Charles M. Blow is the Visual Op-Ed columnist for The New York Times, where his column appears every Monday and Thursday. Mr. Blow’s columns tackle hot-button issues such as teen pregnancy, the national debt, the presidential race, gender roles, and the gay rights movement. Blow joined The Times in 1994 as the paper’s graphics editor; during his tenure he led the publication to win awards for work that included its information graphics coverage of 9/11 and the Iraq war.

Mr. Blow is a CNN contributor, and also often appears on MSNBC's Morning Joe. He has appeared on Andrea Mitchel Reports, Hardball with Chris Matthews, CNN’s American Morning, Headline News' The Joy Behar Show, Fox News' Fox and Friends, the BBC and Al Jazeera, as well as numerous radio programs.

Charles' New York Times Bestselling memoir, Fire Shut Up in My Bones, was released in September 2014. In this captivating book, he mines the rich poetry of the out-of-time Louisiana town where he grew up--a place where slavery's legacy felt close, reverberating in the elders' stories and in the near constant wash of violence. An isolated boy, Blow is fiercely attached to his mother, a woman with five sons, brass knuckles in her glove box, a job plucking poultry, a soon to be ex-husband, and a love of newspapers and learning. But the closeness doesn't protect him from secret abuse at the hands of an older cousin. It's damage that triggers years of searing self-questioning, and Charles explores how this affected his college life and beyond. It is a bravely personal, one-of-a-kind story of self-invention--an instant classic of African American storytelling from the South.

Mr. Blow graduated magna cum laude from Grambling State University in Louisiana, where he received a B.A. in Mass Communications. He lives in Brooklyn with his three children.