

# *Mechanics Hall*

*Where Community and Culture Meet*

## **PRESS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release

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### **“Many Voices: Mechanics Hall Youth Singers” performs fall concert on Sunday, October 22**

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

Worcester, MA — October 5, 2023 — “Legacy,” the fall concert of Many Voices: Mechanics Hall Youth Singers will take place **Sunday, October 22 at 3:00 p.m.** at the Hall. Performed by 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students from throughout Worcester, the concert is free and open to the public. Rooted in themes of persistence, inner strength, and personal empowerment, music selections will include *Hall of Fame; True Colors; Shine Like Stars*; and the world premiere of the chorus’s new anthem, *Many Voices, One Song*. A non-audition chorus with a festival-style format, Many Voices is directed by Reagan G. Paras, associate professor at Berklee College of Music. More information about the fall concert and Many Voices can be found at [mechanicshall.org](http://mechanicshall.org).

“Our concert theme of “Legacy” champions each Many Voices singer as they overcome every possible obstacle. It recognizes their capacity to change the world for the very best,” said Mr. Paras. “Performing inspiring music together for their families and community, each child will realize their ability to create a legacy built upon strong morals, hard work, and love for one another.”

“Many Voices, which brings together youth from across the city and inspires them and their audiences through the power of song, perfectly embodies the mission of Mechanics Hall to enrich the cultural, social and economic vitality of our community.” said Kathleen Gagne, Executive Director of Mechanics Hall. “We couldn’t be more thrilled to have Many Voices return to the Great Hall stage this fall.”



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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 Worcester’s 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 singers 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.

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.

## **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, 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 manager for Mechanics 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 extensive choral experience and has been a concert soloist with the Rhode Island Civic Chorale and Orchestra, Nashville Symphony, Heimermann Chorale, and Massachusetts Symphony Orchestra.

## **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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