



Stories



The Price of Freedom:
Museum Collaborates
with Arts Collective
Theatre to Produce
an Original Play by
Carlos Anthony



With Over 30 Local
Events, Black History
Month 2025 Highlights
Black Legacy and
Leadership



Temporary Exhibit *The*
Never-Ending Quest for
***Inclusion* Features**
Work by The Artists of
Colour

About Us

The Amherstburg Freedom Museum is a curated archive that preserves and shares Amherstburg's stories of the Underground Railroad, and the compassion and solidarity it took to make this network possible.

277 King Street,
Amherstburg, ON N9V 2C7

Phone: 519-736-5433

Email:

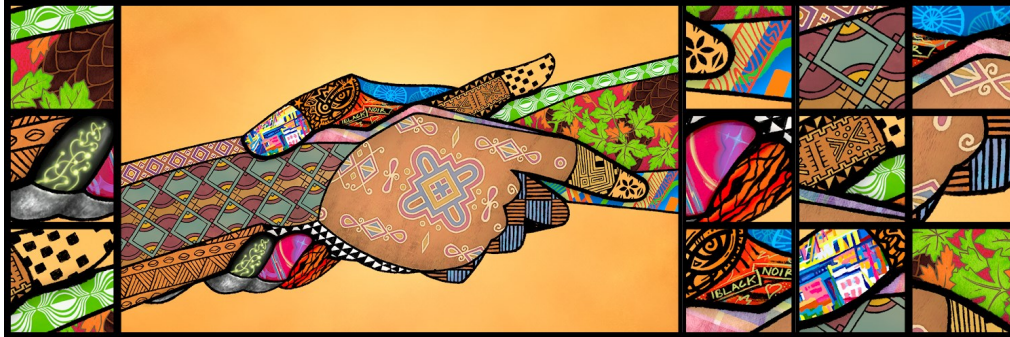
curator@amherstburgfreedom.org

www.amherstburgfreedom.org

February 2025



Happy Black History Month 2025! Focus on Black Legacy and Leadership: Celebrating Canadian History and Uplifting Future Generations.



The 2025 theme for Black History Month across Canada is “Black Legacy and Leadership: Celebrating Canadian History and Uplifting Future Generations.” This theme acknowledges the diversity of Black Canadians, the importance of Black leadership, and the legacy being built for future generations. Black communities are diverse at many levels. Those with a long history in this country have established a legacy for newer communities. The theme underscores that Black Canadians have a rightful place in the nation's narrative, with over 400 years of historical presence on these Indigenous lands, deserving acknowledgment and celebration. (Source: Government of Canada.)

2025 Subscription Renewals Are Now Due!

To renew your subscription or to make a donation, please call the Museum at 519-736-5433. Subscription dues and donations support exhibitions and the daily expenses of operating the Museum. Whether you visit once a month or a few times over the year, you enjoy the benefits of subscription and your support helps to ensure that this incredible Museum will remain a vital source of history, culture and inspiration for generations to come.

The Talking Drum

The Talking Drum is published monthly by the Amherstburg Freedom Museum. Contributions, story ideas, suggestions, and feedback are always welcome. Please contact Mary-Katherine Whelan at curator@amherstburgfreedom.org

277 King Street,
Amherstburg, ON N9V 2C7
519-736-5433 or
800-713-6336 toll free

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Aanand Arya
Bilal Khan



Thank you, Charitable Gaming Windsor & Paradise Gaming Centre!

The Amherstburg Freedom Museum would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to both **Charitable Gaming Windsor** and **Paradise Gaming Centre** for their continued support. Through the years, they have helped us keep the Museum open and running, and allowed for us to continue to offer programming that shares

the significant history of Freedom Seekers and Black settlers in this region. Thank you! For more information about how Charitable Gaming supports non-profits and local communities across Ontario, please go to <https://charitablegaming.ca/>



