

JUST AN ORDINARY LAWYER. A play, with songs.

Written and performed by Tayo Aluko, with Horacio López Redondo, piano

Directed by Amanda Huxtable, Designed by Emma Williams

Theatro Technis, London, January 2017, Week 1

Greetings, welcome. It is interesting that social care is at the forefront of our minds these days, with an ageing population, reducing bed numbers in hospitals and reducing budgets in social services nationwide. What there seems to be no problem funding is the arms industry and the prosecution of war around the globe, supposedly in the interests of our national security. The fact that these conflicts elsewhere contribute to the swelling of our population (however insignificantly) with the influx of refugees seems to elude many of our media outlets and politicians, with the result that populist leaders are able to score amazing, worrying victories in polls around the globe. They argue against the number of immigrants coming to these shores to take jobs and services from the deserving white population, ignoring the fact that most of the people providing those services are immigrants, without whom the systems would grind to a halt. This has been the case for decades – centuries even, and will continue for ever. The benefit that this country has had from African immigration (forced and otherwise) and her natural resources is immeasurable, yet unappreciated by far too many people. The contributions that thousands of Africans have made to this country are too often forgotten, as have the true histories of British and other imperialist campaigns around the world. The brave struggles that were entered into by sons and daughters of Africa in the Motherland and in the Diaspora are literally heroic, and this play is an attempt to bring some of these to light, in a bid to making a contribution to the education that would hopefully counter the racism that seems to be on the rise again here and elsewhere. I hope you enjoy the show, and that it might inspire a quest for more knowledge.

Tayo Aluko. Writer, Performer. Tayo was born in Nigeria, and now lives in Liverpool. He worked previously as an architect and property developer, with a special but as yet frustrated interest in eco-friendly construction. He has fronted orchestras as baritone soloist in concert halls, and has also performed lead roles in operas and musicals. His first play, *CALL MR ROBESON* has won numerous awards in the UK and Canada, as well as highly favourable reviews in the press – most notably in the Guardian and on BBC Radio 4. He has toured the play around the UK, the USA, Canada, Jamaica and Nigeria. He also delivers a lecture/concert called *PAUL ROBESON – THE GIANT, IN A NUTSHELL*, and another one titled *FROM BLACK AFRICA TO THE WHITE HOUSE*: a talk about Black Political Resistance, illustrated with spirituals. He researched, wrote and narrated to camera a piece on West African History before the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, which forms part of the permanent exhibit at Liverpool's International Slavery Museum. His 15-minute play, *HALF MOON*, which also deals with ancient Africa, has been performed several times in the UK. He has been published in *The Guardian*, *The Morning Star*, *NERVE Magazine*, *Modern Ghana* and *Searchlight Magazine*. *JUST AN ORDINARY LAWYER* is his second full-length play, and was premiered at last year's Edinburgh Fringe.

Horacio López Redondo, Piano. Horacio began his musical education in Spain at the age of 5. He was on the MA Piano Accompaniment program at the Royal Academy of Music with teachers Mr Malcolm Martineau and Mr James Baillieu, where he graduated in 2013 with Distinction, and was Highly Commended in the "Christian Carpentier Prize" for Piano Accompaniment Exam. In 2012 he won the Accompanist Competition at the "Canolfan Gerdd William Mathias" Festival in Caernarfon, Wales, and also won the Second Prize at the "Ludmilla Andrew Russian Song Prize" competition, at the Royal Academy of Music. Since his arrival in London in 2010, Horacio has performed as an accompanist at some of the most prestigious London venues, including the Wigmore Hall, Blackheath Halls, St. James' Piccadilly, The Forge, King's Head Theatre and Southwark Cathedral, and in other parts of the country such as Canterbury Cathedral, Bristol Cathedral or "The Venue" at Leeds College of Music.

