

George Hinchliffe's

UKULELE ORCHESTRA OF GREAT BRITAIN

APRIL 12, 2022 | COBB GREAT HALL

Jonty Bankes

Peter Brooke Turner

Laura Currie

Leisa Rea

Ben Rouse

Dave Suich

Ewan Wardrop

Musical Director: George Hinchliffe

Management: Jodi Cartwright

Sound: Doug Beveridge

Tonight's program will be announced from the stage.

This performance will run approximately 110 minutes, with a 20-minute intermission.

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View the digital program at
whartoncenter.com/program

ABOUT THE UKULELE ORCHESTRA

The Ukulele Orchestra is a touring musical group that has been delighting audiences, raising the roof, selling out performances, and receiving standing ovations since 1985. This all-singing, all strumming group has been performing for over 35 years using only a fistful of ukuleles and maintaining that all genres of music are available for reinterpretation.

The premise sounds astoundingly simple: instruments, voices, no gimmicks, no light show. Yet *The New York Times* exclaim that “they extract more than seems humanly possible from so small and so modest an instrument” and millions have enthused over the years about the fact that the Orchestra tears the house down with a lively, touching, catchy, emotive, stomping show, threaded with humor and wit which inexplicably draws the audience in, to a joyous world beyond the conflicts of musical genres and transcending differences between a serious concert and entertainment.

As soon as the performers walk on stage, the audience feels that they are in safe hands, at home with friends who are totally in command of the art, craft, and magic of the stage. Sitting in chamber group format and dressed in formal evening wear (regardless of the time of day or the venue, whether Glastonbury Festival or Carnegie Hall), it uses the limitations of the instrument to create a musical freedom as it reveals unsuspected musical insights.

At this point, the audience may well sit back, all prior assumptions forgotten, and allow the Orchestra, which has sixteen-handedly changed the face of the ukulele world, to give what the *Independent* raved as "the best musical entertainment in the country."

The first gig, intended as a one-off bit of fun was an instant sellout and led to national radio, TV, album recordings and international tours. Since then, the Orchestra has become what the *Observer* called "a much-loved institution" giving thousands of concerts, TV, and radio appearances all over the world. There have been tours in Britain, across Europe, Scandinavia, New Zealand, Australia, Japan, China, America, Canada, and the North Pole. They also had the honor to perform, by invitation of the Prince of Wales, at the private 90th birthday party of Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor Castle.

The Ukulele Orchestra have released CDs and DVDs on their own independent label. The orchestra's music has been used in films, plays, and commercials. The *Financial Times* praised "The sophisticated sound they make—both percussive and melodic—is at once hilarious and heartfelt."

MEMBER BIOS

JONTY BANKES Jonty was serenaded to sleep as a child by his father playing Bach on the cello; inevitably he learned to appreciate music and knew from an early age that he wanted to be a performer. His formative years were spent playing music and acting. He discovered and fell in love with the bass in 1972. Moving to London to try an acting career in 1980, he met Dave Suich and acted in his show until the bassist left, and he took over; he changed from struggling actor to struggling musician. He supplemented his income as a London double-decker bus driver and has since discovered he drove Will to school. Jonty became a full-time musician in the early 90s, joining the orchestra in 1992 while also recording and touring with Ray Davis, Louisiana Red, Marcus Malone and John Mayall. He can also be heard whistling on many TV soundtracks and commercials. He currently lives in Germany and often performs as a guest bassist with various bands and supported Eric Clapton on the German leg of his 2018 stadium tour.

PETER BROOKE TURNER At over two metres tall, Peter Brooke Turner may well be the tallest ukulele player in the world – he is certainly the tallest in the Ukulele Orchestra. He was born in Portugal and grew up in the Soviet Union, Brazil, America, Finland, and Italy. After false starts on the violin, trumpet, and guitar, he finally discovered the ukulele and joined the Ukes in 1995. He has released three albums under his pseudonym Tony Penultimate and has worked with many well-known showbiz names in the U.K.

and has even lent his uke to Tiny Tim. He fronted his own 'Ukulele Kings' rock group in the 90s. Peter has started the world's first high-altitude drama company – the ATTC (Airline Toilets Theatre Company) which has subsequently produced over twenty high-quality, low-budget songs, sketches and shows (all on Peter's iPhone) from this oft-neglected performance area. They can be viewed online.

LAURA CURRIE The youngest member of the orchestra. Laura was born in Dumfries, Scotland, and studied English Literature at the University of Edinburgh. She started playing the ukulele at the age of fifteen after seeing the Ukes in concert and used the instrument to front her first rock band at sixteen years old. She began performing with the Ukes in 2019, and has since toured with them across China, France, and Switzerland. When not touring with the orchestra, Laura performs under the solo stage name Ra. She writes and releases original songs and covers, and one of her collaborative singles was recently featured in a Netflix show. Laura has garnered an active online following for her eclectic mix of elaborately self-produced YouTube videos. During the Covid-19 lockdown in the U.K., she used these video editing skills to produce the Ukulele Lockdown series that the Ukes released weekly on YouTube. Laura also plays piano, bass, and guitar.

