

# MIKE WILEY

**Mike Wiley Productions** offers a compelling repertoire of original works in documentary theatre, plays that illuminate mile markers of our human culture's storyline and pay moving tribute to pivotal moments in African-American history. All theatrical productions are offered in a student-length adaptation (45-50 min.) with study guides, plus in full-length versions (75-80 min.) for general audiences. All performances include post-show audience talkback and Q&A with Mike Wiley.



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

*"It is to Wiley's great credit that he focuses his formidable talents on the story, allowing the audience to clearly understand each character's strengths and foibles. . . A tour-de-force, a riveting evening of theater, one of the year's ten best."*  
-- (Raleigh) News & Observer



*"I've heard about you like a storm on the horizon. My own kids, other children, teachers at area schools... and you definitely lived up to the hype."*  
-- Dr. C. Bagwell, Principal, Spartanburg, SC

*"In my thirty-one years in education, I cannot remember any performance that matches his wonderful blend of humor, history, reflection, student involvement and lasting impact. Mesmerizing. . . truly a gift. In a matter of minutes, he won undivided attention and taught more history than could be taught in a week. He is doing very important work."* -- Dr. B. Redmond, Supt., Newton Conover Schools, NC





### JACKIE ROBINSON: A GAME APART

Glimpse into the baseball legend's life during a bygone era of separate and unequal locker rooms, whites-only hotels and restaurant back doors. Witness the 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

Dec. 1, 1955 in Montgomery, AL: 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 fellow heroes and heroines including Jo Ann Robinson, Claudette Colvin and others instrumental in the Civil Rights Movement who changed the course of U.S. history. (student version recommended for gr. 3+)



### BROWN VS. BOARD OF EDUCATION: OVER SIXTY YEARS LATER

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. (student version recommended for gr. 5+)



### 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

On May 24, 1961, 19-year old Jean Thompson boarded a Trailways bus in Montgomery, AL 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 and demand 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 and one of the three accused confessing 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 the racial murder in BLOOD DONE SIGN MY NAME feels frighteningly familiar and all too current. (student version recommended for gr. 7+)



### Mike Wiley's call to action, education & the arts: "WE COULD BE HEROES"

A motivational commentary by actor/playwright Mike Wiley that speaks to his experiences and influences as a boy growing up in Virginia, a young man finding his inner voice, and his journey to becoming a professional touring artist in America. It is a statement of gratitude to those who incite greatness, and a call to action to those who aspire to . . . It is a personal sharing about a long-planted seed. Originally written for Arts North Carolina as a message to arts advocates and legislators, the speech has been presented as a commencement address, and at education and arts conferences. The address runs approx. 25 minutes in length, and may be followed by an audience Q&A if desired.