

Sancho: An Act of Remembrance

Conceived, written, and
performed by
Paterson Joseph

Co-directed by
Simon Godwin

DATES: DEC 16—19 at 7:30pm
DEC 20 at 3pm

LOCATION: BAM Fisher (Fishman Space)

RUN TIME: 1hr 10min (no intermission)

BAM

GATHERING: *Sancho*
With Paterson Joseph
Led by Bryan Doerries
Thu, Dec 17, Post-show
BAM Fishman Space
Free for same-day ticket holders

#Sancho
#BAMNextWave

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Sancho: An Act of Remembrance

A co-production of Pemberley Productions
in association with the Oxford Playhouse

Writer and Performer
PATERSON JOSEPH

Co-Director
SIMON GODWIN

Set Design
MICHAEL VALE

Music Arrangement & Sound Design
BEN PARK

Lighting Design
LUCRECIA BRICEÑO

Costume Design
LINDA HAYSMAN

Associate Lighting Designer
ANSHUMAN BHATIA

Oxford Playhouse Production Manager
TIM BOYD

Production Associate
PAMELA SALLING

Assistant Director
ANNA GIRVAN

Design Assistant
SARAH JUNE MILLS

Producer
TIM SMITH

The majority of the music
heard this evening was composed by
Charles Ignatius Sancho.

Recorded Ensemble
BUFFY NORTH, Violin
PHIL BROWN, Viola
REBECCA JORDAN, Cello
BEN PARK, Bass and Harpsichord

Sancho: An Act of Remembrance was
originally commissioned by the Oxford
Playhouse in 2011. This production of
Sancho: An Act of Remembrance had its
first performance at the Oxford Playhouse
on Thursday, September 17, 2015.

This production of *Sancho: An Act of
Remembrance* is supported by the Arts
Council of England under its Grants for
the Arts Scheme. The producers wish to
acknowledge the help and support of the
October Gallery, London.

The actors are appearing with the
permission of Actors' Equity Association.
The American stage manager is a
member of Actors' Equity Association.