LEISA REA Leisa has worked as an actor, director, comedy writer and teacher. Her professional directorial debut in 1991 of Oscar Wilde's *The Selfish Giant*, won the Lloyds Theatre Challenge and was performed at the National

Theatre in London. Since then, she has taught stand-up comedy at the Soho Theatre, directed several smash-hit comedy shows, written and performed two critically acclaimed solo shows, and for some time, was one half of the duo, Adams & Rea, who scooped the Musical Comedy Awards prize in 2009. Alongside this, Leisa co-created a theatre show with Miranda Hart and was one of the writers for the pilot episodes of BAFTA nominated *Miranda* on the BBC. When she's not on tour with the orchestra, Leisa is a creative consultant for several organizations offering training, workshops, and advice. She joined the Ukulele Orchestra in 2003 and found it to be the perfect home for her colorful backstory.

BEN ROUSE Ben was born in Cornwall but grew up in Hampshire. At the age of eight he began playing the drums, turning to the guitar at age 11. At 23, Ben formed the rock band Purple Monkey, which became a popular band along the south coast of England. At 25, he decided to learn the violin and mandolin and formed the folk duo Teapot Junkies, releasing two albums of original material. He went on to teach himself the saxophone, flute, trumpet, and banjo. At 30, Ben decided that a proper job might be necessary and earned himself an HND in electronics, but in 2007 was drawn back to music when he saw the Ukulele Orchestra perform on *Jools Holland Hootenanny*. The next day he bought a ukulele and began performing and teaching workshops at festivals around the U.K. until, in 2014, he was invited to play with the orchestra; he has since toured America, China, Europe, Scandinavia and the U.K. with them.

DAVE SUICH Dave has worked as a teacher, a drama and special needs specialist, and is a Makaton signer. For many years he was a compere at Glastonbury Festival for the Theatre Stage. Dave has been with the orchestra for 35 years and notes that he has “jammed with a Beatle and performed for a Rolling Stone” as well as discussed gardening with HRH Prince Charles. At the same Chamber Music Chicago Festival at which the Kronos String Quartet played “Purple Haze” in the 80s, Dave introduced the Ukulele Orchestra version of “Born To Be Wild” to the North American audience. When Dave is not touring with the orchestra, he may be found instead with his bluesy group The Worldwide Whelks, or on his allotment.

EWAN WARDROP Ewan started playing the ukulele in 1998 but also plays mandolin, guitar, and the penny whistle. Ewan trained as a ballet dancer and appeared in a record-breaking run of Matthew Bourne’s *Swan Lake* on Broadway. He has a long history of working in theatre on an international stage and has worked with companies such as the Royal Shakespeare Company and Kneehigh Theatre. He also has an experimental Morris dance group called the Bo Diddlers.

Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain

George Hinchliffe's

Born This Way

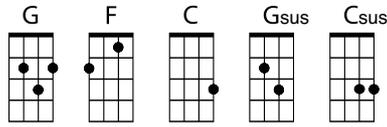
4/4

Key: Downward stroke

George Hinchliffe's
Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain

Born This Way

Lady Gaga



4 beats per box

G / / /	F / / /	C / / /	G / / /	G / / /	F / / /	C / / /	G / / /
G / / /	F / / /	C / / /	G_{sus} / / /	G / / /	F / / /	C / / /	G / C /
G / / /	F / / /	C_{sus} / / /	G / C /	G / / /	F / / /	C_{sus} / / /	G / / /
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G / / /	F / / /	C / / /	G_{sus} / G C	G / / /	F / / /	C / / /	G G

POLICIES AND SERVICES

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY STATEMENT

Wharton Center offers a diverse selection of arts entertainment. Not all productions may appeal to or be appropriate for every person or for all ages. Patrons are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the shows we offer in order to make informed decisions prior to purchasing tickets.

IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

Please observe the lighted exit signs located throughout the building and theatre(s). All patrons should note all exits, especially those closest to your seat location. Our staff and ushers are trained to assist patrons through multiple emergency situations.

FIRST AID

See your usher or House Management Room 209 (in Grand Foyer).

- › Helpful Tips
Cameras, children, late seating
- › Patron Amenities
Lost and found, coat check, etc
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Including SLI, AD, and OC
- › Ticket Office
Exchanges, refunds, fees, hours
- › Mobile Tickets
Access & transfer your mobile tickets
- › Consumer Alert
Avoid being ensnared by resellers
- › Directions and Parking
Nearby parking ramps and lots
- › Engagement Programs
After Chats and Insight Previews
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Prohibited items and security checks
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Patron Safety Protocols

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