



For Immediate Release
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Open For Interpretation: Call For Teaching Artists

Historic Brownington Village, Vermont—The Old Stone House Museum & Historic Village is issuing a call to all teaching artists in the areas of music, theatre and visual arts for *Open For Interpretation*. This public arts project will engage community members and animate the museum's Alexander Twilight Educational Trail, a new one-mile outdoor walking trail named for the 19th century African American educator, Alexander Lucius Twilight, who once lived and taught in the historic village that surrounds the museum.

The selection committee, which includes students from Brownington Central School, will select four artists or groups of artists to receive a \$1,250 stipend plus accommodation and travel to become acquainted with the museum and conduct a one day artist-in-residency for local elementary school students in Fall 2021. These four artists or groups of artists will then receive an additional stipend of \$7,500-to-\$10,000 to create and implement an original project by the end of June 2022. Technical assistance for the competition is provided by Catamount Arts.

“We invite all interested teaching artists to apply,” Molly Veysey, Old Stone House Museum & Historic Village Executive Director, said. “We’re excited to have this funding to award with the involvement of our community, including students from Brownington Central School. This effort to animate our new trail will make it an even more vibrant resource.”

Projects may include visual art in all mediums, as well as original written works or musical compositions. The committee will not only consider proposals for such traditional public art projects such as outdoor murals and sculpture but also for environmentally friendly work, creative interpretive signs, art benches, bike racks, light/sound installations and original plays or musical compositions written for onsite performance. Works inspired by the history and culture of the Old Stone House Museum & Historic Village, particularly the life and legacy of Alexander Lucius Twilight, are particularly encouraged.

The deadline for all submissions is September 15. Funding was made possible by a grant from the Northeastern Vermont Development Association, Northern Forest Center and Northern Border Regional Commission's Northern Forest Destination Development Initiative.



For details and a full prospectus, please visit:

<https://www.oldstonehousemuseum.org/open-for-interpretation-competition-call-for-teaching-artists/>

Interested artists may apply at:

<https://catamountarts.slideroom.com/#/login/program/61147>

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About Alexander Lucius Twilight

Born on September 23, 1795 Alexander Lucius Twilight graduated from Middlebury College in 1823, becoming the first African American graduate of any United States college or university. In 1829 he was hired to be principal of the Orleans County Grammar School and was minister to the Brownington Congregational Church. In 1836 he was elected to the Vermont House of Representatives, becoming the first African American to serve in a state legislature. Under his leadership, the Orleans County Grammar School thrived as a co-educational institution attracting both boys and girls from throughout New England who came from as far away as Boston and Montreal. Between 1834 and 1836 Mr. Twilight designed and built a four story granite dormitory, which he called Athenian Hall.

Mr. Twilight's father Ichabod was born in Boston in July 1765. Both he and Mr. Twilight's mother Mary were free and mixed race, most likely of African slaves and English colonists. Ichabod served in the Revolutionary War in a New Hampshire regiment and later moved with his family to Vermont where he and his wife were listed as "the first negroes to settle in Corinth" where they bought property, moving from Bradford on November 28, 1798.

Typical for children of his class, Alexander began working for a neighboring farmer when he was only eight. Reading and studying mathematics while performing farm labor, he was able to enroll in the Randolph Orange County Grammar School in 1815 at the age of 20. He enrolled in Middlebury College in 1821, graduating as the first known African American to receive a degree from any institution of higher learning in America in 1823.

In 1826, Mr. Twilight married Mercy Ladd Merrill from Unity, New Hampshire and taught in both New York and Vermont before assuming his position as principal at the Orleans County Grammar School. In addition to acting as minister for the Brownington Congregational Church, he led worship services and delivered sermons in numerous other churches. In 1847, he relocated to Quebec where he taught briefly. However, without his leadership the Orleans County Grammar School experienced declining enrollment. He was persuaded to return to Brownington where he resumed duties as both teacher and pastor. In 1855 Mr.



Twilight suffered a stroke and retired. He died on June 19, 1857 and is buried along with his wife Mercy in the Brownington Congregational Church Cemetery.

About the Old Stone House Museum & Historic Village

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the Old Stone House Museum & Historic Village was established by the Orleans County Historical Society and has been operating as a museum since 1926. It has now grown from one building to become an impressive historic site with seven restored buildings and three neighboring structures, all dating from the early 1800s. Dedicated to its mission to preserve, educate and inspire, the museum annually attracts nearly 10,000 visitors from across the country and abroad.

Education has long been a cornerstone of activity in Brownington, Vermont. The former granite dormitory is not the only historic building at the museum to tell the story of progressive education and diversity. Alexander Lucius Twilight's 1830 Federal style home houses his books and letters, along with letters from his students, in an archival vault. Further up the hill an 1831 Federal-style Hall House stands as a testament to Samuel Reed Hall, a recognized pioneer in progressive education. Hall founded America's first teacher training college in 1823 in Concord, Vermont, invented the chalkboard, and published the first teacher-training textbook in 1829.

Through unique educational programs that use select items from its permanent collection as teaching tools, the Old Stone House Museum & Historic Village embraces hands-on, experiential learning as a way of connecting individuals to a way of life that still has much to teach us. Notable past activities have included a barn raising with area vocational students and a tree trimming and replanting project that was incorporated into the 3rd grade science curriculum at the Brownington Elementary School. A thriving adult education program teaches such traditional crafts as blacksmithing, rug hooking, stone wall building, and tree pruning. Spring and Fall Field Days for area schools, as well as its summer "Time Travelers Day Camp" emphasizes hands-on craft activities, theatre, and the scientific exploration of the garden and grounds.

The Old Stone House Museum & Historic Village is located in the Brownington Historic District just off Hinman Settler's Road in Vermont's scenic Northeast Kingdom. The museum is open Mid-May to Mid-October 11:00-4:00 PM on Wednesdays through Sundays. For more information, call (802)754-2022 or visit www.OldStoneHouseMuseum.org.