American Stage Manager
R. MICHAEL BLANCO

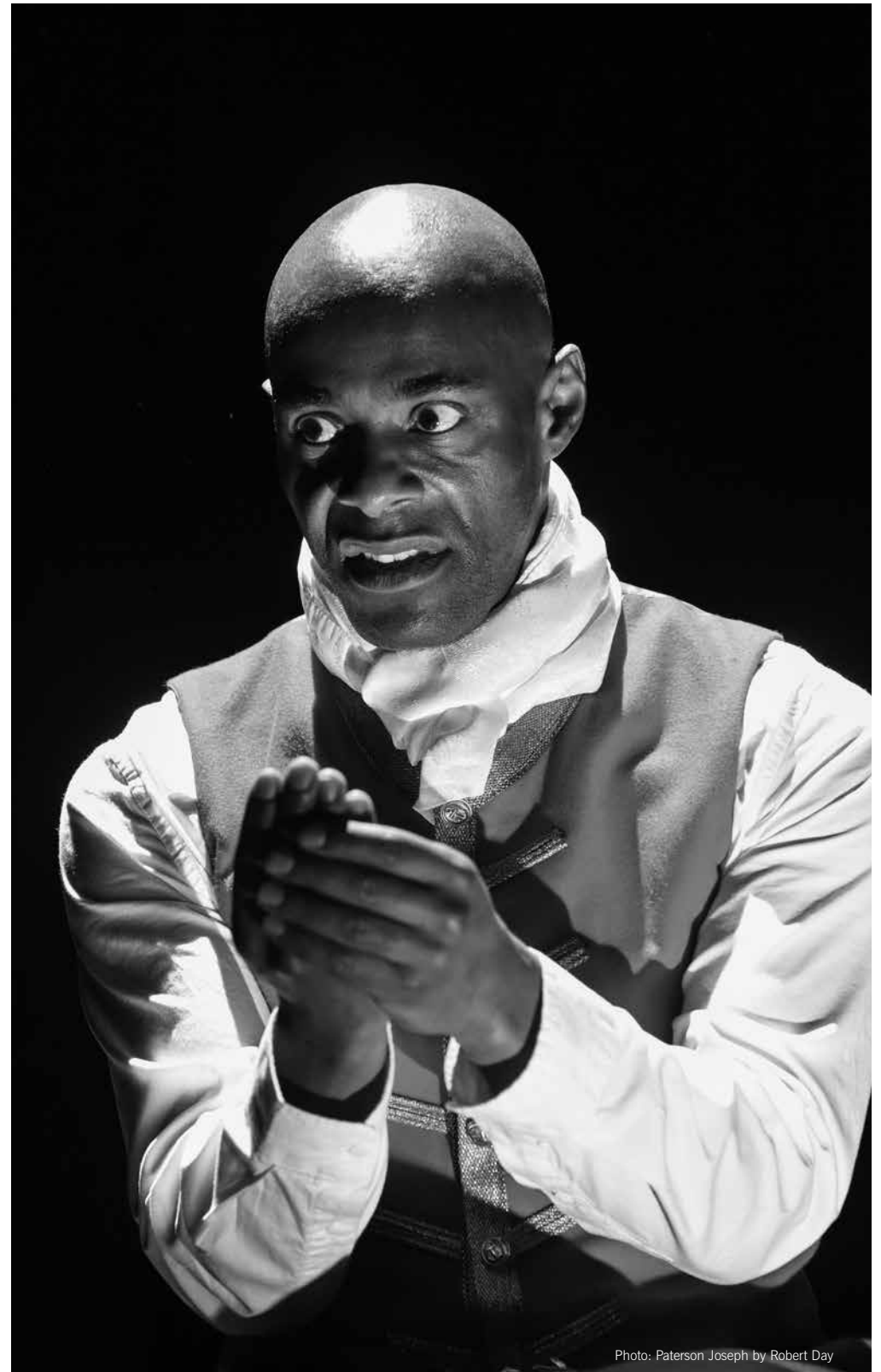


Photo: Paterson Joseph by Robert Day

ABOUT

Sancho: An Act of Remembrance

Author's Note

I had never heard of the subject of my play until I discovered Thomas Gainsborough's portrait of the extraordinary Charles Ignatius Sancho in a book by historian Gretchen Gerzina, *Black England*. The most remarkable thing about this discovery is not that most people hadn't a clue about such an amazing pioneer of multi-ethnic Britain, but that I, a Black Briton, had no clue either. Truth is, I had presumed that the presence of black people in Britain began in 1948 with the 249 passengers (and one stowaway), on board the ship HMT Empire Windrush, when it docked at Tilbury from Montego Bay, Jamaica. Any previous dealings blacks had with the UK would have been remote, I had imagined—African slavery, Caribbean plantations, etc. But was that right?

In the early 2000's, I began a lengthy research period—hours, days, months, years—trawling the archives for details about Black Britain. Most books I tackled were pretty dry. Heavy on facts, light on story. But with Gerzina's book, I discovered the joy of research. Her stories took me much further back than I could have imagined. My knowledge of Black Britain was transformed by my three-fold discoveries about the man baptized in 1729 by the Bishop of Cartagena, Colombia: Charles Ignatius.

First, Sancho's life was no *Roots*, nor was it a British version of *12 Years a Slave*. Charles Ignatius' journey was odder, more quirkily eccentric, and subtler than the American models of slave life I'd been used to seeing and reading about.

Second, Sancho was a "victim" of the British gentry's love of "exotica." He was black, smart, humorous; he appealed to those who knew that Africans were not merely the "beasts of burden" as the slave traders portrayed them. Third, he was an entertainer in a time of supreme entertainers; his best friends were the satirical, shaggy-dog tale author, Laurence Sterne and the greatest actor of the 18th century, David Garrick.

My final, pleasant shock of enlightenment was reading about the "black frolics" and dances organized by the countless black servants, freemen, and sailors all over London's parks. A community of souls who all knew the dangers for Africans in the world beyond the UK, they trod a careful path within these Isles to maintain both their freedom, and that of their oftentimes white spouses and mixed-heritage children. They may have been seen, but they were seldom heard. Still, for them, being ignored meant being relatively safe from attack. Like their white, working-class friends and neighbours, they were shut out of political life because you had to be a property owner to register to vote. And very rare, maybe non-existent, was that working class citizen who could afford to buy property.