Windsor Symphony Orchestra Celebrates Black Composers at the Amherstburg Freedom Museum

wso Windsor Symphony Orchestra
Robert Franz, Music Director

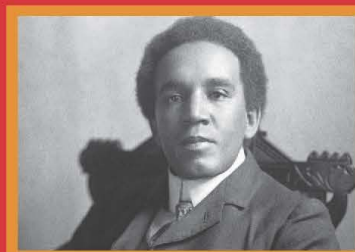
CELEBRATING BLACK COMPOSERS

FEB.
14
7:00PM

Music from Adolphus Hailstork &
Samuel Coleridge-Taylor

Amherstburg Freedom Museum (277 King Street, Amherstburg)

The WSO celebrates Black composers, performing **Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's Four Novelettes**. He was a British composer of mixed-race heritage, a descendant of an African-American soldier. A late 19th Century Romantic powerhouse, Coleridge-Taylor wrote in the style of Dvorák. **Adolphus Hailstork's** work, **Sonata da Chiesa** (Church Sonata), represents his African, Native-American, and European roots. Conducted by Geoffrey Larson.



PROGRAM

ADOLPHUS HAILSTORK: Sonata da Chiesa

COLERIDGE-TAYLOR: Four Novelettes

TICKETS \$35 CONCERT SPONSOR: RICHARD AND COLLEEN PEDDIE
WINDSORSYMPHONY.COM

**BLACK
History
MONTH**



Don't Miss the World Premiere of the Original Play *The Price of Freedom*, February 28th-March 2nd!

The Price of Freedom is an original play written by Carlos Anthony, directed by Chris Rabideau, and a collaboration between the Amherstburg Freedom Museum and Arts Collective Theatre. Don't miss it! Coming to the Capitol Theatre Windsor. Get your tickets at actwindsor.com.

WORLD PREMIERE

ACT ARTS COLLECTIVE THEATRE
in collaboration with

AMHERSTBURG FREEDOM MUSEUM

PRESENTS
THE PRICE OF FREEDOM

ONE MAN'S COURAGE.
ONE NATION'S MOMENT OF TRUTH.

FEB 28 / MAR 1, 2025 @ 7:30 PM
MAR 2, 2025 @ 2:00 PM

THE CAPITOL THEATRE WINDSOR | 121 UNIVERSITY AVENUE W

\$28 ADULTS + BOX OFFICE FEES | **\$25** STUDENTS / SENIORS + BOX OFFICE FEES

In celebration of the Amherstburg Freedom Museum's 50th Anniversary
ACTWINDSOR.COM

An original play by Carlos Anthony
Directed by Chris Rabideau

THE CITY OF WINDSOR ONTARIO, CANADA
Supported by the Arts Culture and Heritage Fund



Black History Month 2025 Celebrated with Over Thirty Local Events



Once again the Amherstburg Freedom Museum and Essex County Black Historical Research Society have compiled a comprehensive Black History Month activity schedule. Find it at <https://amherstburgfreedom.org/bhm> (or look under Events on the museum site.) Hosting the calendar is a valuable service we provide annually, with many other organizations, individuals, media, elected officials, and even municipalities sharing the link with followers for easy access to the wide array of local Black History Month observances.

The 2025 Joint Windsor-Essex Annual Black History Month Kickoff took place on January 31st at the Caribbean Centre, once again as a collaboration between the Essex County Black Historical Research Society, the Amherstburg Freedom Museum, and the Windsor West Indian Association. Replete with music, poetry, and

history highlights, the standing-room-only event was a fitting start to a monthlong celebration that will see over thirty events taking place across Essex County throughout February... and thanks once again to sponsors and donors, the Kickoff was a free event.





African American historian Carter G. Woodson established Negro History Week in 1926. By the 1970s, it had evolved into Black History Month in both the U.S. and Canada. In December 1995, the House of Commons officially recognized February as Black History Month, following a motion introduced by the first Black Canadian woman elected to Parliament, the Honourable Jean Augustine. The motion was carried unanimously by the House.

Over thirty local events have been made available to the public in celebration of Black History Month 2025!

Celebrating the Arts and Black History in Partnership with the River Bookshop



On February 8th, the Museum and our partners at River Bookshop welcomed Craig Shreve, author of *The African Samurai*, for a reading and book signing in Nazrey A.M.E. Church.

