

"My art is a weapon in the struggle for my people's freedom and for the freedom of all people"

Paul Robeson

Welcome to the inaugural Paul Robeson Art Is A Weapon Festival.

Since 2007, I have been privileged to travel the world telling the story of Paul Robeson, one of the most remarkable human beings of the twentieth century. The fact that a figure like Robeson - one of the most famous people on the planet in his time - is relatively unknown today is due to his decision to use his formidable voice to speak out for freedom, peace, justice and equality around the world. The authorities did their best to silence him and wipe him out of public consciousness, and largely succeeded.

The multi-award-winning play **Call Mr. Robeson** comes to London's West End for a four- week run at the Tristan Bates Theatre from September 31 to October 26, and a series of speakers and other performers will occupy the space during this period to make up a festival of entertainment, education, activism and ideas. Speakers will talk on theatre, arts, Black history, the global arms trade and much more. There will be an interview with Tony Benn. Performers will come from as far away as Canada, South Africa and Nigeria to offer great music, theatre, performance poetry and comedy. Some are quite well known (such as Jackie Kay and Bob Crow), many are not. And even though October is Black History Month in the UK, the festival is not exclusively Black: white working class, Jewish and other stories feature too. The common thread is that by sharing knowledge, ideas and art, we arm ourselves and others with weapons with which to fight for a better world. Join us as we "occupy Covent Garden", brandishing weapons of mass creation!

Tayo Aluko Performer, Producer.

[Performers line-up](#)

[Speakers line-up](#)

[Programme](#)