



Press Contact: Alan Casso 617-972-8300 ext. 22; [acasso@revels.org](mailto:acasso@revels.org); [JPEGs Available](#)

Revels Rep in collaboration with arsenalARTS presents “There’s a Meeting Here Tonight!” the story of New England’s Hutchinson Family Singers, March 7, 2010 at the Arsenal Center for the Arts in Watertown, MA

**The Hutchinson Family Singers** are coming to town by way of a special performance by Revels’ acclaimed touring ensemble, **Revels Repertory Company**. Among the many traveling troupes of family singers during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, none was as well known as the Hutchinson Family Singers. They sang in theaters, churches, schools - even on the street. Programs featured songs about important issues of the day such as Emancipation, Women’s Suffrage and Temperance by America’s earliest and best song writers as well as Hutchinson family members.

“**There’s a Meeting Here Tonight!**” is a staged, costumed recreation of a Hutchinson Family reunion after the Civil War where family members have gathered at their home in Milford, NH to celebrate their travels and experiences. **P.T. Barnum**, the great showman who always wanted to present the Hutchinson Family is invited as a guest and finally gets his chance. Barnum, played by Revels veteran, **Walter Locke**, brings “**The Phenomenon**” with him from the American Museum in New York, an amazing one man band and juggler. “The Phenomenon” is played by **Len Solomon** who built the fascinating instruments he plays in the show.

The original quartet consisted of four of the thirteen children of Mary and Jesse Hutchinson, all self-trained musicians. Abby joined her brothers John, Judson and Asa on the road when she was only twelve years old. Some of the family members moved to Lynn, Massachusetts in 1841 and set up a store right down the street from **Frederick Douglass**, a recently freed slave who became one of the leading voices in the Abolitionist movement and who inspired the Hutchinsons to join him in that cause. Douglass is also invited to the reunion where he recreates one of his famous anti-slavery speeches (originally given at Boston’s Tremont Temple), sings spirituals and camp meeting songs and teaches singing games to the children. Douglass is played by **Milton Wright**, director of *Black Nativity* and a member of the New England Spiritual Ensemble.

**The pianist for “There’s a Meeting” is Jacqueline Schwab**, who has been heard in many of the Ken Burns public television documentaries including *The Civil War*. She is joined by other band members including flute, fiddle, banjo, and guitar.

**The performance time is 4:00pm on Sunday, March 7, 2010. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$12 for children 11 and under.** Seating is General Admission. **Order Tickets Online at [www.revels.org](http://www.revels.org) or call 617-972-8300 ext. 22. Group Discounts Available** for groups of 10 or more. Please call for details.

**The Arsenal Center for the Arts** is located at 321 Arsenal Street in Watertown, MA. Directions at [www.arsenalarts.org](http://www.arsenalarts.org)

For more information on this special family performance please visit [www.revels.org](http://www.revels.org)

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*Revels Repertory Company* is the touring ensemble of Revels, Inc. which presents *The Christmas Revels* at Sanders Theatre in Cambridge, MA each December and in nine other cities across the country. Founded by Kay Dunlap in 1997, *Revels Rep* was created to expand Revels' reach beyond the Boston area and has performed for museums, community concert series, festivals, coffee houses, libraries and schools throughout New England. Members include 40 adults and children who are chosen by audition and represent 20 communities in the greater Boston area.