Craig Shreve was born and raised in North Buxton, Ontario, and is a descendant of Abraham Doras Shadd, the first Black person in Canada to be elected to public office. His debut novel *One Night in Mississippi* (Dundurn, 2015) has been optioned for film by Birchall Entertainment, and *The African Samurai* (Simon & Schuster Canada, 2023) has been translated into twelve languages. It was named one of 2023's best novels by *The Miramichi Reader* and *Quill & Quire*. The critically acclaimed historical novel is based on the true story of Yasuke, the celebrated Black Samurai who lived a remarkable life in 16th century Japan.



On **February 16th at 2:00 p.m.**, the Museum and River Bookshop will host a **Storytime Circle at the Bookshop**, featuring students from the Black Joy Club at Amherstburg Public School. Four exemplary intermediate/senior students will read books to younger audience members, centering **local Black history**, and will share some local stories. The books being read live will include *Meet Mary Ann Shadd* and *All Aboard!: Elijah McCoy's Steam Engine*. Thanks to educator Raquel Hurst for coordinating the student readers! All kids accompanied by an adult are welcome to attend this free event.



Thanks as well to Richard and Colleen Peddie of River Bookshop who are the sponsors of the **Windsor Symphony Orchestra concert, Celebrating Black Composers**, which will be hosted in Nazrey A.M.E. Church on the Museum Complex on **Friday, February 14th at 7:00 p.m.** For tickets, visit windsorsymphony.com.



See The Artists of Colour Exhibit, *The Never-Ending Quest for Inclusion* at the Museum through March 2nd!

The Artists of Colour's The Never-Ending Quest for Inclusion

Exhibit, Hosted by the
Amherstburg Freedom Museum

277 King St, Amherstburg, ON

February 1st—March 2nd, 2025

Opening Reception Saturday February 8th, 2 pm—5pm

This special presentation is a fine arts-based exhibit displaying a combination of paintings, images, artifacts, and interactive informative panels. The exhibit tells a most compelling story of the strength, determination, and the resilience Black Canadians displayed in achieving success and leads visitors on their quest to learn about the Black Presence in Canadian history.

Museum Hours:

Thursday 12–5 p.m.

Friday 12–5 p.m.

Saturday 1–5 p.m.

Sunday 1–5 p.m.

Monday Closed

Tuesday 12–5 p.m.

Wednesday 12–5 p.m.

Adult Admission-\$7.50

Senior & Student Admission-\$6.50

Family of Five (5) - \$30

Please contact the museum at
1-800-713-6336 for group rates





The Artists of Colour Present *The Never-Ending Quest for Inclusion* at the Museum through March 2nd.

The Amherstburg Freedom Museum is pleased to host The Artists of Colour special exhibit *The Never-Ending Quest for Inclusion* through March 2nd. Our first and second floors have been transformed into a visually rich arts experience, presenting materials from the Museum's permanent collection alongside artists' interpretations of the people, places, and stories that make up Black history in Southwestern Ontario and beyond. This special presentation is a fine-arts based project displaying a combination of paintings, images, artifacts, and history information panels. QR codes are displayed on each information panel to help create a seamless way to engage further with the learning experience.




Formed in 2008, The Artists of Colour have formed a collective comprising artists whose mandate is to speak through the visual, written, and oral language of art.

An opening ceremony was held February 8th. Thanks to all who joined us!





Coming February 17th: Black History Month Trivia at Phog Heads, A Fun-Raiser for the Amherstburg Freedom Museum


AMHERSTBURG
FREEDOM MUSEUM
BLACK HISTORY
universal inspiration.


**The Amherstburg
Freedom Museum**

presents

**Black
History
Month
Trivia!**

**MONDAY, FEB. 17TH, 2025
7:00-8:30 PM**

PHOG HEADS
157 UNIVERSITY AVE. W.
WINDSOR



\$20 PER PERSON

HOSTED BY TEAJAI TRAVIS



Organize into a team of
2-4, join a team at the
scene, or play solo.
Compete for prizes!
Advance registration
encouraged.
bit.ly/3CBpAYn

Join us at Phog Heads for Black History Month Trivia, February 17th, 7:00-8:30 p.m., emceed by TeaJai Travis... a fun-raiser for the Amherstburg Freedom Museum! You may organize into teams of 2-4, join a team with new friends, or play solo. Celebrate Black History Month, test your knowledge of Black history and culture, and compete for prizes. \$20 per person. Space is limited! Advance registration is encouraged or pay cash at the door (provided there's room!) To sign up in advance: bit.ly/3CBpAYn



The Price of Freedom: Don't Miss the World Premiere **February 28th at Windsor's Capitol Theatre**



When Carlos Anthony learned about the story of freedom seeker John Anderson during a visit to the Amherstburg Freedom Museum, he was instantly intrigued.