It may be hard for some of us today to imagine a world where one is treated as a second class citizen, with little or no say in the running of one's own country. In England before the early 20th century this was true for all women and the majority of men. Getting one's vote registered would become a burning goal for the working men and women of the UK for much of the 18th and 19th centuries and beyond. And Sancho would have been amongst that disenfranchised and dissatisfied throng. All this is a sobering reminder, if ever one was needed, to never abstain from voting! One of the most heartening details uncovered in my studies was the natural

solidarity between the white working class and their African brothers and sisters—the former often rescuing and hiding slaves who had run away from cruel masters. A wonderful picture: struggling brother aiding struggling brother, a historical fact the likes of today's right wing UK Independence Party seem to have cynically forgotten.

Some of the stories I've come across are so domestic and modern they make me smile and shudder simultaneously. When Sancho's rather sketchy, and frankly racist, biographer, Joseph Jekyll, wrote that Sancho could have been an actor if not for a speech impediment, it sounded like something an agent might say to a black actor today after they'd auditioned for the new Mr. Darcy: "Great audition, they loved you...but they're going another way..." The fact that Sancho's black skin had no part to play in his stymied acting career seems pretty unlikely to me. But perhaps it truly was the only obstacle, and, in fact, there were, as in the courts of Henry VIII and his daughter, Elizabeth I, black musicians and performers whose color was of little or no consequence to the majority of Britons in their day.

Through these years of research my ideas of British life and Black British contributions to it have been revolutionized. What I thought I knew about multi-ethnic Britain before the arrival in 1948 of 492 West Indian Blacks on the SS Windrush and the subsequent controversy over assimilation and what I now know has, for me, changed forever the meaning of the words, Black British. I now write them confidently, but with awareness of their resonance on every form that begs the question: *Who do you think you are?* My humble hope is that this play will contribute a little to an understanding of our shared British history. Whoever we are.

