

GRAND ORCHESTRA UNION

A WORLD MUSIC FESTIVAL ON A SINGLE STAGE!

The latest version of the Grand Union Orchestra, brings together Grand Union's celebrated world music performers and internationally-renowned jazz soloists into a single, mainly instrumental, 16-strong global ensemble. The personnel includes familiar and popular Grand Union performers, at the same time introducing some formidable new young talent:

Zhu Xiao Meng (China) – gu zheng (Chinese harp)
Baluji Shrivastav (India) – sitar, dilruba, naal
Günes Cerit (Turkey) – baglama (saz), voice
Ken Johnson (Trinidad) – steel pans, bongos
Lilia Iontcheva (Bulgaria) – tuned percussion, congas
Xavier Osmir (Brazil) – Latin percussion, cavaquinho
Yousuf Ali Khan (Bangladesh) – tabla, dholak, voice
Claude Deppa (South Africa) – trumpet, African drums
Paul Jayasinha (Sri Lanka/Scotland) – trumpet, cello
Tony Kofi (Ghana) – alto and baritone saxophones
Louise Elliott (Australia) – tenor saxophone, flute
Tim Smart (England) – trombone, dijeridu
Tony Haynes (England) – trombone, piano
Gerry Hunt (England) – guitar, soprano sax, violin
Andres Lafone (Uruguay) – bass guitar
Brian Abrahams (South Africa) – drums



The pulse of Carnival from Brazil and the Caribbean, fuelled by West African and Cuban rhythms, with echoes of urban South African townships and the rural music of Eastern Europe, mystical North Indian classical ragas, traditional song from Bangladesh, ancient Chinese courtly show-pieces and the folk music of distant regions – all resonate through the diaphanous textures and visceral energy of Tony Haynes's highly original compositions and arrangements for this unique ensemble and its remarkable virtuoso soloists.

"His genius has been not merely to bolt colourful ethnic exoticisms onto the exterior body-work of the jazz tradition, but to create a truly syncretic blend in which it is impossible to say where one culture stops and another starts..." - Chris May on Tony Haynes, All About Jazz.

A TRULY INTERNATIONAL ENSEMBLE, YET AT THE SAME TIME REPRESENTATIVE OF BRITAIN TODAY

THE GRAND UNION SMALLER GROUPS

The Grand Union Orchestra is also very versatile, and can be broken down into smaller constituent parts. Centring on the music of particular regions of the world, we have created a number of Grand Union Bands over the years which feature musicians from those regions, together with other members of the Grand Union Orchestra, listed above. The rhythm section generally remains the same; and sometimes appropriate guest artists are added.

Here are some examples of the possible combinations and themes:

Spirit of Carnival

A seven-piece band featuring the music of South America, the Caribbean and West Africa, including **Xavier Osmir, Ken Johnson, Claude Deppa** and **Tony Kofi** in a dance-orientated programme – samba and bossa nova, ska and reggae, calypso and soca, salsa and hi-life.

Can't Chain Up me Mind

A deeper exploration of the links between the musics of Brazil, the Caribbean and the Southern USA and their West African roots (originally commissioned to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade). Ten musicians, including **Claude Deppa, Tony Kofi, Tim Smart, Ken Johnson, Louise Elliott** and singer **Jonathan André**.

The Rhythm of Tides

Recreating the Orchestra's acclaimed CD of this title, this project features Brazilian singer/percussionist **Xavier Osmir** with Lisbon-based guest musicians **Sadjo Djolô** (Guiné-Bissau - kora), **Mingo Rangel** (Mozambique - guitar, voice) and **Rui Júnior** (Portugal - percussion).



Imagined Caravan

Eight musicians, including **Lilia Iontcheva, Gunes Cerit, Baluji Shrivastav** and **Zhu Xiao Meng**, conjure up an imaginary journey along the Great Silk Road, linking the music and instruments of Eastern Europe and Turkey with Central Asia and China.

Grand Union Bangla Band

Especially popular with South Asian Melas, the eight musicians include **Yousuf Ali Khan, Baluji Shrivastav**, visiting artist **Shahadat Hossein Khan** (sarod) and singer **Lucy Rahman**, playing Indian classical music, traditional songs from Bangladesh, bhangra and Bollywood.

Bengal Tiger, Shanghai Dragon

Ten musicians, including **Yousuf Ali Khan, Zhu Xiao Meng, Paul Jayasinha** and **Louise Elliott**, explore the music of Bangladesh, North India and China, but with a decidedly modern feel, a touch of jazz, European harmony and brilliant improvisation.

The Dragon's Hour

A presentation of the music of China, from the ancient imperial court to the present day, from classical virtuoso show-pieces to folk melodies from far-flung regions, featuring **Zhu Xiao Meng** (celebrated exponent of the gu zheng) with guest Chinese musicians and GU support

WORKSHOPS AND MASTER-CLASSES

Grand Union is also well-known for its practical workshops and participatory projects with young people, students or music-lovers of all ages, exploring creatively all facets of world music. Some of the music created in these sessions can often be presented as part of, or alongside, public performances by the Orchestra or Band.

For more details, CDs and DVDs please contact:

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