"John Anderson's story captivated me from the start," says the author, filmmaker, and playwright. "I had never heard of an enslaved person who not only escaped but also got away with murder, changed laws, and altered relationships between Canada and the United States. That combination of defiance, survival, and systemic impact immediately felt like a story that could inspire others—especially Black youth.

"As I delved deeper, I began viewing the Underground Railroad through a new lens, almost like a spy war story rather than just a series of traumatic events. This perspective felt fresh and transformative. If stories like these were told this way when I was younger, I think I would have been far more

engaged with Black history. It felt like my duty as a storyteller to reshape the narrative and spark a similar excitement in others."

Born enslaved in Missouri, John Anderson killed a man in self-defence along his Underground Railroad journey to Canada in 1853. Years later, his dramatic extradition case was a source of controversy for many members of the Canadian public as well as cause for concern for freedom seekers who had valid reasons to fear a dangerous new legal precedent that could threaten their own liberty.

The original play *The Price of Freedom*, a collaboration between the Amherstburg Freedom Museum and Arts Collective Theatre, will debut at Windsor's Capitol Theatre at the end of February 2025. Written by seasoned author but first-time playwright Carlos Anthony, and directed by ACT's Chris Rabideau, the play is one of the highlights in the Amherstburg Freedom Museum's fiftieth anniversary schedule of activities. A performance for local school groups has already sold out, but members of the general public still have an opportunity to pick up tickets to the February 28th, March 1st, and March 2nd performances.

The journey to this production began when Amherstburg Freedom Museum Vice President Barbara Porter connected with Arts Collective Theatre board members Shelly Davis, Chris Rabideau, and Moya McAlister to find out whether ACT would be interested in collaborating on a short play at the museum.

"It was an idea that I had that was going to be on a smaller scale," Porter explains. "I imagined a show in Nazrey A.M.E.





Church. Actors dressed as freedom seekers would burst into the back, saying ‘Are we here? Are we here in Freedom Land?’ Then they would make their way to the stage and talk about their experiences and their struggles. But Chris imagined something on a bigger scale.”

“When we were first approached about collaborating on this project with the museum, I don’t think we even thought about it,” says Moya McAlister, Vice President of Arts Collective Theatre. “We immediately said ‘Yes! That’s perfect!’ Our social justice shows have always been partnerships with an organization in our community, so this original work that we’ve been doing as the first show of the year has always been a collaboration with a local organization.”

Artistic Director Chris Rabideau adds, “Barb Porter reached out to us through a board member, Shelly Davis, and wanted us to do something in collaboration or at least to speak to the 50th anniversary of the museum. I said ‘Barb, if I’m going to put that time into doing it then we’re going to do it right.’ So we turned this into our project that we do yearly, a show with a message. This was a year ago. And what a compliment to have chosen ACT. It fits who we are and it’s perfect.” The show also features an original score by acclaimed composer Ian Smith. “It will be an event!” says Rabideau.

For Carlos Anthony, the most important goal is to raise awareness of John Anderson and his story. “John is a brave man who takes his fate into his own hands,” says Anthony. “He’s not waiting for a saviour—he’s doing whatever it takes to survive. I relate deeply to that instinct. I became a father as a teenager and was homeless at 18, so I know what it’s like to navigate a world that sees you one way while you feel something entirely different inside.

“John is a hero and an inspiration,” he adds. “His story of sacrifice and perseverance resonates far beyond his time, and I hope it will inspire Black youth to see themselves as capable of overcoming immense obstacles. At his core, John is a man trying to survive in a system that is designed to oppress him. That struggle is not so different from the challenges we face in today’s capitalist system, where the disparity between the 1% and the 99% mirrors many of the inequities of John’s time.”

