

JUST AN ORDINARY LAWYER. A play, with songs.

Written and performed by Tayo Aluko, with Tim Mottershead, piano

Rotunda Theatre, Buxton Fringe Festival. 13 – 16 July, 2017

Greetings. Some people campaigned for Brexit not for racist reasons but due to suspicion that the EU as a trade block was less concerned about their citizens' wellbeing or the environment as they were about ensuring maximisation of profits for multinational companies. This was exemplified by the proposed Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) which was an agreement between the EU and the USA, negotiated in secret, which would have enabled multinational companies to sue member governments for policies that restricted their profits, for instance by banning tobacco advertising or imposing the highest regulatory standards for food and environmental safety. A worrying report in the Guardian this week reveals that one multinational, British American Tobacco (BAT) is doing just that right now – suing eight African governments, demanding the relaxation of restrictions put in place to protect the health of their populations, including protecting young people from easy access to cheap cigarettes. That's one multinational in one sector. There's oil; there's defence manufacture and procurement; there's agribusiness, and others. Why should people here care about what these companies are doing in Africa? Well, there are those that fear that post-Brexit, and following the demise of TTIP, there is a possibility of the UK striking an even worse deal with the US, for example opening up the NHS to American companies in an effective privatisation of that most precious of national assets. So, when people talk about the neocolonisation of Africa, they are talking about multinationals taking over where imperialist powers left off. And what they can do to Africans they can do to Europeans. The people of Greece may attest to that. Recent talks between the Prime Minister and the current US President about "a very, very good trade deal" should alert us to the shady figures lurking in the shadows behind them that we should fear. This play, even though relatively historical, aims to remind us of how and why liberation struggles in Africa and the Diaspora were, and remain everybody's struggles. I hope you enjoy the show.

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 such operas and musicals as *Nabucco*, *Kiss Me Kate* and *Anything Goes*. His first play, *CALL MR ROBESON* has won numerous awards at festivals 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, including New York's Carnegie Hall in 2012. He 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 developed a piece titled *WHAT HAPPENS?* featuring the writings of African American Langston Hughes, for performance with live jazz accompaniment. He has been published in *The Guardian*, *The Morning Star*, *NERVE Magazine*, *Modern Ghana* and *Searchlight Magazine*. *JUST AN ORDINARY LAWYER* premiered at the Edinburgh Fringe in August 2016, and will feature in the National Black Theatre Festival in Winston-Salem, USA, later this year.

Tim Mottershead, Piano. Tim Mottershead studied music at Liverpool Community College and at Aberdeen University. He is regarded as an authority on the English composers Edmund Rubbra and Lancashire born composer Alan Rawsthorne (1905-1971), on whom he has published a biography. He has contributed to scholarly publications, including *Piano Professional*, *Musical Opinion*, and most notably *TEMPO*, with articles in nearly every issue from 2005-14. As a composer of more than a 150 works, he now writes mainly for specific performance projects. In 2004, he undertook a short tour of universities with a recital to celebrate the centenary of Luigi Dallapiccola. Tim is a keen advocate of world music, having performed or written in every conceivable genre from Iraqi Oud music, to Gamelan, to music for Maypole dancing. He played in the Indian classical music group Raga Jyoti from 2000 to 2012. However, he feels he has learned most from studying with the Scottish composer-pianist Ronald Stevenson.

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, including 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 Tayo Aluko

Forthcoming Performances Include

Just An Ordinary Lawyer: Till July 16: Buxton Fringe Festival;

July 3 – 5: National Black Theatre Festival, Winston-Salem, USA; **August 21 – 26:** Edinburgh Fringe; **Sept 2, 7:** MUSON, Lagos, Nigeria; **Sept 24, 25:** Swallow Theatre, Whithorn, Dumfries & Galloway; **Oct 5:** Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton; **Oct 6,7:** Unity Theatre, Liverpool; **Oct 11:** Waterside Arts Centre, Sale; **Oct 19:** Lakeside Theatre, Colchester; **Oct 20:** Wellingborough Afro-Caribbean Association; **Oct 23:** The Y, Leicester; **Oct 27:** Dugdale Arts Centre, Enfield

Call Mr. Robeson: Till July 16: Buxton Fringe Festival; **August 21 – 26:** Edinburgh Fringe; **Sept 2, 7:** MUSON, Lagos, Nigeria; **Sept. 29 & Oct 1:** Bedwas Workmen's Hall, Caerphilly; **Sept. 30:** Memorial Hall, Pembrokeshire; **Oct 7:** Unity Theatre, Liverpool; **Oct 21:** Nottingham Contemporary; **Oct 28:** Dugdale Arts Centre, Enfield

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