

JUST AN ORDINARY LAWYER. A play, with songs.
Written and performed by Tayo Aluko, with Iain Jackson, piano
The Studio @ Birmingham Rep
For No. 5 Barristers Chambers and Birmingham Law Society
Monday 17 October, 2022

Tayo Aluko, Writer, Performer. Tayo was born in Nigeria, moved to England as a teenager, and worked as an architect in Liverpool for many years. Since 2009, he has been a professional playwright, singer and actor. He is also a published essayist and poet. With today's play and his earlier one, *Call Mr. Robeson*, his performances have taken him as far North to above the Arctic Circle in Canada and South to New Zealand. He is also sometimes a political activist engaging in direct action, and thankful for the services of good lawyers.

Tayo comments:

We often hear far-off countries dismissively described as failing due to corruption and poor leadership. We lament at how politicians care more about enriching themselves and vested interests than they do about the people they profess to serve. It is also now long-established fact that interference in electoral processes by shadowy external forces (in collusion with local actors) ensure that totally unsuitable people assume power as their populations experience perpetual, extreme suffering. We wonder at the proliferation of lethal weaponry and warfare in so many regions, while scarcity of food, books and medicine blights the people. That would describe my home country, Nigeria - or Haiti, to give other extreme example - but to a certain extent, it also undeniably describes the United Kingdom and Europe. The kinds of movements and uprisings that rid the former colonies of their oppressors in the times covered by this play are needed again in those countries, and one would argue, here too. This has been demonstrated recently by the fact that even barristers have been on strike for better pay, with notice given that they might take their wigs and gowns back onto picket lines in future. In the uncertain times ahead, one hopes to see people from a wide range of professions, ages, races and faiths out on the streets, acting in solidarity with each other in an effort to end the oppression of the many by the few.

Iain Jackson, Piano. Iain Jackson studied piano accompaniment at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and now works as an accompanist and piano teacher. He plays in the swing era quintet Grandma's Biscuit Tin and in The Nick Ross Orchestra. Iain is also the regular accompanist for Handsworth Community Choir.

Tayo Aluko & Friends

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