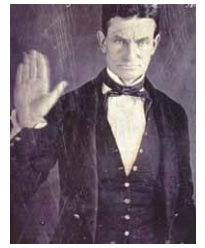




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NEWS RELEASE

John Brown: The Connecticut (and Norfolk) Roots of an American Legend

When & Where: Wednesday July 7th at 7:30pm, Battell Recital Hall, Yale School of Music's Chamber Music Festival, Ellen Battell Stoeckel Estate, Norfolk, CT – rtes 44 & 272

Contact: William Hosley, 860-944-8349 or wnhosley@snet.net or

What: A spoken-word performance developed for the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War - *John Brown: The Connecticut Roots of an American Legend*, explores why America never forgets John Brown, whose activism blazed a trail on America's journey of freedom.

With roots in Norfolk and born in Torrington, John Brown was raised in Connecticut's Western Reserve (Ohio). He was the quintessential, puritanical, entrepreneurial, evangelist, a Connecticut type familiar (and in some places reviled) in early America. The Raid on Harpers Ferry was *the* news story of the decade and one of the most divisive and influential events in American history. It paved the way for Lincoln and made the Civil War inevitable.

This illustrated program provides a fresh, **visually-rich** interpretation of an epic American story told by Connecticut's master storyteller and public humanities scholar, William Hosley. Taking special note of its Connecticut connections, Hosley explores the roots of Brown's vision and madness, chronicling his influence and influences and unraveling a complex web of local connections that made Brown's story possible and kept it alive for a century and a half since his death.

Part history, part travelogue, the program features an abundant array of art and artifacts from public collections in Connecticut and from the Adirondacks to Kansas. Audiences will learn the events in Brown's life leading up to Harper's Ferry and discover how **African-Americans**, who regarded Brown as a **hero** and the first white American to walk the talk of racial equality and social justice, kept this story alive. In the South, he was regarded as a **blood-thirsty war monger**. Former neighbors and associates in Ohio, Connecticut, New York and Massachusetts typically "praised the man, but not the deed." He was the most **divisive** figure of the age.

About the Speaker:

William Hosley, Principal of Terra Firma Northeast, is a cultural resource consultant, planner, teacher, writer, and photographer. He was the former Director of the New Haven Museum and Connecticut Landmarks. Prior to that, as a curator and exhibition developer at Wadsworth Atheneum, Bill organized major exhibitions including *The Great River: Art & Society of the Connecticut Valley* (1985), *The Japan Idea: Art and Life in Victorian America* (1990), and *Sam & Elizabeth: Legend and Legacy of Colt's Empire* (1996). Bill has studied hundreds of museums and heritage destinations around the country, has performed nationwide, has written five books and dozens of articles and served as a content specialist for PBS, BBC and CPTV film documentaries.

Sample Illustrations:

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