Mike Wiley Productions

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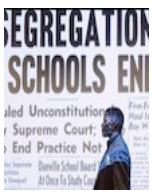
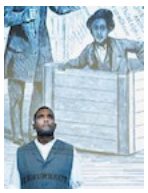
Live & Virtual Performances 2025





"I grew up in Raleigh, NC. When I was in elementary school, I came to see your show One Noble Journey about Henry "Box" Brown. Then in high school, you came to perform Dar He: The Story of Emmett Till for my high school. To this day I remember your performances so clearly. You drove me to want to know more, to be better. Your work literally changed my life. I'm a 2nd & 3rd grade teacher in Seattle who is working on a school equity team to fight for all students to feel welcome and safe to be their full selves at school. You are a change-maker and I wanted you to know that your impact spreads far and wide…" T. Pozzo, teacher, Seattle, WA

"This is more than mere versatility - it's virtuosity." American Theatre Magazine

"A depth and clarity as distinct as an entire cast of players could make them... so packed that we are rapt from the very first word." Classical Voice of NC

Most of the productions in the solo-actor theatrical touring catalog of Mike Wiley Productions' documentary dramas are available in **virtual format as well as on-site live performance** for presentation by educators and performing arts venues nationwide.

The impressive virtual catalog includes eight solo-actor productions that Mike has toured to great acclaim throughout North America. Each offering is complete with study guide and includes an option for an interactive Q&A with Mike Wiley following the streamed virtual performance. (The interactive talkback is always included with on-site live performances.)

On every stage or screen in whatever form, this remarkably gifted playwright/actor continues to peel away distrust and misinformation to dramatically and powerfully share true stories giving honor and tribute to heroic, iconic legends and change-making unsung heroes from the African-American history book of the United States of America.

the goingbarefoot collective www.goingbarefoot.com

Mike Wiley Productions

Solo Performance Repertoire; Live and Virtual Performances

- **JACKIE ROBINSON: A GAME APART**

Glimpse into baseball legend Jackie Robinson's life during a bygone era of separate and unequal locker rooms, whites-only hotels and restaurant back doors. Witness the hopeless humiliation of a star player showered with adulation on the field, but a second-hand citizen outside the stadium. Meet compatriots fighting the same battles between end zones, inside the ring, around the track. JACKIE ROBINSON: A GAME APART is a powerful lesson of courage through dedication, perseverance and leadership. (student version recommended for gr. 3+)

- **TIRED SOULS: THE MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT**

Montgomery, AL, Dec. 1, 1955: Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat to a white man on a city bus. This action inspires the black citizens of Montgomery to abandon all travel on city buses until they are no longer forced to sit in the back or stand when a white person boards. There were more who came before, brave visionaries who laid the groundwork for this pivotal moment. TIRED SOULS introduces audiences to heroes and heroines Jo Ann Robinson, Claudette Colvin and others instrumental in the Civil Rights Movement, changing the course of U.S. history. (student version recommended for gr. 3+)

- **ONE NOBLE JOURNEY: A BOX MARKED FREEDOM**

A true story of three slaves who overcome seemingly insurmountable odds to gain a life of freedom. Wiley becomes Henry "Box" Brown a black slave who sees no alternative but to mail himself to freedom in a small crate. Brown's life unfolds like a Mark Twain adventure, perilous and somber at times while humorous and heroic throughout. Audience members join Wiley on stage, quickly becoming characters helping propel the historic action. (student version recommended for gr. 3

- **BREACH OF PEACE: STORIES OF THE FREEDOM RIDERS OF 1961**

On May 24, 1961, 19-year-old Jean Thompson boarded a Trailways bus in Montgomery, Alabama with 11 other young Freedom Riders bound for New Orleans – and history. Within three months, approximately 300 other riders took up the mantle to desegregate buses, following the path of the first brave few. Mobs bloodily assaulted many. Others were arrested. Wiley's drama BREACH OF PEACE is based on true accounts of surviving participants of the Freedom Rides and others involved in the early struggle for African-American equality. This solo-play is a living monument to those remarkable young men and women of various races, religions and backgrounds who rose to face the dangers of fighting for just and equal treatment for all. (student version recommended for gr. 5+)