Amanda Huxtable, Director. Amanda trained at Manchester Metropolitan University, Recreational Arts in the Community course, followed by studying for a BA Degree in Communications and Cultural Studies at The University of Leeds. She continues to strengthen her practice by studying Social Sciences and The Arts Past and Present at the Open University. Amanda served as Artistic Director of Yorkshire Women Theatre Company in Leeds from 2004-2009. She is building her portfolio of freelance directing work across the UK. She also enjoys being part of a writer-and-director team with Marcia Layne, and together they run Hidden Gems Productions, a theatre company committed to telling rarely told Black British Stories: Black British and Bold. Theatre Directing credits for Hidden Gems tours 2010 -2016 include: Bag Lady, Somebody's Son, Lost & Found, The Yellow Doctress - all by Marcia Layne. Freelance Director credits include: The Promise, by Chris Cooper (Belgrade Theatre Tour), The Dressmaker's Gift, by Anita Franklin (Liverpool's Write Now International Festival), Totally Over You, by Mark Ravenhill (Lawrence Batley Theatre), Continent Chop Chop, by Virtual Migrants, HD100 (Chol Theatre). She was recently Associate Director on Wakefield Mysteries, adapted by Nick Lane (Theatre Royal Wakefield), and is an Artistic Associate at Hull Truck Theatre, under the Arts Council's Changemakers Programme.

Emma Williams, Designer. Emma trained as a theatre designer at Wimbledon School of Art and has worked extensively for touring companies, most recently with Hidden Gems on "The Yellow Doctress", "HD100" for Chol at the Lawrence Batley theatre, both directed by Amanda Huxtable: "Iyalode of Eti", Utopia Theatre; "Molly's Marvellous Moustache", Fidget and "You Forgot the Mince" Imagine Theatre. Designs for the West Yorkshire Playhouse between 2003-2015 include: "Immune"; "Nine Lives"; "Refugee Boy"; "You The Player", co-production with Look Left Look Right; "Scuffer"; "Crap Dad"; "Two Tracks and Text Me"; "Runaway Diamonds"; "Broken Angel"; "Sunbeam Terrace"; "Huddersfield"; "The Dutiful Daughter"-co-production with Szechuan People's Theatre, Chengdu, China; "Coming Around Again"; "The Elves and The Shoemakers"; "Pinocchio"; "The Magic Paintbrush" and the original version of "The Yellow Doctress". Other designs include "One Among Millions", co-pro between RJC Youth Dance and Leeds University, 2016; "Brief Encounters@Bradford Interchange, a site-specific piece for Freedom Studios; "Somebody's Son", Hidden Gems; "Strawberries in January" Traverse, Edinburgh; "The Shoe", Polka Theatre; "The Swing Left" Unlimited Theatre; "Small Objects of Desire"; Soho Poly Theatre. Opera credits include: "Siroe" Royal College of Music; "Partenope"; Admeto"; "Alceste" all for Cambridge Handel Opera at New Hall Cambridge; "La Cenerentola"; "The Tales of Hoffman" and "Genevieve de Brabant", French Institute, London.

Esther Wilson, Dramaturg. Esther writes for stage, TV & radio. Her first R4 play 'Hiding Leonard Cohen' won a Mental Health in Media award. The Heroic Pursuits of Darleen Fyles is an on-going series for Woman's Hour on R4. Her stage play 'Soulskin' toured nationally with Red Ladder. She was lead writer on the award-winning 'Unprotected'. 'Ten Tiny Toes' was shortlisted for a TMA award. In Collaboration with Paula Simms, Esther worked on 'The Quiet Little Englishman', set in a disused cinema, for Liverpool's Capital of Culture. The piece was hugely ambitious and critically acclaimed. The sequel to the R3 version of Tony Teardrop was commissioned by R4. Esther's TV work includes: Jimmy McGovern's The Street (RTS award for best newcomer), Accused, Moving On, Call the Midwife and The White Princess.

Lighting Design: Mark Loudon; **Sound Design:** Noel Inyang and TayoAluko

Forthcoming Performances Include

Just An Ordinary Lawyer: Jan 16, 17: Ustionv Studio, Theatre Royal, Bath;

Feb 2: Intrepid Theatre, Victoria, BC, Canada.

Call Mr. Robeson: Feb 4: ACT Arts Centre, Maple Ridge, BC, Canada; **Feb 11:** Union County Performing Arts Centre, Rahway, NJ; **Feb 16 – 18:** Evergreen Cultural Centre, Coquitlam, BC, Canada;

Feb 28: Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY

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