



Dawn Tyler Watson performs at John Brown Day 2018.

John Brown Lives! uses the history of freedom and human rights in the Adirondacks as a prism to inform and inspire civic action, addressing some of the most pressing issues of our time.

The legacy of civil rights in the Adirondacks runs deep: When John Brown lived here, he helped administer Gerrit Smith's "scheme of justice and benevolence" to give land to free blacks so they could move from cities, begin lives as farmers and vote. This region was also an important route on the Underground Railroad, a last leg before fugitive slaves could reach Québec and Ontario, Canada.

Today, [John Brown Lives!](#) continues that legacy in several ways: We host discussions and lectures, sponsor cultural events and serve as the official Friends Group of the John Brown Farm State Historic Site.

- **Start difficult conversations.** How can we reverse the damage done by mass incarceration, even though many of our communities have benefited, economically, from regressive policies? What can we do to ensure our own Adirondack communities welcome all comers? Through programs such as [Friends in the Adirondacks](#), John Brown Lives! provides an open forum and safe space to examine topics like these—thorny topics that we frequently rush past.
- **Recover the past.** Not all histories are told equally. Or, sometimes, at all. Our [Dreaming of Timbuctoo](#) exhibit is one way that we're recovering often-overlooked or forgotten chapters from our past.
- **Unite through culture.** We use literature, cinema and music to inspire and uplift. Our annual Blues at Timbuctoo concert, held at the Upper Barn at the John Brown Farm, brings together leading blues artists each fall.
- **Build to the future.** Our [Harriet Was Here](#) project works in schools from Maryland to Canada to teach children of Harriet Tubman's heroic work in their own communities—not only making history come alive, but laying the groundwork for them to understand the difference a single person can make.