

Hero.

Today we live in times where the word “Hero” is written in large headlines across both national and local newspapers. We are reminded daily of the brave men and women who risk their lives for freedoms that we take for granted....as well we should.

Last night I was given the rare opportunity of being entertained, educated and transported expertly through an emotional one-man performance “From Wharf Rats to Lords of the Docks” with Ian Ruskin.

I was an actor and tech director for the Berkley Stage Company. I saw one heck of a lot of shows. This one-man show was the ultimate in simple set design, sound effects, and 100% content, not to mention a character that lives and breathes life. How often do you find that in theatre? It's rare.

Ruskin's show began with an amusing introduction to a real-life character who quietly and carefully unfolds his inspiring bigger-than-life story. I sat mesmerized as Harry Bridges spoke to me across the decades of American history.

Starting from his humble beginnings, Harry spoke to his audience with a twinkle in one eye and a vision in the other, revealing layers of his personal self with an equal amount of long forgotten history.

I was not around during the depression and have no grasp of the heart and mind-set of those harsh times. I was in fact born in 1945, and can still remember feeling the fear of the McCarthy hearings crawling out our tiny black and white screen.

Most folks born after those years have no knowledge of how one mis-guided Senator could send a tidal wave of fear across a nation. How the term “red-baiting” could ruin American lives and more importantly....how one man could stand up against a powerful, destructive arm of the government and win.

How one man could patiently, intelligently, and bravely stand up in public organizing the future for the workers of the world.

Yes, there are many kinds of heroes in this world and in our times....and then there is Harry Bridges....my kind of hero.

Thanks Ian and The Harry Bridges Project for a dramatic reminder of heroism and American history. Best of Luck with this worthwhile project.

Leo DuBois  
Kapaa, Hawai'i  
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