

BIO: MIKE WILEY

Mike Wiley Productions

“A marvel to watch...” Robert McDowell, Triangle Theatre Reviews

“More than mere versatility... It’s virtuosity.” American Theatre Magazine

Mike Wiley is the NC-based playwright, actor and director whose distinctive original works in documentary theatre, film, educational residencies and performances for student audiences have been acclaimed across America and abroad.

His dramas relay the stories of fugitive slaves, civil rights game-changers, sports heroes and freedom fighters. Dynamic multi-character portrayals offer penetrating views into parallel lives whose roles within African American history have shaped a richer total American experience. Wiley's remarkable one-man “cast” sometimes introduces dozens of characters during the course of a single play. Morphing from young to old, man to woman, African American to white, his gripping stories enlighten and inspire audiences of every age to apply history's lessons to events and situations of the present.

An MFA Graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill, Wiley's original theatrical repertoire includes *The Parchman Hour, Songs and Stories of the 1961 Freedom Riders*, premiered by Playmakers Repertory Company in Chapel Hill in 2011 and subsequently produced by Cape Fear Regional Theatre and others. *One Noble Journey: A Box Marked Freedom* relays the true story of Henry “Box” Brown, a slave who crated and mailed himself to freedom. *Dar He: The Story of Emmett Till chronicles the murder, trial and confession of the men accused of the Chicago youth's lynching in Mississippi in 1955. Blood Done Sign My Name* is Wiley's riveting dramatization of Tim Tyson's best-selling memoir of race and religion. Additional plays include *Jackie Robinson: A Game Apart*, about African American athletes who pushed the color barrier to its breaking point; *Tired Souls: The Montgomery Bus Boycott*, documenting men and women who stood up to Jim Crow segregation; *Life Is So Good*, about the amazing life of George Dawson who learned to read at the age of 98, and *Brown v. Board of Education: Over Fifty Years Later* on the high-impact ruling that desegregated schools.

Mike Wiley has been featured as News and Observer's “Tar Heel of the Week,” profiled in Our State magazine, spotlighted on UNC-TV's “North Carolina Now” and North Carolina Public Radio's “The State of Things” and was named the 2012 Indie Artist of the Year by the Independent Weekly.

In **DAR HE**, a gripping independent film adaptation of his play about Emmett Till, Wiley himself portrays more than 30 characters in a tour-de-force which has garnered major film and acting awards at numerous film festivals across North America, Europe and Australia, including “Best Actor” at the most recent Harlem International Film Festival.

Extended educational residencies have been funded through grant programs of the North Carolina Arts Council, and his plays have been selected for spotlight showcases at major industry conferences including Arts Northwest, Performing Arts Exchange, Arts Midwest and ArtsMarket. During 2014, Wiley completed a 20+-performance tour of *One Noble Journey* in Ontario, Canada.

Mike Wiley is the current 2014 Lehman Brady Visiting Joint Chair Professor in Documentary Studies and American Studies at Duke University’s Center for Documentary Studies and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Artist site: www.mikewileyproductions.com

Artist booking: www.goingbarefoot.com

Video compilation reel: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Op0_rWON4k

75-word bio thumbnail:

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