

George Hinchliffe's UKULELE ORCHESTRA OF GREAT BRITAIN



7:30 p.m. April 14, 2023

**Escher Auditorium
College of Saint Benedict**

And they do it all with just four strings. The often-imitated-never-duplicated Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain may have twice sold out at Carnegie Hall in New York, twice at The Royal Albert Hall in London and also at Sydney Opera House in Australia, but they've never abandoned their signature wit and lifelong passion for their plucky little instruments. The set list has been described as a "shopping trolley dash through genres," and the result is a show that guarantees something for everyone. Brace yourself for the unexpected and prepare for smiles as familiar tunes pop up in surprising contexts.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

<https://www.ukuleleorchestra.com/>

<https://www.csbsju.edu/fine-arts/performances/ukulele-orchestra-of-great-britain-2023>

ENGAGE

Just like it sounds, the Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain only uses ukuleles, with no drums or backing tracks in sight. Performing an impressive variety of songs ranging from Lady Gaga to various medleys to the Italian song no one can seem to remember the name of, this oddball group shows the audience exactly what their ukulele skills are made of.

- Ukuleles are considered very easy to learn. Yet, these musicians have managed to create complex, skilled renditions with this simple instrument. Do they seem simple? Skilled? Complex?
- Did you bring YOUR ukulele to play along? How did this impact your experience?

The members of the Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain love to explore genres and experiment with their instruments. The performance is a variety of musical and geographical diversity in the music they play – ranging from a beautiful Italian ballad to the more modern sounds of Pharrell Williams. Though the Orchestra played songs that may have been unfamiliar to certain age groups, they played them in a way that entertained and appealed to everyone.

- How many genres of music did you notice them play? Did you hear music you knew? Music that was new to you?
- What did you think about the use of one instrument across multiple genres of music? Did it expand or contract your experience of the musical styles?
- Did you hear a song you love? How did your connection change or expand? How did you feel hearing it in this concert?
- What songs would you recommend the group to play in their signature style?
- The Orchestra often elicits strong audience interaction—how does this impact your experience?

When the group first formed, their goal was to have fun and "not to lose money." They have been together for over 35 years of "ukuleleation." The orchestra has played in music festivals such as Glastonbury, The Big Chill, WOMAD, and The Electric Picnic. They have collaborated with the British Film Institute and have been featured in many silent films. The group has also collected many celebrity fans throughout their years, including Sir Paul McCartney and David Bowie.

- Do you think they accomplished their initial goal?
- What goals do you make when starting something new? Are they similar to the Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain's? Different?