

The story of the Land and Freedom Army of Kenya (the Mau Mau) features in this play – particularly how it was portrayed as a terrorist organisation intent on unjustifiably, illegally and wantonly using violence to evict peace-loving Brits from their lands. Said Brits were forced to resort to internment, imprisonment, torture and murder to defend their honour. Nelson Mandela, once famously declared the head of a terrorist organisation and imprisoned for three decades, also features. He at least was not assassinated, like many others were. These figures and stories of recent African History offer a useful perspective on contemporary events, African or otherwise. In Palestine for instance, a barbaric settler community whose government contains self-declared fascists, terrorises an indigenous population with unprecedented impunity, justifying the assassination of activists, journalists and ordinary citizens by declaring them terrorists. So extreme has their brutality become that even war-mongering heads of governments previously unquestioning in their support of Israel occasionally express concern at their behaviour. Their extremism has now led even the dominant Jewish (mainly settler) population to rise up against, falling victim to milder forms of the state violence previously only directed at Palestinians. In the Sahel region of Africa, people are also on the streets in their thousands, but this time celebrating the non-violent ousting of the former leader of Niger. The sanctimonious outrage in Western capitals and media is interesting to behold. Of course, this is because it was not done properly: regime change must be violent; it can only be brought about by external intervention. And sure enough, fingers are being pointed at Russia, since Africans are clearly incapable of deciding for themselves when neo-colonialism can no longer be tolerated. And with a methodology utilised even during Trans-Atlantic slavery times, Black overseers, in the persons of some leaders of ECOWAS, are all-too-ready to show their loyalty to their white masters by offering to mete out violence on their brothers and sisters. And who benefits from all this? Western arms manufacturers and dealers, bankers and elites. A new flood of refugees from the region will also soon become demonised and dehumanised as they swell the numbers trying desperately to flee to Europe, only to find themselves far less welcome than blue-eyed, blonde-haired Ukrainian refugees. One wonders how long it will be before British folk reject the diet of lies and take to the streets to oust their leaders, like freedom fighters elsewhere.

Tayo Aluko, Writer, Performer. Tayo was born in Nigeria, worked as an architect in Liverpool for many years. He has fronted orchestras as baritone soloist in concert halls, and has also performed lead roles in opera, musicals and oratorio. His first play, *CALL MR ROBESON* has won numerous awards at festivals in the UK and Canada, and continues to be performed after 16 years. He delivers a number of lecture/concerts and talks on Black Political Resistance using art and song. 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 writer Langston Hughes, for performance with live jazz accompaniment. He has been published in *The Guardian*, *The Morning Star*, *NERVE Magazine*, *Modern Ghana*, *Searchlight Magazine*, *Counterfire* and *Counterpunch*. His latest production is a radio play, *PAUL ROBESON'S LOVE SONG*, recorded during lockdown with actors from the USA and Canada, and now streaming online. He has recently had two poems published, and developed one of them – “*GREATNESS*” IN A TIME OF COVID – into an online international performance and mapping project and a workshop examining colonial history. Talks he gives include *ART AS A WEAPON – SOME PAN-AFRICANIST EXAMPLES*, a survey of artists in the African Diaspora. His third one-man musical play (a work in progress), is *COLERIDGE-TAYLOR OF FREETOWN*, inspired by the life and music of the Black British Composer, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. He is also working on a screenplay telling the story of Pastor Daniels Ekarte (d. 1964), known as the African Saint of Liverpool.

Samuel Howley, Piano. Born in the Rhondda Valley, South Wales, Samuel studied at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama before embarking on a career that includes composing, conducting, teaching and performing. As an accompanist, he has worked with David Campbell, Paul Basler, Rebecca Evans, WNO and many others. His compositions have been played on BBC Radio 3, Argentinian Classical Radio, Radio Orkney and Radio Poznan. He now lives in Fife, Scotland.

Just An Ordinary Lawyer was premiered at the Edinburgh
Fringe on 4th August, 2016 by Tayo Aluko,
with Angus Carmichael on piano

Directed by **Amanda Huxtable**
Designed by **Emma Williams**
Dramaturgy: **Esther Wilson**
Lighting Design: **Mark Loudon**
Sound Design: **Noel Inyang & Tayo Aluko**

Future Performances Include:

Till 19 August (odd dates only) **Call Mr. Robeson**
@ **Edinburgh Fringe**

Till 20 August (even dates only) **Just An Ordinary**
Lawyer @ Edinburgh Fringe

26 September: Dodging Bullets, in #BlackBoyJoyGone,
for Blackfest @ Unity Theatre, **Liverpool**

29 September: Call Mr. Robeson. Royal Exchange Theatre,
Manchester, for UNISON Black Workers NW

12 October Just An Ordinary Lawyer.

For Law Society of Scotland, EICC, **Edinburgh**

14 October. Just An Ordinary Lawyer

Tullynessle Hall, **Aberdeenshire**

20 October. Just An Ordinary Lawyer

St. George's Hall, **Liverpool**

7 November: Call Mr. Robeson. St. Ives Library, Cambs

8 November: Call Mr. Robeson. St. Neots Library, Cambs

Tayo Aluko & Friends

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C Arts

AND

TAYO ALUKO & FRIENDS
present

JUST AN ORDINARY LAWYER

(?)

A PLAY, WITH SONGS

Written and performed by **Tayo Aluko**,
with **Samuel Howley**, piano

C Aurora Studio

Week 1, Edinburgh Fringe 6-20 August, 2023