



press release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**A TRUMPET AT THE WALLS OF JERICHO: THE UNTOLD STORY
OF SAMUEL HARRISON AIRS ON PBS 45 & 49 IN FEBRUARY**

*Film features narration by Ossie Davis and highlights the life of a
19th-century visionary*

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KENT, Ohio — FEB. 18, 2005 — A new documentary partially filmed at Western Reserve Academy in Hudson, Ohio, airs on Monday, Feb. 28 at 9 p.m. on PBS 45 & 49. **A Trumpet at the Walls of Jericho: The Untold Story of Samuel Harrison** is the story of a 19th-century visionary who fought prejudice, slavery and war. Ossie Davis, who died Feb. 4, is one of the film's narrators, along with Mario Van Peebles, Wynton Marsalis and Keith David. Aurora resident Mike Kirk produced, wrote and directed the film.

The film chronicles the life of freed slave Samuel Harrison, who was a giant of his time in the civil rights and anti-slavery movement. Harrison studied at Western Reserve Academy, an unusual feat for an African-American citizen during this period in American history. A primary reason for Harrison's acceptance at the Academy was the fact that it and Hudson were strong abolitionist communities that supported equal rights for African-Americans. In addition, the community of Hudson was a major stop on the Underground Railroad.

In the documentary, viewers not only have the chance to see a program about an extraordinary man but also visit the communities in which he lived. The Western Reserve Academy campus served as one of the locations for the film, and some of its faculty and students participate as extras. Other towns featured in the film are Pittsfield, Mass., Philadelphia, Pa. and Portland, Maine.

Samuel Harrison's life spanned 1818-1900, a time during which issues of equality experienced great upheaval, challenges and change. An educated man who studied Greek, Latin, philosophy and theology, Harrison became a prominent minister and ardent advocate of civil rights. He crossed paths with many of the great figures of the century including John Brown, Frederick Douglas, Mark Hopkins and Herman Melville.

Harrison left an impressive record of years of dedicated service, and his spirit and achievements were singular to his time. His eloquent voice provides an insight into the thoughts and aspirations of African-Americans during a critical era of American history.

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

WESTERN RESERVE ACADEMY — Founded in 1826 and located in historic Hudson, Ohio, Western Reserve Academy is a private, mid-sized coeducational boarding and day school for grades 9-12.~The school's 400 students, drawn from 25 states and 19 countries, choose Reserve for its fine academic, art and athletic programs, and for the commitment to a set of fundamental values: excellence, integrity, compassion. Western Reserve Academy's Hudson, Ohio, campus is well-situated on 200 acres between the cities of Cleveland and Akron and its institutional roots are firmly planted in the tradition of the great New England boarding schools'— an intimate community of the finest teachers and students engaged in education of the highest caliber. For complete information visit the school's Web site, www.wra.net, or call 800-784-3776.

SPRING HILL FARM STUDIOS — Spring Hill Farm Studios, a television and film production company, specializes in both short- and long-form documentary work. The studios are situated 45 miles from the city of Cleveland. The editing suite is a 205-year-old building that was originally used as a land office selling parcels of land to the many brave pioneers who made the Western Reserve their home.

The production staff has accumulated over 18 Emmy Awards nationally and locally over the past decade. Mike Kirk, the company's founder, is co-creator and producer of the PBS series **Odysseys & Ovations: Travel and the Arts**, an international travel and arts series currently airing nationally. He has also produced, directed and worked on national and international television shows over the past decade, including A&E's **Biography**, **American Justice**, **Unexplained**; The History Channel's **History's Mysteries**, **The Wrath of God** and one of the first reality-based shows to air on any NBC affiliate, **Roommates**. Mike has also written and directed three short films, one of which, **Moving Day** (1998), featured cast members of **Saturday Night Live**. These shorts have been screened at over 30 film festivals worldwide. **Tomorrow**, shot on location in Chicago, won Grand Finalist at the Long Island Film Festival in 1997. Contact www.farmspun.com or call (330) 562-8864.

PBS 45 & 49 — Owned and operated by Northeastern Educational Television of Ohio, Inc., PBS 45 & 49 is a private, nonprofit corporation. A trusted community resource, PBS 45 & 49 uses the power of non-commercial television and related services to enrich the lives of people through high-quality programming and educational services that teach, illuminate and inspire. Call (330) 677-4549 or visit our Web site at www.pbs4549.org.

PHOTO CAPTION

The late actor Ossie Davis (left) was one of the narrators for **A Trumpet at the Walls of Jericho: The Untold Story of Samuel Harrison**, which airs on Monday, Feb. 28 at 9 p.m. on PBS 45 & 49. Pictured with Davis is Aurora resident Mike Kirk, who produced, wrote and directed the film. The program airs