“This is what we do,” says Barbara Porter. “We educate and we preserve information from the past. We are Underground Railroad descendants and it’s the mandate of the museum to teach the public about the realities of slavery and the struggles generations of Blacks have gone through. And we hope that teachers will teach students about this case, about John Anderson, before and after the play. It’s such an important story for everyone to know.”

“With the premiere just weeks away, I’m feeling a mix of excitement and disbelief,” says Anthony. “It’s surreal to think that my first-ever play will be performed in front of thousands of people.... It’s been a blessing to learn, develop, and contribute to telling this important story, and I couldn’t be more honored to be part of such a meaningful milestone for the museum.”

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\$28 ADULTS + BOX OFFICE FEES | \$25 STUDENTS / SENIORS + BOX OFFICE FEES

In celebration of the Amherstburg Freedom Museum's 50th Anniversary
ACTWINDSOR.COM

An original play by Carlos Anthony
Directed by Chris Rabideau

WINDSOR
Supported by the Arts Culture and Heritage Fund




Happening February 20th: A Tasty Way for Amherstburg Residents to Support the Museum at Naples Pizza

The Amherstburg Freedom Museum has teamed Up with Naples Pizza - Amherstburg


PIZZA DAY

FEBRUARY 20TH

Buy any *Large*, *Queen*, or *King* size pizza and Naples Pizza - Amherstburg will donate \$5 per pizza to the Amherstburg Freedom Museum to support their operations and programs.



AMHERSTBURG
FREEDOM MUSEUM



Naples
PIZZA

110 Richmond Street
Amherstburg
519-736-2193

Thanks to our friends at Naples Pizza (110 Richmond Street, Amherstburg) for offering another pizza fundraiser for the Amherstburg Freedom Museum. On February 20th, buy any large, queen, or king size pizza at the Amherstburg location and \$5 per pizza will be donated to the Museum. Naples Pizza (Amherstburg) previously hosted a fundraiser for the Museum in December 2024: thanks to all Amherstburg residents who participated!



Heading to the Beer Store? Donate cash or empties to the Amherstburg Freedom Museum through March 2nd.

Sincere thanks to The Beer Store for supporting the Amherstburg Freedom Museum and Black Mental Health Canada through March 2nd. When visiting any Beer Store location in Ontario this Black History Month, you are welcome to donate cash or your empties! We appreciate the contributions to help us share Black history for universal inspiration.

Donate Today

Donate cash or your empties from
February 3rd - March 2nd to support

Black Mental Health Canada

Amherstburg Freedom Museum





Save the Date! The Nathaniel Dett Chorale is coming May 3, 2025 as part of the Museum's 50th anniversary celebrations.



The Amherstburg
Freedom Museum
presents

The Nathaniel Dett Chorale

A concert in celebration of the
museum's 50th anniversary

YOUR PARAGRAPH TEXT

SAVE
THE
DATE

**SATURDAY,
MAY 3, 2025
7:30 PM**

All Saints' Anglican Church
330 City Hall Square West,
Windsor

Tickets on sale soon!
Come and hear Canada's
premier professional choral
group dedicated to Afrocentric
music of all styles, including
classical, spiritual, gospel, jazz,
folk and blues.





Subscribe Today!



AMHERSTBURG
FREEDOM MUSEUM
Black History - universal inspiration

Give a Gift, and Preserve History!

Donate to help us to preserve, protect, and display historic treasures. Every gift is tax-deductible in Canada or the United States.

General subscriber benefits include:

Unlimited 1 year free admissions, Invitation to preview exhibition openings, 10% off all items in museum store and name listed in monthly newsletter (with permission), introduction to genealogy research library.

\$20 Seniors (age 65+)

\$25 Students (age 5-22)

\$35 Adults (age 23-64)

\$120 Family (family of 5)

\$100 to \$499 SUPPORTER

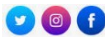
All the above plus a beautiful Certificate of subscription, suitable for framing, that recognizes your participation as a Member.

\$500 to \$999 CONTRIBUTOR

All the above plus an invitation to one special event, one exhibition opening or subscriber-only event.

\$10,000+ Legacy

All the above plus recognition on Museum's Donor Wall. Plus two tickets to all events and recognition on our social media pages.



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Thank you for your support!



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