

CALL MR. ROBESON: A life, with songs.

Written and Performed by Tayo Aluko, with Gus Carmichael, Piano

Spotlites @ Edinburgh Fringe. 5 - 27 August 2016

According to supporters of one of the American Presidential hopefuls, a terrorist organisation officially launched in the UK this week, with the national media irresponsibly giving them a little publicity too. The Black Lives Matter Movement now has a UK branch. It is needed not just to show solidarity with our American brothers and sisters, but because even though deaths of Black people in police custody in the UK are thankfully much rarer than in the US, they happen all too often, including here in Scotland. Following killings of some police officers in the US by "lone wolves," the organisation there is now being unfairly tarred by some in the same way as entire religious communities are tainted by association with extremists perpetrating terrorist acts, in a way that most white people and Christians aren't by the state terror that their nations visit on innocents abroad. The racism at the centre of much of this madness is a symptom simply of ignorance, and Paul Robeson was determined to use his art to combat this evil. The use of art in the fight against bigotry and terrorism seems far-fetched, but it is the one weapon that our leaders seem determined to ignore, despite clear evidence that it is at once one of the most effective and enriching of all the means at our disposal, in "winning hearts and minds." Whoever becomes the next President of Paul Robeson's former country, they would do well to seek out the sort of art that he promoted, so that it enriches them, either for the sake of basic education in simple humanity, or for the promotion of peace internally and worldwide.

Tayo Aluko. Writer, Performer. Tayo was born in Nigeria, and now lives in Liverpool. He worked previously as an architect. He has fronted orchestras as baritone soloist in concert halls, and has also performed lead roles in operas and musicals. *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. 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 is 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*. His second play, *JUST AN ORDINARY LAWYER* premieres at this year's Fringe.

Angus Carmichael, Piano. Edinburgh born Gus Carmichael B.Mus/P.G.C.E, studied piano with Audrey Innes from St Mary's Music School and David Parkhouse from London. His musical interests and styles are very broad. He was accompanist for the folk singer Mary Sandeman, worked as session keyboard player with the late Billy Mackenzie and has accompanied Rowan Atkinson. He performs concerts for Music in Hospitals, works with performing arts students at Edinburgh College, accompanies singers/instrumentalists, plays in a jazz quartet and teaches piano.

Olusola Oyeleye, Director and Dramaturge. Olusola is an award winning writer, director and producer working in opera, music theatre, visual arts and dance. She was Resident director on Trevor Nunn's West End production of *Porgy and Bess* (Savoy Theatre), staff producer at English National Opera, and has had productions touring internationally, including the USA, Ghana, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Hungary and the Czech Republic. She has been a visiting lecturer and Artist at Universities in South Africa and London, and was Head of the Acting Studio at Morley College. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Arts.

Phil Newman, Designer. Phil's Set & Costume Designs have featured in several productions touring the UK and internationally, including the USA and the UAE.

Sound Design: David Darlington & Liam McDermott. **Sound Engineering:** Derek Murray. **Lighting Design:** Gareth Starkey. **Recorded Percussion:** Oludele Olaseinde **Voices:** Shamus Maxwell, Paul O'Neill. Felix Pring, Kat Bishop, Suzanne Goldberg, Harry Arkwright, and from the original HUAC hearing of June 12 1956, "Honorable" Senators Walter, Arens and Scherer. **Male Voice Choir:** Liverpool Male Voice Choir

Tayo Aluko & Friends

24 – 24 Mount Pleasant

Liverpool L3 5RY Tel: 0151 707 8187

e: info@tayoalukoandfriends.com w: www.callmrrobeson.com

facebook: Call Mr. Robeson **Twitter:** @CallMrRobeson

