

PRESS RELEASE

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L O S A N G E L E S

MASTER CHORALE

**Fifth Graders to Perform Songs They Wrote About
Heroes as Part of the Voices Within Program
April 25 & 26**



Hooper Avenue Elementary School
Wednesday, April 25, 9:30 AM & 10:45 AM
1225 E 52nd St, Los Angeles

Sheridan Street Elementary School
Thursday, April 26, 9:00 AM & 10:15 AM
416 Cornwell St, Los Angeles



(Los Angeles) April 16, 2018 – At a recent Los Angeles Master Chorale event, a technician asked the group’s Director of the Marketing if the Master Chorale was the same organization that went into schools and taught kids how to write and sing songs. When it was affirmed that it was, he exclaimed: “I was one of those kids!” His fond memory of the Voices Within program 12 years after he participated illustrates the lasting impact the program has had on thousands of students since it was launched in 2001. This year’s spring series of Voices Within concerts will take place at **Hooper Avenue Elementary** in South Los Angeles on **Wednesday, April 25** and at **Sheridan Street Elementary** in Boyle Heights on **Thursday, April 26**, creating new memories for this season’s 110 participants.

The concerts are the culmination of the 12-week Voices Within program that brings three teaching artists—a composer, a lyricist, and a performer—into the schools to introduce the students to music ideas such as pitch, rhythm, and melody, and teaches them how to apply these concepts to songwriting. The students perform their songs for fellow students, teachers, and friends and family. Each school will give two performances. It is the first time that Hooper Avenue Elementary has taken part in the Voices Within program.

A theme for the songs is provided and the students work in groups to write the lyrics and melodies for six songs. Students at Hooper Avenue Elementary wrote songs about “Teenage Heroes,” learning about young people who have made an impact with an idea they have had, or product they have developed, to help other people in the world. The songs created are:

- **Strength, Force, and Power** about Dylan Mahalingam (15) whose foundation encourages others to raise money to help survivors of tsunamis.
- **Puedo Salvar El Mundo** about Cassandra Lin (14) who created a program to turn ordinary cooking oil grease into biofuel.
- **The World Is My Family** about Maren Johnson (17) who created a program that recycles used hotel soap to send to needy countries.
- **Free the Bees** about Mikaila Ulmer (13) who works to raise awareness about bees.



- **Language of Picture** about Alex Urbach (16) a young videographer who created cartoons to teach the illiterate.
- **The Eye of the Storm** about Salvador Gomez Colon (15) who raised money for solar lamps and supplies following Puerto Rico's Hurricane Maria.

The teaching artists working with the Hooper Avenue students are lyricist Doug Cooney, performer Alice Kirwan Murray, and composer Saunder Choi.

“American Heroes” provided the inspiration for the Sheridan Street Elementary students whose songs are:

- **Bridge to Freedom** about congressman John Lewis who led historic civil rights marches to Washington, D.C. in the early 1960s and across The Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama in 1965.
- **Soon We Will Have Justice** about suffragette Alice Paul who fought for women's right to vote in the U.S.
- **Separate Is Never Equal** about Mexican and Puerto Rican activist Sylvia Mendez whose family fought for the desegregation of Californian schools.
- **Number Forty-Two** about Jackie Robinson, the first African American Major League baseball player.
- **Big Helpful Hospital** about nurse and activist Lillian D. Wald, founder of the Visiting Nurse Service, the Henry Street Settlement (still active in New York today), and the Women's Trade Union league.
- **Eagle in the Sky** about César Chávez, the Latin American activist who co-founded the National Farm Workers' Association and fought for the rights of farm laborers and migrant workers.

Teaching artists working with the Sheridan Street students are performer Amy Fogerson, composer David O, and lyricist Brett Paesel.



The students will be joined by eight members of the Los Angeles Master Chorale who sing with them at the culmination performances, providing the students with the exciting opportunity to hear their songs sung by professional singers.

The Los Angeles Master Chorale partners with elementary schools for Voices Within residencies twice a year with concerts in the Fall and Spring. Additionally, Voices Within includes an Oratorio Project that engages high school students to compose a full-length oratorio and then perform it. The Los Angeles Master Chorale's community engagement also includes an annual High School Choir Festival that brings about 1,000 students from around the Southland to sing at Walt Disney Concert Hall. The 2018 Festival will be held on Friday, May 18.

Voices Within was developed for the Los Angeles Master Chorale by Marnie Mosiman in collaboration with Bernardo Solano, Penka Kouneva, David O, and Doug Cooney. The first residency was held in 2001 and the program has subsequently been awarded Chorus America's Education Outreach Award. Voices Within is made possible by generous grants from:

- American Business Bank
- Ann Peppers Foundation
- The ASCAP Foundation Irving Caesar Fund
- California Arts Council
- City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs
- Employees Community Fund of Boeing California
- The Thornton S. Glide Jr. and Katrina D. Glide Foundation
- The Green Foundation
- William H. Hannon Foundation
- Thelma Pearl Howard Foundation
- The Rose Hills Foundation
- Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors / Kathryn Barger
- Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors / Mark Ridley-Thomas
- Lon V. Smith Foundation
- Sidney Stern Memorial Trust
- John and Beverly Stauffer Foundation
- Dwight Stuart Youth Fund



Walter J. and Holly O. Thomson Foundation

CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT:

Voices Within concerts performed by fifth grade students featuring members of the Los Angeles Master Chorale.

Open to the public & free to attend. (Street parking only.)

WHEN & WHERE:

Wednesday, April 25, 9:30 AM & 10:45 AM

Hooper Avenue Elementary School, 1225 E 52nd St, Los Angeles

Thursday, April 26, 9:00 AM & 10:15 AM

Sheridan Street Elementary School, 1833, 416 Cornwell St, Los Angeles

[VIEW VOICES WITHIN VIDEO \(FALL 2017\)](#)

[VIEW VIDEO OF TEACHING ARTISTS TALKING ABOUT VOICES WITHIN](#)

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Members of the press are welcome to attend, photograph, and film the Voices Within performances. Please rsvp to jscott@lamasterchorale.org.

Pictured: Students from Carlos Santana Arts Academy performing a Voices Within concert in 2016.