Paterson Joseph

September 2, 2015

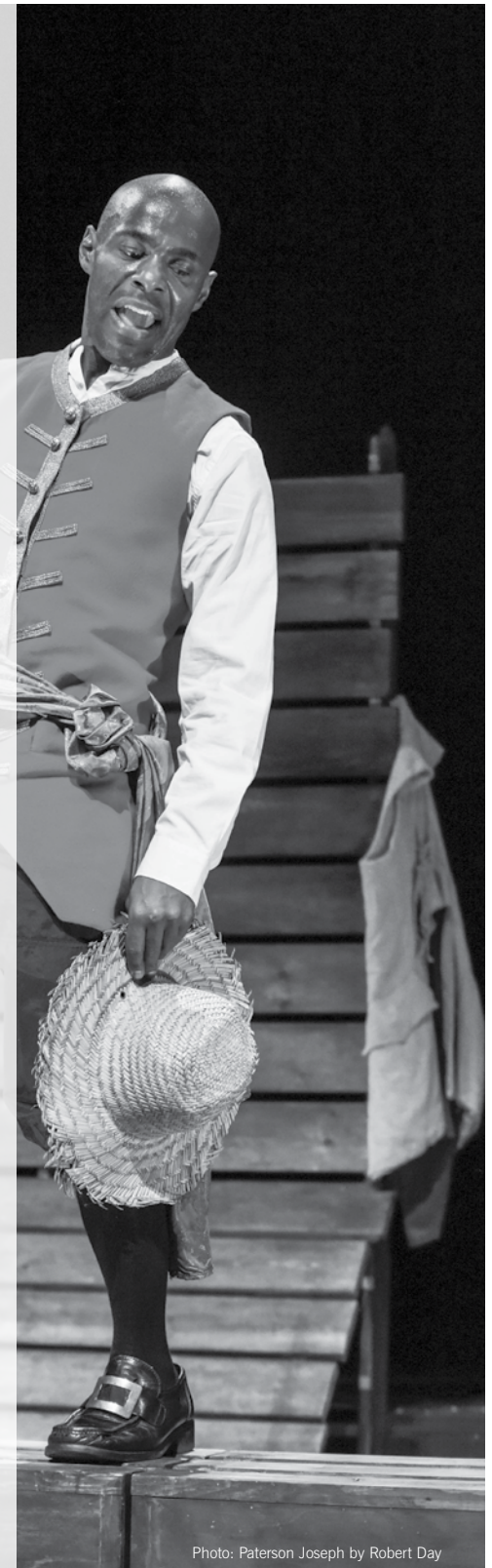


Photo: Paterson Joseph by Robert Day

Who's Who

PATERSON JOSEPH
Author and Performer

Paterson Joseph has worked regularly at the National Theatre in London (*Whale, Saint Joan, Royal Hunt for the Sun, The Emperor Jones, Elmina's Kitchen*) and the RSC (*Julius Caesar* [BAM 2013], *Don Juan, Troilus and Cressida, Love's Labours Lost, King Lear, The Pretenders*), as well as the Royal Exchange, Gate, Almeida, and Young Vic theaters. Television includes BBC's *The Hollow Crown* (PBS), *The Leftovers* (HBO), and Danny Boyle's *Babylon*. Joseph is a season regular on *Law and Order UK* and *Peep Show*, and he has also appeared in *Doctor Who, Hustle*, and *No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency* (all BBC). In 2015 Joseph has been seen co-starring with Christopher Ecclestone in *Safe House*, a major four-part drama for ITV and is appearing on Sky and NBC this autumn in *You, Me and the Apocalypse*. *Sancho* marks Joseph's first play as a writer.

SIMON GODWIN
Co-Director

Simon Godwin's recent work includes *Strange Interlude, Man and Superman*, and *The Beaux' Stratagem* for The National Theatre, as well as *The*

Two Gentlemen of Verona for the RSC. Between 2011 and 2013 he was associate director at the Royal Court, where he directed seven world premieres including *Routes, If You Don't Let Us Dream, NSFW, The Witness, Goodbye to All That, The Acid Test*, and *Wanderlust*.

Between 2009 and 2011 Godwin was associate director of Bristol Old Vic, where he directed *The Little Mermaid, Krapp's Last Tape, A Kind of Alaska, Faith Healer*, and *Far Away*.

MICHAEL VALE
Set Design

Michael Vale has designed the sets and costumes for more than 200 theater and opera productions both in the UK and abroad including those he has directed. Companies he has worked with include the Royal Shakespeare Company, National Theatre, Royal Opera House, English National Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Opera North, English Touring Opera, De Vlaamse Opera (Antwerp), Los Angeles Opera, New Zealand International Arts Festival, Galaxy Theatre (Tokyo), Warsaw Globe Theatre Company, Munich Biennale, Lyric Hammersmith, Royal Court, Almeida Theatre, Soho Theatre, Manchester Royal Exchange, Birmingham Rep, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Sheffield Crucible, Northampton Theatre Royal, Liverpool Playhouse, Nottingham Playhouse, Bristol Old Vic, Plymouth Theatre Royal, Edinburgh Royal Lyceum, Bolton Octagon, Oldham Coliseum, Manchester Library Theatre, Salisbury Playhouse, Colchester Mercury Theatre, English Touring

Theatre, Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, the Sage, Gateshead, Battersea Arts Centre, Spymonkey, Kneehigh Theatre Company, and Told By An Idiot, with whom he is an Associate Idiot.

Vale's work has been nominated for two Olivier Awards, an *Irish Times* theater award, a *Manchester Evening News* theater award, a Charrington Fringe First Award, and two Off-West End theater awards.

BEN PARK
Music Arrangement & Sound Design

Ben Park has an extensive track record as a producer, collaborator, director, performer, and educator. He originally studied at the Royal College of Music and subsequently, having gained a degree in zoology at University College London, he then set about becoming a session musician working with such bands as Soul 2 Soul, The Escape Club, Lamb, and Diesel Park West. He has written and performed for film, television, and theater, notably the multi-award winning *70 Hill Lane* with Improbable Theatre; as associate artist at the Royal Opera House with long time collaborator, choreographer/director Fin Walker; the triple BAFTA winning, Oscar-nominated S4C production of *The Canterbury Tales*, and the new British comedy film, *Downhill-the-movie*.

Park is currently collaborating as associate director/composer with Fin Walker on a new *Macbeth*, to be premiered at the Norwich Festival in 2016.

LUCRECIA BRICEÑO
Lighting Designer

Lucrecia Briceño is a Peruvian artist currently based in Brooklyn. Much of her work has been in association with artists developing innovative and original pieces. Her designs have been presented at such venues as Arena Stage in Washington, DC, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Dallas Theater Center, Berlind Theatre, La MaMa E.T.C., Culture Project, Pregones Theatre, Intar, HERE Arts Center, Soho Rep, Ohio Theatre, Irondale Center, and ArtsEmerson in Boston. Internationally her work has been seen in Venezuela, Peru, Turkey, Scotland, Korea, Colombia, and Norway.