- **THE FIRE OF FREEDOM**

Abraham H. Galloway (1837-1870) was a fiery young slave rebel, radical abolitionist, and Union spy who rose out of bondage to become one of the most significant and stirring black leaders in the South during the Civil War. Risking his life behind enemy lines, he recruited black soldiers for the North, and fought racism in the Union army's ranks. He also stood at the forefront of an African American political movement and led a historic delegation of black southerners to the White House to meet with President Lincoln to demand the full rights of citizenship. He later became one of the first black men elected to the North Carolina legislature. Long hidden from history, Galloway's story reveals a war unfamiliar to most of us. This riveting portrait, adapted by playwright Howard Craft, illuminates Galloway's life and deepens our insight into the Civil War and Reconstruction as experienced by African Americans in the South. (student version recommended for gr. 5+)

- **DAR HE: THE STORY OF EMMETT TILL**

In 1955, a 14-year-old black Chicago youth traveled to the Mississippi Delta with country kinfolk and southern cooking on his mind. He walked off the train and stepped into a world he could never understand -- a world of thick color lines, of hard-held class systems and unspeakable taboos. Young Emmett crossed that line and met his gruesome fate by whistling at a white woman. This riveting play chronicles the murder, trial and unbelievable confession of the men accused of Emmett Till's lynching. (student version recommended for gr. 7+)

- **BLOOD DONE SIGN MY NAME**

In the spring of 1970, Henry "Dickie" Marrow, a 23- year-old U.S. Army veteran whose wife was pregnant with their third daughter, was beaten and shot to death by three white men who were later acquitted of the crime by an all-white jury, despite testimony by two black eyewitnesses. Roger Oakley, the stepson, actually confessed to shooting the gun. This hot-headed hate crime launched the small town of Oxford, NC into a season of violent reprisals. Based on Tim Tyson's award-winning memoir, Wiley's compelling dramatization of the true-life account of this 1970 racial murder feels frighteningly familiar, and all too current. Features special guest gospel musical artist in full-length version. (student version recommended for gr. 7+)

- **BROWN VS. BOARD OF EDUCATION: OVER SIXTY YEARS LATER**
  (available for streaming only; not currently in live touring repertoire)

In 1952, the Supreme Court heard a number of school-segregation cases, including Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas. It ruled unanimously in 1954 that segregation was unconstitutional, overthrowing Plessy vs. Ferguson (1896) that had set the "separate but equal" precedent. This play recounts the effects of the decision on the families who participated in the original court case, the impact of the ruling on school systems at the time and the challenges still being made today. (recommended for gr. 5+; streaming only)

- **And Mike Wiley's newest powerful solo-actor drama**

CHANGING SAME: THE COLD-BLOODED MURDER OF BOOKER T. SPICELY
(available in live performance only; not offered in streaming format)

Pvt. Booker T. Spicely, an active-duty U.S. Army soldier stationed at Camp Butner who was visiting Durham, NC on a weekend's leave, was shot to death by a city bus driver on Club Blvd. in Durham, NC on July 8, 1944. The Blackstone, VA native who later moved to and enlisted in Philadelphia, PA, boarded the Durham bus and took his seat on the next-to-last row. The driver ordered him to move to the row behind. Pvt. Spicely initially protested but eventually relocated to the last row of the bus. When he got off at the bus stop, driver Herman Lee Council exited the bus and fatally shot Spicely twice. Military police brought Spicely to Watts Hospital, where he was refused treatment because of his race. Duke Hospital agreed to administer treatment, but Spicely died at Duke from his wounds. Council was charged with first-degree murder but was permitted to continue driving his bus until trial, under $2,500 bail paid by Duke Power Company who owned the bus system. At trial, Council was acquitted by an all-white jury after only 28 minutes' deliberation. He kept his bus-driving job. (Written by Mike Wiley and Howard Craft; Directed by Joseph Megel; recommended for gr. 7+; 70-min. running time)

"Wiley repeatedly turned on a dime, theatrically shape-shifting among a throng of 25 characters… Given his protean abilities as an actor and an uncanny mimic, I wrote years ago that Wiley's solo shows usually had a longer and more convincing cast of characters than most large-ensemble productions in the region. Here, under Joseph Megel's trademark discerning direction, Wiley plays Pvt. Spicely plus 24 other characters (count 'em!) who speak to us over 80 years, through this 70-minute production – as ever, without a major costume or makeup change. When the heat from an unstable and certainly unrepentant racist radiates off stage from the same human form that, moments later, portrays his victim – a friendly, confident, young Black soldier on leave, flirting with a woman on a bus – a sharp, unlikely meditation on the inseparability and interdependence of all life blossoms…" Byron Woods, Cultural Voice of North Carolina.

