

Mass Transit Muse

a performance by Michael Molina



Mass Transit Muse is a multi-media, genre-blending performance told in rhymed and metered prose with hip hop and vocal songs, movement, and digital images. The story follows an attorney and professional storyteller who returns to post-Katrina New Orleans to oversee the demolition of his childhood home. Shaken by the loss of the last vestige of his childhood, he ventures on a bus ride through the city to reconnect to his roots. A series of humorous, heart-rending, and impactful interactions with bus riders set the stage for his healing through connection with others. *Mass Transit Muse* creator and performance lead **Michael Molina** is an accomplished actor, author, and multi-media performance artist who seasons the earthy experiences he brings from his native New Orleans with the worldly perspective he gained as a graduate of Yale Law School and as a national and international spoken-word performance artist.

Reviews online at www.mikemolina.org/press.



Performance and Popular Education to Encourage Community Connection

Mass Transit Muse has undergone several years of development, initially published as a read-aloud, spoken-word novel and expanded through a careful creative process to merge storytelling, video, music, movement, and performance art. *Muse* has played at Emory University's Breaking Ground Theatre Lab, Wonderroot Center for Arts and Social Change, Elevate Atlanta Arts Festival, Inman Park Festival, Art on the Beltline, Snake Nation Festival, and more prior to its world premiere at 7 Stages in May 2014.

Mass Transit Muse can be presented in the form of Performance Workshops designed for:

- Increasing cultural competency through performance-inspired dialogue
- Team building through group creative expression
- Developing mutual understanding, shared values, and team commitments through group storytelling

Mass Transit Muse is a creative solution for any diverse group working through difference to build mutual respect. *Muse* performance workshops **increase cultural competency** by using depictions of encounters on a city bus to inspire **open dialogue** and **shared learning** on challenging topics such as race, class, gender, sexuality, and community healing. Through dialogue and by encouraging workshop participants to share their own stories, the workshop leads to the creation of shared values and commitments to support continued progress on group goals. *Mass Transit Muse* is about humanity progressing together. The *Muse* performance workshop can help your team move forward.

Of the creation of *Mass Transit Muse*, Molina says, "Taking the best of the Socratic method of inquiry I encountered in law school and drawing from the tradition of communal performance and passing of knowledge that colored my youth in New Orleans, I've created *Mass Transit Muse* to perform human interaction in order to inform human understanding, challenge assumption to craft compassion, and uplift art to ground a creative vision for the future."

Reviews

“Michael is ingenious in his presentation of these stories. He demonstrated the breadth of this creativity when he adapted *Mass Transit Muse* to perform the play on a subway car, with the audience physically getting on and off as he brought this narrative to life. Understanding the potential power of this unique multi-media, genre-bending performance, the Mayor’s Office of Cultural Affairs supported the early development of *Mass Transit Muse* through arts grants. We are excited to have been a part of bringing this production to public spaces in Atlanta and ultimately the stage, and we are hopeful that diverse audiences everywhere will experience this inspiring and refreshing theater production.”

Camille Russell Love, Executive Director, Mayor’s Office of Cultural Affairs, Atlanta

“*[Muse]* doesn’t just stick to anecdotal observations about quirky New Orleans character types: the bus is the locus of conflict, as well, and these characters bring the weight of history, race, strife, and urban violence on board with them, as well, all of which are taken in by Molina’s sharp eye...*[Molina]* has an expansive and encompassing vision and a sharply conscious and present performance style.”

Andrew Alexander, *ArtsATL*

“Intelligently animated and soulful...captivating. Molina and *[the]* supporting actors left an impact that resonated across the room. Melodic scenes expressed heart felt and heart wrenching stories from Molina’s native home of New Orleans that took the audience on an audio/visual journey into his world.”

Janssen Robinson, *Urban Lux Magazine*

“*Muse* is a mélange of poetry, dance, song, and visual living art all in homage to the city of New Orleans and its people since Katrina....Mr. Molina’s metaphors and symbology are quite beautiful and inescapable. We’re all on a journey (life), and we have choices. Shall we connect, love, and boost one another, or shall we judge, call ugly names, and intensify strife? Old Man River will keep right on rolling; so will St. Rita; but we are always at choice.”