This year, Briceño's design work for *Crime and Punishment* was part of the Venezuelan presentation for the Prague Quadrennial. Her design work has been nominated for several awards, recently receiving a Bel Geddes grant for the upcoming production of *The Desire of The Astronaut*. She has been a guest artist/lecturer at NYU, Princeton University, Hunter College, and the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú.

LINDA HAYSMAN
Costume Designer

Linda Haysman trained as a theater designer at Central School of Art and Design. She specializes now in costume design and has worked at the BBC covering a whole variety of shows from period dramas and plays to popular sit-coms. Her credits include the feature films *Delirium, The Black*

Prince, Sus, Niagara Motel, Urban Ghost Story, and The Runner. Television credits include *Not Even God is Wise Enough, Small Metal Jacket, Tales From Hollywood, Prisoners In Time, Out Of the Blue, Scene Dramas, A Few Short Journeys of the Heart, Low Level Panic, The Crouches, In Exile, Once Upon a Time in the North, May to December, Woodcock, Lenny Henry Gets Wild, East Enders, Scoop, The Story of Tracey Beaker, Megamaths, Hero to Zero, John Daniel, and The Last African Flying Boat.*

ANSHUMAN BHATIA
Associate Lighting Designer

Anshuman Bhatia's designs for dance, opera, and theater have been seen at Canada's Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Soho Rep, Arena Stage in Washington, DC, HERE Arts Center, New York Theater Workshop, Lincoln Center Director's Lab, Infinity Theater Company, the Juilliard School, University of Denver, New School for Drama, and Columbia University. His assistant and associate designs have been seen at the New York Philharmonic, Central City Opera in Colorado, Washington Ballet, Anchorage Opera, Roundabout Theater, Guggenheim Museum, Opera Theater of Saint Louis, and BAM. He holds an MFA from NYU, and more information can be found at bhatiadesign.com

ANNA GIRVAN
Assistant Director

Anna Girvan trained at Bristol Old Vic and is a Jerwood assistant director 2014—15. As a director, her work in theater includes *Welcome, Friend* at

the Courtyard; *A Little Nonsense* at Edinburgh Fringe and Brighton Fringe; *Stuff* at the Bike Shed, Exeter; and *Debris and Contractions* at the Alma Tavern (also Trafalgar Studios 2). As assistant director, works include *Richard II* at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre; *The Red Lion* at the National Theatre; *Happy Days* at the Young Vic; *The Lion King* at Bristol, Manchester, and Birmingham UK tour venues; *A Voyage 'Round My Father* and *The Lady in the Van* at Salisbury Playhouse; *The Good Companions* at Bristol Old Vic Studio; and *Glengarry Glen Ross* at the Ustinov, Bath Theatre Royal.

PEMBERLEY PRODUCTIONS
Producer

Founded by Tim Smith, Pemberley Productions is a producing company dedicated to bringing European drama to North America and North American drama to Europe. Its previous projects include a European Tour of the Public Theater's *Apple Family Plays* written and directed by Richard Nelson and an Irish Tour of the American Players Theatre's production of James DeVita's *In Acting Shakespeare*. In addition to producing the UK and US tours of *Sancho*, in the 2015—16 season Pemberley Productions will also produce a nine-week North American tour of the Filter Theatre (in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company) production of *Twelfth Night*. Prior to founding Pemberley Productions Tim Smith worked as the general manager and consulting producer for Druid Theatre Company in Ireland and as a tour manager for the Royal Shakespeare Company.

OXFORD PLAYHOUSE
Producer

Oxford Playhouse and its Burton Taylor Studio present and produce a wide range of live performance. The program includes the best of British and international drama, family shows, contemporary dance and music, student and amateur shows, comedy, lectures, and poetry. The Playhouse has been presenting and creating all kinds of performance since 1938. It produces and tours its own shows, has the acclaimed Shared Experience as its resident company, mentors emerging artists through the Evolve Artists in Residence program, and presents Playhouse Plays Out, an ongoing series of off-site events which take surprising theater to unexpected places across the county. The Learning Team works with over 14,000 people each year through post-show discussions, workshops, work experience, three resident young people's theater companies, and holiday workshops. The Playhouse also produces an annual pantomime. Its 2014—15's *Beauty And The Beast* was seen by 36,000 people, and 2015—16 will see more OP productions on the main stage including *Sancho* and an exciting new production of *The Tempest* in October. Visit oxfordplayhouse.com for more information.

