



20²⁵₂₆
SEASON

**THE UKULELE ORCHESTRA
OF GREAT BRITAIN**

Sunday, May 3, 2026

ORPHEUM THEATRE

From the Artistic Director

Dear Friends:

After their riotous and wonderfully memorable VRS debut at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre in 2023, we are delighted to welcome the Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain back to our stage.

Last year marked the 40th anniversary of the Ukulele Orchestra, who, from their humble beginnings in small rooms above old pubs, took the world by storm with their off-beat humour and four-stringed virtuosity.

All these years later, they are still thrilling audiences with their all-singing, all-strumming, full throttle, foot-stomping concerts. There are no drums, pianos, backing tracks, guitars, or banjos, no pitch shifters or electronic trickery — just the astonishing revelation afforded by the rich orchestration of differently tuned ukuleles and dynamic vocals.

Once again, we would like to thank Martha Lou Henley for sponsoring their appearance (as she did in 2023).

We are also grateful to our Season Sponsor, the Peak Group of Companies, and to the City of Vancouver for its support.

Buckle up for a helter-skelter ride through every kind of musical genre with plenty of laughs along the way in an afternoon of Classical, Pop, Punk, Funk, Disco, Bluegrass and Metal.

This is an orchestra like no other. You are in for a rollicking and musically rewarding musical afternoon!

Thank you for joining us.



Leila Getz



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The use of cellphones and recording devices is prohibited in the concert hall. Please take this opportunity to turn off all electronic devices.

音乐厅内禁止使用手机，禁止拍照，录音，录像。请观众关闭所有电子器材，感谢您的合作。

Program

The Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain

Peter Brooke Turner, soprano ukulele
Ben Hales, baritone ukulele
Ben Rouse, tenor ukulele
Leisa Rea, concert & sopranino ukulele
Guy Hargreaves, concert ukulele
Laura Currie, tenor ukulele
Laurie Higgins, bass ukulele

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



Photo credit: Stefan Mager and Kate Barsby

The Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain

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.

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”.

Season Sponsor



Supporting the VRS since 2008

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Additional Support



The musicians of The Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain

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, Mutter 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.

The Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain is represented by Arts Management Group, New York, NY

Thank You!

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There are many ways to support the VRS including making a philanthropic gift, sponsoring a concert and/or including us in your estate plans. If you would like more information, please contact us at 604.602.0363.

103 - 119 West Pender Street
Vancouver, BC
V6B 1S5

Telephone: 604.602.0363

Email: info@vanrecital.com

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