Manning Harris, *Atlanta Intown*

“*Mass Transit Muse* is a memory poem, a lament, and a fantastical journey. Through the mundane vehicle of a city bus, endlessly circulating through the heart of New Orleans, Molina transports the audience to an impressionistic, timeless place—a deeply felt, archetypal city that has been destroyed and still lives on.”

Meredith Hobbs, *The Daily Report*

Mass Transit Muse Costs

| Performance Option | Performance Description | Cost |
|--|---|--|
| One Man Show | <i>Michael Molina with visual projection and recorded audio accompaniment</i> | \$2000 + travel, lodging, and per diem |
| One Man Show with Workshop | <i>Performance as above with interactive workshops that inspire dialogue and creative expression prior to or following performance</i> | \$2500 + travel, lodging, and per diem (\$500 per additional workshop) |
| Full Production (4 Member Cast, AV DJ Accompaniment) | <i>Michael Molina and three supporting cast members (one vocalist, one musician, and one dancer) with audio/visual DJ accompaniment</i> | \$6000 + travel, lodging, and per diem for entire cast and audio/visual DJ |
| Full Production with Workshops | <i>Performance as above with interactive workshops that inspire dialogue and creative expression prior to or following performance</i> | \$6500 + travel, lodging, and per diem for entire cast and audio/visual DJ (\$500 per additional workshop) |
| Workshop with Performance Excerpts | <i>Michael Molina-led and facilitated interactive workshops that inspire dialogue and creative expression</i> | \$1000 + travel, lodging, and per diem |



“When the blue veil of day is lifted and infinity is revealed, we can see that we know nothing except that something is coming next and through the worst and for the best we trek together. If only together we would celebrate and mourn, and weather the storms.”

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Michael Molina's Past Performances and Presentations

Dialogue Facilitation, Atlanta Alliance Theater Presentation of Native Guard, October 2014
Creative Process Facilitation, Clarkston Community Mural Design, September 2014
Guest Lecture, Emory University Education Department Listening Course, September 2014
Performance/Workshop, University of Johannesburg Department of Education, August 2014
Featured Performer, NEXT Atlanta Artist Showcase and Dialogue, July 2014
Be Encouraged Sermon/Talk, First Existentialist Congregation, June 2014
Mass Transit Muse World Premiere, 7 Stages Atlanta, May 2014
Radio Performance and Interview, Moving the Center on WRFG Atlanta, April 2014
Featured Performer, Georgia Women for New Directions Real State of the Union, March 2014
Be Encouraged Workshop, *National Geographic* Education's *Crossing Cultural Borders* Documentary
Panelist and Performance, American Studies Association National Conference, San Antonio
Master of Ceremonies and Featured Performer, Dream Reborn Conference, Memphis
Keynote Address, Regional Forum for Public Education, Guatemala City
Workshop and Performance, St. Joseph's International School, Kerala, India
Featured Performer, World Social Forum, Porto Alegre, Brazil
Keynote Address, Tri-National Public Education Conference, Los Angeles
Closing Plenary, British Columbia Federation of Teachers Conference, Vancouver, BC
Master of Ceremonies and Featured Performer, Threshold Foundation Concert, New Orleans
Master of Ceremonies, Youth for Environmental Sanity Generation of Hope Fundraiser, San Francisco
Featured Performer, 21st Anniversary Gulf Coast Allied Funders Fundraiser, Mississippi
Featured Performance, San Francisco Noir Black History Gala at Museum of the African Diaspora, San Francisco
Keynote Address, NAACP West Coast Regional Conference, San Diego
Featured Performer, Advancement Project 10th Anniversary Gala, Washington, DC
Featured Performer and Workshop Presenter, Georgia National Association of Multi-Cultural Education Conference, Atlanta
Featured Performer, Southern Partners Fund Youth Gathering, Atlanta
Featured Author, Charis Books Reading Series, Atlanta
Featured Poet, Red Star Gallery Poetry Series, New Orleans
Be Encouraged Workshop, Youth Creates Youth Theatre, Atlanta
Be Encouraged Workshop, Beyond The Bricks Leadership Institute, Atlanta
Master of Ceremonies, Finding Our Folk Katrina Survivor Event, Houston
Master of Ceremonies, Katrina Solidarity Work Fundraiser, New Orleans
Featured Speaker, Theater Communications Group National Convening, Los Angeles
Guest Instructor, New College Political Science Master's Program, San Francisco
Featured Speaker, Bioneers Conference, Marin County, California