

PRESS RELEASE

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Central District Forum for Arts & Ideas Presents

***American Heritage Series:
Patriot or Terrorist? Exploring the Legacy of Nat Turner
and John Brown***

Co-Sponsored by the [Walter Chapin Simpson Center for the Humanities](#) and the [Comparative History of Ideas Program at UW](#)

Seattle, WA – The Central District Forum for Arts & Ideas presents ***American Heritage Series: Patriot or Terrorist? Exploring the Legacy of Nat Turner and John Brown*** on Thursday, December 7, 2006 at 7pm at Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center, 104 17th Ave. S (Near Yesler) Seattle, WA.

Is armed resistance ever ok? What is armed resistance? Is it simply a case of violence begets violence, or is it a viable option in the face of state sponsored violence? The answers to these questions will influence how we see the legacy of slave rebellions and what the terms “terrorist” and “patriot” mean in a post 9/11 world. In this context, the CD Forum will explore the legacy of Nat Turner and John Brown in the first of two ***American Heritage Series*** events this season.

The ***American Heritage Series*** is an ongoing series of lectures and discussions that offer new perspectives on the role of African-Americans in American history. In 1831 Nat Turner led a slave rebellion in Southampton County Virginia. Years later in 1859, John Brown, a white abolitionist, led a raid at Harpers Ferry Virginia. These events led to varied reactions and contributed to some seeing Turner and Brown as terrorists or patriots.

Questions about Turner and Brown’s methods persist but have become more poignant in recent years. Today, the terms “terrorist” and “patriot” are used frequently and seem to have many meanings. Each can be loaded with implications and/or contradictions, depending on who is using them. What is the legacy of Turner and Brown today, given more recent events? Has their legacy been impacted since 9/11? What is the difference in their legacy?

Join moderator Dr. Midori Takagi and panelists Dr. Stephanie Camp, Dr. Nikhil Singh, Jonathan Lawson, and Erwin Thomas as we discuss these questions and explore new notions of Nat Turner and John Brown. (Full Bios Below)

Ticket prices are \$7 for adults, \$5 for CD Forum members/students/seniors. Order tickets online at <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/5546> or call 1-800-838-3006

The [Central District Forum for Arts & Ideas](#) is a 501 (C) (3) non-profit organization that advocates and promotes greater awareness of African-Americans in the arts, humanities and public affairs. We offer a glimpse into the lives and accomplishments of African-Americans contributing to the vibrancy of contemporary American thought and culture.

For more information, contact Denee McCloud at 206-323-4032 or via email at info@cdforum.org

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Special thanks to the [Mayflower Park Hotel](#), the preferred hotel of the CD Forum.

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Bios

Moderator

Midori Takagi is a historian of African American and Asian American history. She teaches at Fairhaven College, Western Washington University in Bellingham. She teaches classes on the African American experience from the 17th century to the 21st century. Her book is called, [Rearing Wolves to Our Own Destruction: Slavery in Richmond, Virginia, 1782-1865](#) published by University Press of Virginia and is part of the Carter G. Woodson series. She holds degrees from Oberlin College, American University, and Columbia University.

Panelist

Stephanie Camp is a historian of African American culture and of slavery in the U.S. South. She teaches in the Department of History at the University of Washington about slavery and black Americans from the growth of the African slave trade in the early sixteenth century through the end of the 19th century. Her first book, *Closer to Freedom: Enslaved Women's Everyday Resistance in the Plantation South, 1830-1865*, was published in 2004. *Closer to Freedom* was featured on the "Tavis Smiley Show" on NPR and won the 2005 Lillian Smith book prize for New Voices in Non-Fiction in 2005. She's earned a B.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Pennsylvania in 1990 and 1998, and an M.A. in African American Studies from Yale University in 1992.

Jonathan Lawson is the currently the Executive Director of Reclaim the Media and has helped RTM play a catalytic role in the growth of a national movement focused on democratizing media policy. Jonathan also sits on the advisory board for the Consumers Union's [Hear Us Now](#) project, and is a board member of the [Washington News Council](#). He is a four-year veteran of the Independent Media Center movement, and has worked in community radio since 1986; he currently co-hosts the weekly creative music program Flotation Device on [KBCS](#) in Seattle. His articles on media issues have appeared in numerous publications including *Adbusters*, *YES!*, *Clamor*, and *Z Magazine*. Jonathan holds a Masters degree in Theological Studies from Harvard University.

Nikhil Pal Singh is Associate Professor of History at the University of Washington. He is the author of numerous essays, and the awarding winning *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (Harvard University Press: 2004). He is currently at work on two new book projects. *When this Time is Named: Jack O'Dell and the Black Freedom Movement* is a collection of writings by and about the legendary civil rights activist Jack O'Dell. *The Afterlife of Fascism*, a collection of Singh's new and previously published essays, considers the problem of fascism in American political culture since WWII.

Erwin Thomas is an Actor, poet and educator. He Received an MFA in Acting from UW. His work has concentrated on engaging the imagination of audiences and students. Erwin explores cultural issues of memory, identity, history, conflict and dialogue within everyday people as a fabric for building strong community. Focusing on the transformative arts (theater and poetry) as a tool to politically educate and organize people throughout the Afrikan diasporic world towards self-determination. Writer and performer of 'Quiet Violence of Dreams'; a dramatic piece that explores the legacy of Nat Turner. He has been blessed to express his talents throughout the world. He is a member of INPDUM - International Peoples Democratic Uhuru Movement. Erwin is based out Brooklyn, NY.