

CALL MR. ROBESON: A life, with songs.

Written and Performed by Tayo Aluko,

With Michael Conliffe, Piano

The Welfare, Ystradgynlais, Saturday 30th April, 2011

Greetings and welcome. I was sadly unable to attend the Royal Wedding yesterday, finding myself performing in Wales. I am sure I'll find my invitation waiting for me when I get back to Liverpool. I believe there were a few dignitaries in attendance whose legitimacy could have been called into question, which makes one wonder whether Paul Robeson might have been invited, were this wedding happening in his time. In fact, he might have been invited to sing, as he famously did in St. Paul's Cathedral in 1958. Actually, I suspect not, if the current cabinet had anything to do with it, nor indeed that of the last government, considering how much Robeson is likely to have criticised them for their war mongering and arming of dictators in foreign lands, while withdrawing inalienable rights from their own people. Paul saw this at first hand in Wales in the 1930s, and might be shocked to see whatever progress was made since his time being reversed today. So, for those of us who were not invited to join the great and the good yesterday, we are in good company, as long as we continue the fight for peace, justice and equality here and worldwide. Hopefully, the bravery shown by people like Robeson in his time, and the people of the Middle East will give us much needed inspiration today, as we need as many people as possible to join the struggle. I hope you enjoy the show.