

## **CALL MR. ROBESON: A life, with songs.**

**Written and Performed by Tayo Aluko, with Michael Conliffe, Piano  
Ucheldre Centre, Holyhead, Saturday January 28 2012**

**Greetings and Croeso.** It must be quite galling to watch the antics of our politicians and bankers from a place of relatively high unemployment and low wages as Holyhead. Ministers are competing amongst one another to condemn the excesses of the bonuses awarded to the chief executives, without appearing to have a clue as to what to do to eradicate the vast inequalities and injustices in our society. Paul Robeson believed strongly in socialism, but that system has been discredited in the past. Now capitalism is being shown to be as inadequate in meeting society's needs, but nothing is being done to really question and reform the system. The uprisings that have been going on around the globe (though curiously enough not on our shores) show that whatever you may wish to call it, collective action really can bring about change in society. Extreme bravery is often needed, as we see in places like Syria where people seem not to fear even death to achieve a better society. Yesterday was Holocaust Memorial Day, and that reminds us of the danger of people standing around and doing nothing in the face of developing evil. Robeson in his time spoke out vociferously, but was not listened to. Trade Unionists here are ridiculed for calling trying to protect their members' livelihoods, but they also try to point out that it is the current system that needs to change, in favour of all people. It is at times like these that one needs to remember to show solidarity with oppressed and exploited people, both here and elsewhere, and I hope that Robeson's story will reinvigorate us into remembering that, and rediscovering the bravery that lies within each and every one of us. I hope you enjoy show.