Oxford Playhouse is thrilled to be co-producing this new run of *Sancho: An Act of Remembrance*.



Photo: Paterson Joseph by Robert Day

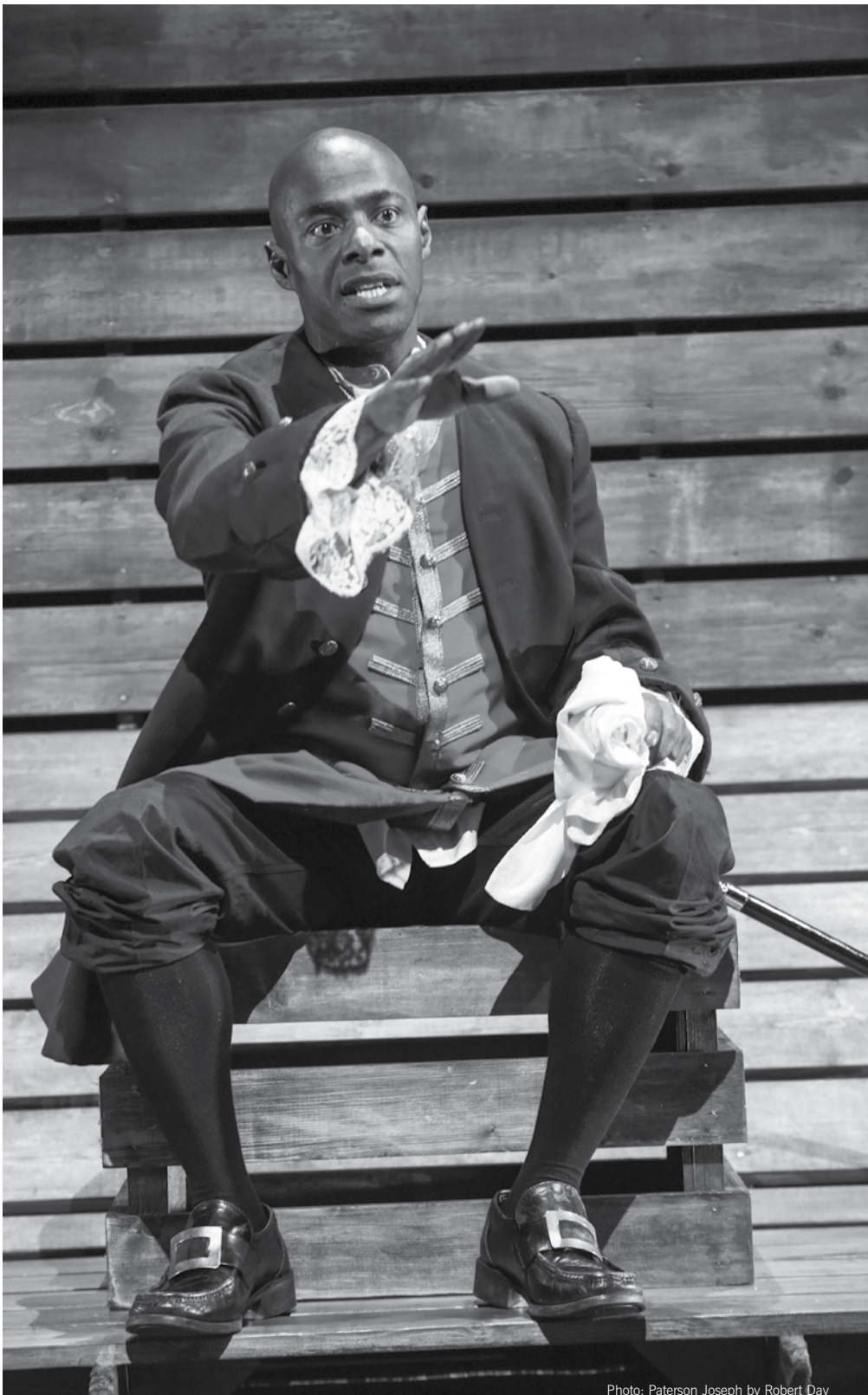


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