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arts *LIVE* ✦ 26



**UKULELE
ORCHESTRA OF
GREAT BRITAIN**

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UKULELE ORCHESTRA OF GREAT BRITAIN

Soprano Ukulele	Peter Brooke Turner
Baritone Ukulele	Ben Hales
Tenor Ukulele	Ben Rouse
Concert & Sopranino Ukulele	Leisa Rea
Concert Ukulele	Guy Hargreaves
Tenor Ukulele	Laura Currie
Bass Ukulele	Laurie Higgins

The programme will be announced from the stage.
There will be a 20-minute intermission.

Musical Director	George Hinchliffe
Creative Producer	Leisa Rea
Tour Management	Claire Risseeuw
Sound	Verena Rogler



ABOUT THE COMPANY

Formed in 1985 as the antidote to mindless pop, egocentric rock, and the indulgent, bluster of the music business, The Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain donned black tuxedos, and began giving 'concerts' in tiny rooms above old pubs.

2025 saw them celebrate 40 years of thrilling audiences with their off-beat humour and four-stringed virtuosity from Tasmania to the Arctic Circle, Windsor Castle to Carnegie Hall.

There are no drums, pianos, backing tracks, guitars, or banjos, no pitch shifters or electronic trickery - just an astonishing revelation of the rich palette of orchestration afforded by ukuleles and a menagerie of voices in a collision of post-punk performance and old classics.

Come and celebrate the 40th anniversary of this much-loved institution, on a white-knuckle shopping-trolley dash through every kind of musical genre. From ABBA to ZZ Top, Tchaikovsky to Nirvana, Bluegrass to Broadway, all played on the 'bonsai guitar'.

COMPANY BIOS

Peter Brooke-Turner (Soprano Ukulele)

Born in Portugal and growing up in the Soviet Union, Brazil, America, Finland, Italy and Britain, Peter dominates the skyline at over 2 metres tall. After false starts on the violin, trumpet and guitar, he turned to the ukulele and joined the Orchestra. Peter has worked with many showbiz greats, even lending his

uke to Tiny Tim. Away from the tuxedo, Peter has an alter ego, 'Tony Penultimate', whose musical shenanigans and albums have a website all of their own.

Ben Hales (Baritone Ukulele)

Ben Hales is a musician, composer and songwriter based in London. He spent the 2000s playing guitar with chart-topping, yearning man-band 'Aqualung', the 2010s writing music for BBC sketch shows ('Watson & Oliver', 'Dick & Dom', 'Count Arthur Strong') and the 2020s making theatre with several companies, including his own - 'Splendid', in places like Battersea Arts Centre and Shakespeare's Globe. Ben is hoping the next decade will feature more ukuleles.

Ben Rouse (Tenor Ukulele)

Ben is a multi-instrumentalist who plays guitar, mandolin, violin, saxophone, flute, trumpet, banjo and ukulele. His background as an all-rounder led him to form the rock band 'Purple Monkey' and the folk duo 'Teapot Junkies'. Ben has also released several albums of his own original music. Born in Cornwall, he now lives on the west coast of Wales, where he enjoys sailing, making his own electric ukes and a bit of astronomy. But not all at once.

Leisa Rea (Concert & Sopranino Ukulele)

Leisa has a diverse background in performance, music, directing and writing for stage, television, and radio, working with many established names including, Miranda Hart (BBC) Jack Rooke (Channel 4), and Live at the Apollo comic, Jen Brister. She's produced her own solo shows and written a raft of original songs for Musical Comedy Award winners 'Adams & Rea'. Leisa has Irish-Italian heritage, plays uke, guitar and percussion and lives in London.

Guy Hargreaves (Concert Ukulele)

Guy is a seasoned performer and theatre maker from Lancashire with a background in acting, dance, clown, puppetry and music. He has directed shows for The National Youth Theatre and made short films about friendly ghosts for his local Carnegie library. He's appeared in iconic British television programmes, ('Coronation Street' and 'East Enders') as well as penning his own solo show about letter writing, ballet dancing and growing up. Guy is a keen artist and hill climber. Sometimes he combines the two.

Laura Currie (Tenor Ukulele)

Laura was born in Dumfries, Scotland and joined the Orchestra shortly after graduating from Edinburgh University. She started playing the ukulele at the age of fifteen after seeing the Ukes in concert and, inspired, fronted her first rock band a year later. Away from the Orchestra, Laura performs under the stage name Ra and releases her own original material. Her eclectic mix of self-produced YouTube videos have garnered an active online following. Laura also plays piano, bass and guitar.

Laurie Higgins (Bass Ukulele)

Laurie is a professional bass player from Dorset, who has many years of experience playing and recording with a huge variety of artists including Robbie McIntosh, Mutt Slater and Steve Jones. Having studied jazz and composition, he is also busily involved in writing and arranging music, as well as in music education. Laurie continues to provide the 'heartbeat' for the Ukulele Orchestra with his signature sound, as the group tour in the UK, Europe, America and across the world.



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If These Walls Could Rock

APR 26 • MARRONEY THEATRE

A behind-the-scenes look at the untold stories about LA's iconic Sunset Marquis Hotel, where music legends created unforgettable moments.

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