

Bringing Joy To His Home City



MALIK MINGO

Malik Mingo “love love loves” hosting “Great Day Louisiana” on WWL-TV Channel 4

By Dean M. Shapiro
Senior Editor

PHOTO COURTESY OF WWL TV

PHOTO COURTESY OF MALIK MINGO

“exuberant” definition: “joyously unrestrained and enthusiastic; ebullient, buoyant, cheerful, sunny, etc.

“That would be me,” Malik Mingo, the exuberant, perpetually cheerful host of “Great Day Louisiana,” replied when asked if the definition fit him. “This is not the first time I’ve heard that word to describe me,” he added with a laugh.

Airing weekdays on WWL-TV Channel 4 from 9-10 a.m., “Great Day Louisiana” has rocketed in popularity since Malik took the reins of the lifestyle and entertainment talk show in October 2019. Approaching his third season as host, he describes the job as “living my dream and I love, love, love it!”

Born in New Orleans and raised in Gentilly, Malik was only 9 years-old when Hurricane Katrina hit and his family evacuated to Texas. They settled in Houston but with the threat of another hurricane about to hit there, the family moved further inland to San Antonio.

A career in the television entertainment medium was not in Malik’s early plans as he was growing up in the city made famous by the Alamo. “I thought I wanted to be a doctor,” he said. “I planned a career in

medicine. Lots of money and all of that.”

Attending what he called a health-focused high school, Malik interned at hospitals, learning medical terminology and procedures like how to draw blood and other basic tasks. However, he soon came to the realization that “This is not it. This is not what I want to do.”

He recalls a summer in his late teenage years when, after watching daytime talk shows on TV, an inspiration began dawning on him. “I started thinking, ‘This looks like so much fun. I want to do that,’” he said. “And that was kind of like the moment when I told myself, ‘No more medicine for me. I’m going into television.’”

Enrolling at Texas State University in nearby San Marcos in 2013, Malik



Malik with Lauren Reese and Lisa Kimball of TLC’s “sMothered”

signed up for media and mass communications classes and received hands-on training at the campus TV and radio stations. During his four years at Texas State he also interned at TV stations in San Antonio and Austin, continuing to learn the ins and outs of TV production and interview techniques that would, several years later, serve him well in his current capacity.

Following graduation with a B.A. in Mass Communications in 2017, Malik landed reporter positions with two stations in the mid-sized city of San Angelo covering hard news like crime, city government and the weather, none of which he found enjoyable. “I told myself, ‘This is not what I want to be doing either.’ I wanted to be doing entertainment TV.”

Malik began dubbing audition reels of himself on-air and sending them to TV stations all over the U.S. that featured entertainment-oriented daytime talk shows. One of those reels happened to land in the right place at the right time: with Channel 4 in his former hometown of New Orleans. The host of “Great Day Louisiana” was getting ready to leave the show and the station was looking for her replacement.



(left to right) Great Day Louisiana executive producer Val Amedee, stilt walker Sarauniya, Malik Mingo, and Chief Shaka Zulu and his wife

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MALIK MINGO

As Malik explained, “When I sent these reels out I was really just looking for feedback on my work. I wanted to make sure this was what I should be doing. Am I going in the right direction? Do I need to add something? Take something out? I never actually applied for this job. I never filled out an application. I didn’t even know they were looking for somebody.”

But several weeks after sending his audition reel, Malik received a message from the station that they wanted to talk to him. He was surprised. “This didn’t sound like just feedback. It sounded like an interview opportunity,” he said. Flying into New Orleans, he went through a series of interviews and camera tests and was hired. He was only 23 years old and just two years out of college at the time.

“And so I got the opportunity to come back to New Orleans,” Malik said. “I never would have thought I’d move back here, but I knew what I was looking for in a job and I knew this was a great city to do that in. Luckily I was correct and I’ve been loving it ever since.”

Over the nearly three years Malik has been on the air hosting “Great Day Louisiana, the show and its mostly light-hearted format has been tailor-made for the enthusiasm he brings to the table. Guest and their presentations have included dance performances and exercise instruction, live music, fashion demonstrations and beauty tips, discussions with published authors, cooking and drink mixing demonstrations, and live talk about sports and other forms of entertainment.

“We love to entertain over here,” he said, “I call it ‘infotainment.’ It’s informative but it’s also entertainment. There’s nothing better than being able to bring joy to people’s day.”

However, he also presents more serious subjects like taking care of one’s health, hurricane preparation and safety tips and other types of helpful information.

Malik especially enjoys interviewing celebrity guests, both local and international. He recalls with great fondness one



Malik with New Orleans Roller Girls in their Running with the Bulls outfits and the Running of the Bulls event chairman

of his first celebrity interviews with Jamie Foxx, which was done virtually during the early days of the pandemic. “He was just so fun, so cool,” Malik recalled. “I loved that. He’s a really nice guy. We talked about ‘Ray’ (the film about Ray Charles which was partially shot in New Orleans) and it was really cool.”

He also interviewed Tyler Perry who, he said, grew up just down Baronne Street from where Malik’s mother lived. “I loved interviewing Amanda Shaw,” he added. “She and I played the violin together. That was fun because I used to play the violin growing up.”

In addition he has interviewed and worked on many projects with Big Freedia, most recently when Freedia was in a BET (Black Entertainment Television) reality show where celebrities go back to college. “He’s a real character for sure,” Malik laughed.

He also enjoyed doing shows about other parts of Louisiana, including Baton Rouge and Plaquemines Parish, and other cities in the South like Jackson and Mobile, with more still to come, he noted.

So how did he get to be so exuberant and joyful and full of life, he is asked? Has that

always been in his personality? “I think it’s the number one question I get asked,” he responds, attributing much of it to his mother, Marcia Jalvia-Mingo.

“My mom has always been a positive person; always been the life of the party,” he explained. “Growing up I would see how her friends and people in general react to her. She always would tell me, ‘Treat people right and they’ll treat you right.’ And that’s just something I constantly live by.

“So when people come on the show I try to make it welcoming and fun, he continued. “One of the reasons why I am the way I am is that I’m living my dream. My goal in life was to host a talk show in one of the best cities in the world and I got that. So to be able to live the dream is what always makes me so happy because I get to literally wake up and do what I’ve always wanted to do and get paid for it. I love it and I love love love New Orleans. It’s just so cool to experience it all.”

Selected videos of “Great Day Louisiana” segments can be viewed on YouTube and on www.wvlv.com/great-day-louisiana. You can also view them on Facebook | [GreatDayLouisiana](#). 🐾