortona, and Biella; at basilicas in Rome, Turin, Loreto, Tortona, Gubbio, Absam, and Rieti; and at abbeys in Dürnstein and Camaiore.

Since 2019 Mr. Ciampa has served as director of music at Emanuel Lutheran Church in Worcester, MA and since 2015 as *maestro di cappella onorario* (honorary choir director) of the Basilica in Gubbio, Italy. In August 2021, he was appointed Mechanics Hall's first composer-in-residence and is founder and chair of The Friends of the Worcester Organ.

### **About Mechanics Hall**

Built in 1857 by the Worcester County Mechanics Association, 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. Among the world's most renowned orchestras and performers have taken the Hall's stage, from the London Philharmonic to Yo-Yo Ma, Ella Fitzgerald to Linda Rondstat. Among the many luminaries who have spoken at Mechanics Hall are Charles Dickens, Susan B. Anthony, Theodore Roosevelt, and Bill Clinton. 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, 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).