Running times for virtual film adaptations and on-site live performances:
JACKIE ROBINSON: A GAME APART - Virtual film 31 minutes; live 45-55 min.)
FIRE OF FREEDOM: 46 minutes. (live 50-60 min.)
BLOOD DONE SIGN MY NAME: 84 minutes (live 90-95 min.) (offers condensed & full version)
ONE NOBLE JOURNEY: 47 min. (live 50-70 min.) (offers condensed & full version)
DAR HE - THE STOR OF EMMETT TILL: 74 min. (live 75-85 min.) (offers condensed & full version)
BREACH OF PEACE – STORIES OF THE FREEDOM RIDERS OF 1961: 45 min.; live 50-70 minutes)
TIRED SOULS – THE MONTGOMERY BUS BOYCOTT: 35 min. (live 45-55 min.)
BROWN vs BOARD OF EDUCATION: 35 min. (not currently offered in touring repertoire)
CHANGING SAME – THE COLD-BLOODED MURDER OF BOOKER T. SPICELY (70 min., live only)

About the pre-packaged virtual options from Mike Wiley

The catalog of actor/playwright Mike Wiley's solo-actor dramas include eight performances captured in multi-camera shoots, hosted by The Clayton Center near Raleigh as the production stage for the complete series, with all post-production and editing completed in direct collaboration with Mike Wiley. Presenters may contract for their choice of virtual performances in single or multiple-show schedules, to be presented to a school's specific designated/restricted audience or online classroom, or a presenting venue's virtual ticketed audience. Each title offers an opportunity for the presenter to add a post-show interactive audience talkback with Mike Wiley. Talkbacks can be scheduled at the conclusion of the play as Mike would do in live performance - or at a subsequent pre-scheduled time and date, allowing for educators' further classroom discussion and curation of questions and topics the students would like to pose to Mike Wiley in the interactive Q&A.

All professionally produced virtual/filmed versions are contracted via goingbarefoot in a similar process as one would contract for Mike's live performances. Presenting organizations will be provided a custom link to the specified presentation, with the link active for the contracted period. For educational and not-for-profit organizations, we work directly from a published fixed fee chart for virtual content, as we have for all of Mike Wiley's live performances for more than a dozen years. You will find Mike's published fee chart (live/virtual) his Presenter Toolkit at goingbarefoot.com at this link: http://www.goingbarefoot.com/toolkit_wiley.php

*Streamed-event performance contracts include an Intellectual Property rider addressing issues of content prerogative & ownership and clearly defining the buyer's rights and restrictions for how any virtual event may be shared, used and distributed. Under no circumstance will a venue or presenter or school organization have unlimited use of any of the virtual catalog described. All contracts will be for specified times of streaming and for specific limited audience access to the product. (These are not to be considered broadly-shared Facebook Live-type offerings.)

Visit LIFT EVERY VOICE, a compilation of excerpts featuring each of Mike Wiley Productions' solo-actor touring repertoire: https://vimeo.com/670366964

From an 8th grade teacher in Wake County, NC, May 2021

"...My fellow teachers and I were able to show your virtual performance Dar He – The Story of Emmett Till to our 8th grade students a couple of weeks ago, and it was incredible.

Your performance has been on my mind ever since, and I've been meaning to let you know what a profound impact it had on the students (and teachers!) who watched it. **There's nothing we could have done in school to communicate this story and the surrounding, ongoing issues as effectively as you did. Thank you. I often wonder if any of my lessons will stay with students as they grow. Yours will.**

I have never seen a group of kids react to a school experience like these kids did. When the video was over, no one moved, or talked, or looked at each other. **It was total silence for at least 5 minutes. There were quiet tears. The kids were processing what they had seen and trying to decide how to move forward with it. There were no words to say.**

We had a chance to talk over Emmett Till's story and your performance after some time had passed. The play was so well-researched and thoughtfully-portrayed - from the different southern accents to the tie you wore that matched Emmett's.... **You have amazing talent, and you are using it to give voice to those who cannot. This story will live in the minds of our 67 students for years to come."**

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